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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOREST TOURISM IN SELECTED AREAS OF FINLAND AND SOUTH AFRICA

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DECLARATION

I, **Nadine Lenhard** hereby declare that the thesis for the **Masters in Tourism Management** degree at the University of Pretoria, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university, and that it is my own work in design and execution and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

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Date

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF THESIS: A comparative study of forest tourism in selected areas of Finland and South Africa

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The role of forests in nature-based tourism and recreation is becoming increasingly important. Forests, in South Africa and abroad are no longer seen simply as a source of timber, but provide spiritual and recreational services to millions of people through forest-related tourism. Consequently many countries have had to try and balance the multifunctional roles that forests play in the forestry and tourism sectors.

There has been very limited research conducted to date on the role that forests and woodlands play in the tourism sector in South Africa. The study assesses the current and potential role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector in selected regions of Finland and South Africa by means of a comparative study. The Mpumalanga and Oulu Provinces were chosen as the two case study regions. The dissertation presents a general picture of the similarities and differences between the regions and countries. The comparison of similarities and differences in the management of forest areas serves to identify different solutions to the challenges faced by the tourism sector in forest and woodland areas of Finland and South Africa.

The study further measures and compares tourism providers' perceptions towards how they value and use forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation. How and why forests and woodlands are valued should play an important part in how they are created and managed. Management methods are then likely to be more effective and socially acceptable.

In addition to examining the role of forests in the tourism sector, it is helpful to understand why people choose to visit forests and woodlands and their attitude towards forests and the environment. The study assesses why tourists visit forest and woodland areas and their attitudes towards forests and the environment. Attitudes of individuals are seen as a major factor that explains motivations for different forms of behaviour and such analysis provides useful information for organisations involved in managing forest-related tourism. The study uses the Forest Importance Scale (FIS) and the General Awareness and Consequence Scale (GAC) as simple measures of attitudes towards forest importance and usage.

Lastly the study assesses and compares the perceptions of tourists and tourism providers and the importance they place in sustainable tourism principles. Both forests and tourism are relevant issues from an environmental perspective and it is relevant for planners and managers both inside and outside the tourism industry to evaluate the level of support amongst tourists and tourism providers towards more sustainable practices. The purpose of this thesis is thus to present the findings of research conducted using a comparative approach including a comparison of two case-study regions, multiple-use Likert scales, in-depth interviews and participant observation as means for investigating the role of forests in tourism.

This study reveals that forests are seen to have a significant role for tourism and play an important role in attracting tourism in many communities located near them through nature-based tourism and recreation. Forests and woodlands are especially perceived as important by tourism providers in maintaining and creating the tourism activities in the area. The results reveal that there is a need to increase and monitor local community participation in the regions as there was a high degree of uncertainty regarding

involvement of the community in decision-making and tourism development in the regions. Community involvement is one of the vital components of ensuring sustainable tourism. Therefore it is important to monitor the level of community involvement in an area to ensure sustainable tourism development.

The study adds a supplier and consumer perspective regarding the importance of sustainable tourism principles. The study reveals that both tourists and tourism providers in Finland and South Africa are very supportive of sustainable tourism principles in the destination. The high interest and fairly similar ranking of issues suggest that tourists and tourism providers largely share the definition of sustainability. Positive perceptions towards sustainable tourism principles will encourage tourists and tourism providers to act sustainably regarding tourism development and management.

Finally the results suggest that well-managed and organized tourism in forested rural areas can play a significant role in enhancing the economic, environmental and social development in the regions. The challenge of managing sustainable forest tourism is discussed further and the results from the study aim to provide the foundation on which to formulate principles or guidelines and recommend approaches to be applied in the development and management of sustainable forest tourism in South Africa.

Key words: *forests and woodlands, recreation, forest tourism, sustainability principles, attitudes, behaviour, comparative study, tourism providers, sustainable forest management*

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AT	Alternative tourism
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CMT	Commercial Mass Tourism
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FIS	Forest Importance scale
FPEG	Forest Policy and Environment Group
GAC	General Awareness and attitude scale
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross national product
IUFRO-WFSE	International Union of Forest Research Organisations
METLA	Finnish Forest Research Institute
METSO	Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland
MII	Mpumalanga Investment Initiative
NFA	National Forest Act
NSW	New South Wales
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
SAFCOL	South African Forestry Company Limited
SD	Standard deviation
SFM	Sustainable forest management
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFF	UN Forum on Forests
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCFSD	World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development
WFSE	World Forests, Society and Environment
UNWTO	United Nations World tourism Organisation
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature

Anne Frank

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

The best friend on earth of man is the tree: when we use the tree respectfully and economically we have one of the greatest resources of the earth.

Frank Lloyd Wright

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Forests play important cultural, spiritual and recreational roles in many societies (Prasad, 2006:15), and the importance of forest-related tourism and recreation, in particular is increasing rapidly (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:4). Both forestry and tourism are increasingly receiving more international attention. On the one hand forestry draws attention due to its functions in supplying products and services needed for society; while tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors and its economic, socio-cultural and environmental effects are increasingly recognized (Kuvan, 2003). Consequently, many countries have tried to balance the multifunctional role that forests play in the forestry and tourism sectors (Cruz, Baltazar, Gomez & Lugo, 2005; Robertson & Lawes, 2005; Svoronou & Holden, 2005; Hannam, 2004; Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002; Hjortso & Straede, 2001; Shrestha, 1998; Bostedt & Mattson, 1995; Bengston, 1994; Stephens, 1984).

Even though forest recreation has been extensively researched over the years, there is a lack of research concerning its role in tourism (Pröbstl, 2007). Limited research has been conducted to date on the role that forests and woodlands play in the tourism sector in South Africa and even less comparative research on developing and developed countries. Not much has been done to investigate how the relationship between the forestry and tourism sectors can be developed (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:8). Pröbstl (2007) emphasises the need to focus on forest-related nature tourism, reflecting not only the general aspects of these functions of forests, but also the regional and local differences on different continents. An evaluation of the existing and potential role national forests can play in attracting local and regional tourism would likely assist national forest managers in better planning of natural resources (Kline, 2001:8).

Tabbush, et al. (2002:49) argue that the benefits that forestry brings to tourism and links between forestry and tourism are poorly understood. Also as a result of the rapid increase in recreational activities in forest and woodland environments, it is important that forest tourism and recreation activities are put in the context of other uses of forests in order to assess their complementarities or conflicts (Font & Tribe, 2000:4). Furthermore, Font & Tribe (2000:2) point out that tourism and recreation will increasingly use the world's forest resources in developed countries as buffer zones from daily urban life and in developing countries as the setting for nature tourism.

One of the defining characteristics of forestry is that it produces multiple outputs (Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, 2000:5). The ways in which forests are perceived and used have changed dramatically over recent years (Mery *et al.* 2005), and the values of forests and woodlands for tourism are much greater and diverse than has been recognised previously (Martin, 2004:55). Consequently it is widely recognised that the traditional production function of forests is changing towards a multifunctional use (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:6). This has resulted in changes in many countries where management for nature and ecological functions of forests as well as the social functions of forests, like recreation and tourism have become more important (IUFRO, 2007). Bori-Sanz & Niskanen (2002:6) emphasize that forests need to be reconsidered regarding the new approaches to forestry, particularly multifunctional use of forests.

Both forests and tourism are relevant issues from an environmental perspective (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002). Despite increasing emphasis being placed on the negative impacts of tourism to the environment, Martin (2004:54) states that there is increasing awareness that tourism can work to support, and act as a key driver, for the protection and enhancement of the environment. Specifically the planning and management of nature-based tourism is increasingly mediated by the paradigm of sustainability (Pickering & Weaver, 2003:7) and as a result tourism has moved from being a peripheral aspect to a central focus of sustainable forest management (Martin, 2004: 54).

The adoption of sustainable forest management as a paradigm or strategy of forest resource management is associated with these changes or shifts in the way we view or

regard forests. Kuvan (2005), points out that the challenge for sustainable forest management comes from within the forest sector as well as from outside. Increased pressure is being placed on forest institutions and organisations to comply to certain criteria in order to ensure sustainable multi-purpose forest management. This has resulted in different initiatives being developed in order to try and deal with the issue of encouraging sustainable forest management and integrating timber production with the environment and recreational benefits sought by society (Font & Tribe, 2000:7).

Despite the growth of research and publications on tourism in natural areas, our understanding of the role and effects of tourism in natural areas is surprisingly limited (Hall & Boyd, 2005:3). Little research has been conducted in an attempt to work directly with tourism providers to understand how they value and use forests and woodlands and how the relationships between the forestry and tourism sectors might be developed to deliver benefits effectively (Martin, 2004:55). The study aims to assess and understand how tourism providers in Finland and South Africa value and use forests and woodlands. The study also assesses and compares tourism providers' attitude towards the environment and sustainable tourism principles. Even though attitudes towards the environment has been studied extensively (McCool & Moisey, 2001; Frost, 2000), studies comparing attitudes between developed and developing countries have only recently been reported (Frost, 2000).

In addition to examining the role of forests in the tourism sector, it is helpful to understand why people choose to visit forests and woodlands and their attitude towards forests and the environment. Attitudes of individuals are seen as a major factor that explains motivations for different forms of behaviour (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003) and such analysis provides useful information for organisations involved in managing forest-related tourism. Furthermore, few studies in the past have attempted to connect visitors' attitudes towards the environment to their travel motivation (Luo & Deng, 2008:399). For the present study, attitudes are measured by means of the Forest Importance Scale (FIS) and the General Awareness and Consequence Scale (GAC). The present study also assesses tourists' reasons for choosing to visit forests and woodlands areas; and their perceptions towards sustainability principles.

Despite South Africa's relatively small forest industry, it still possesses a strong forestry industry in relative world terms and has a reputation for delivering products of high quality and economic value (DWAF, not dated). However, even though many tourism and recreational activities take place in South Africa's forests and woodland areas, forests in South Africa have not been managed specifically for the delivery of ecosystem services (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:49). In South Africa, forest goods and services play a disproportionately important role and it is emphasized that there is a need for forest roles to be clearly identified, articulated, managed and measured (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:49).

Many other countries around the world, such as Finland, with much larger percentages of their national land cover dominated by forests, have focused on managing forests for their 'hidden' or nature' services (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:49). Finnish Forest Policy is one of the most advanced in the world and is a good example to other countries of how forest and forestry issues can be co-ordinated at national level (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2005:53). A comparative analysis between the two countries and study regions would therefore provide useful information and results regarding the role forests play in the tourism sector. Pearce (1993:32), states that comparative studies offer tourism researchers a way forward in a field still largely dominated by descriptive, ideographic work. He further emphasizes the importance and significance of conducting comparative studies especially with the increasing globalization of the world economy and the tourist industry.

1.2 FOREST-BASED TOURISM AND RECREATION

A vast number of recreation and tourism activities take place in outdoor settings where forests and woodlands are present. Font & Tribe (2000:2) contend that forests and woodlands are part of the environment in which tourism and recreation take place, providing attractive scenery and attracting millions of visitors every day (Gössling & Hickler, 2006:95). Font & Tribe (2000:2) further point out that there are very few outdoor

settings for recreation that do not have trees, and there are also very few tourism activities that cannot take place in a forest environment.

A review of the suitability of forest sites for tourism shows that a large proportion of forested land would be adequate for tourism purposes (Font and Tribe, 2000:3). In Germany for example, it is estimated that in about 90% of all German forests it is possible to simultaneously produce valuable timber, to protect soil, climate and watersheds, and to allow people access to the forest for recreational purposes (Lang, 1995:36). Also both boreal forests and tropical forests are becoming increasingly popular as tourist destinations (Gössling, 1999). In both Finland and South Africa, forests have gained importance as hiking and adventure tourism destinations.

Forests host a majority of the world's biodiversity and many individual species are of great importance for tourism (Gössling & Hickler, 2006:95). In South Africa, for example, the endangered Blue Swallow, a bird endemic to the forest and woodland areas in the Mpumalanga region, is a major tourist attraction. Even though South Africa's forest biome is very small, occupying less than 1%; it does support a high proportion of the country's plant and animal diversity. The more diversity in natural habitats associated with the forestry activity, the greater the diversity of goods and services generated (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:48).

Outdoor recreation in both Finland and South Africa continues to be a very important element of forest use. In Finland, hiking, skiing and Nordic walking are some of the activities that often take place in forests. The relative importance of recreation and tourism services, particularly areas in Northern Finland are increasing (METLA, 2007). In South Africa mountain biking, hiking and horse-riding are very popular activities in forest and woodland areas. Adventure tourism, in particular, is one of the fastest growing aspects of tourism in South Africa and in the world (Buckley, 2003:2). South Africa is often referred to as one of the adventure tourism capitals of the world (Holt-biddle, 2002) and activities such as mountain biking have become very popular in forest and woodland areas.

It is recognised that recreation and tourism can cause both negative and positive impacts on the environment and the challenge remains in understanding the relationship between recreation, tourism and the environment. Holden (2008:102) argues that the negative effects of tourism must be offset against the economic benefits offered through tourism as they may be of significant importance in combating poverty and aiding human development in developing countries. Tourism can also help protect the environment from potentially more damaging forms of development, such as logging and mining and can have a particularly beneficial role in the regeneration of economically depressed urban environments (Holden, 2008:102). Furthermore, it is important to identify ways of managing resources in harmony with the attractiveness of many recreational and tourist activities (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:314) so that the impacts are kept to a minimum.

It is clear that the presence of forests and woodlands are a crucial element to the tourist products that are offered in these environments. However, forest tourism is a niche that is still a relatively new concept, especially in South Africa. Even though there are tourism and recreation activities taking place in forest and woodland areas, the term 'forest tourism' is an unfamiliar concept in South Africa and there is no tourism product that has specifically been marketed as 'forest tourism'. As a result, it was not possible for the researcher to find documented research on the growth and size of this tourism sector, the market segment that it serves, or its resulting impacts.

1.3 KEY DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

As with many concepts related to tourism, the definitions of terms such as recreation, forest tourism, nature-based tourism and ecotourism can be a problematic one, and although they are widely used, there are a number of definitions for these terms. Holden (2008:2) contends that this difficulty is a reflection of both the complexity of tourism, and the fact that different stakeholders or groups with an interest in tourism are likely to have different aspirations of what they hope to achieve from it, and consequently hold different perspectives on what it means to them. As a result, many of these definitions

tend to overlap one another and concepts such as ecotourism and nature-based tourism tend to have different meanings amongst stakeholders; within different world regions and countries.

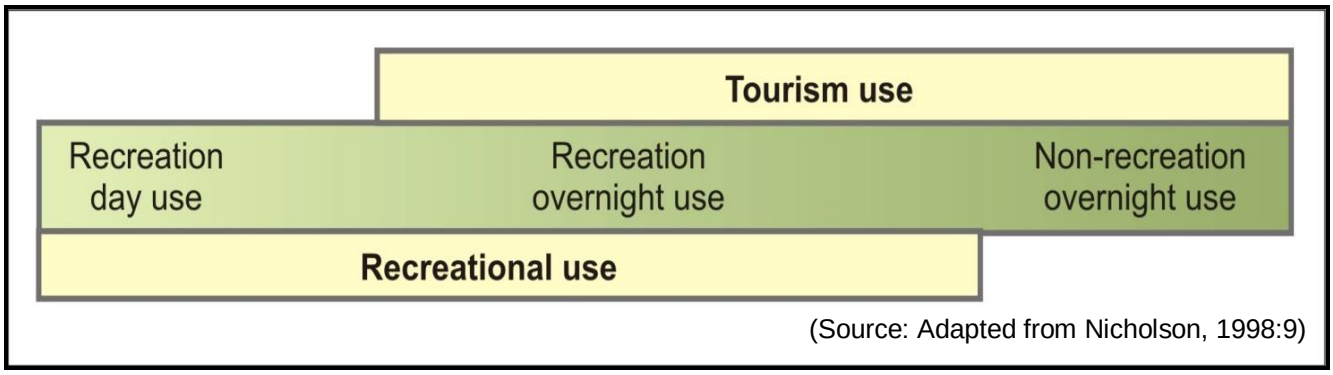
For the purpose of the study, the WTO (not dated) definition of tourism is used: “Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.” The next section defines and highlights the concepts of tourism and recreation in more detail.

1.3.1 Tourism and recreation

The term resource-based recreation and tourism is used to refer to experiences related to natural areas or amenities that serve as an activity site of attraction for recreation (Stokowski, 2000). Nicolson (1998:8) emphasises, however, that there is a distinction between the concepts of recreation and tourism:

Recreation consists of any outdoor or leisure activity area where the participant did not pay a commercial operator for the privilege of partaking in the activity. The activity can be a single or multi day event. Nicolson (1998:8) defines **tourism** as any recreation in which a fee for service relationship exists. Usually the activity occurs greater than 80 kilometres from the participant’s residence or involves an overnight stay. However, according to Holden (2008:2), how far one has to travel and how long one has to be away from one’s home location to be categorised as a tourist is debatable. It is therefore difficult to define tourism in terms of distance spent away and time spent at a destination. It is also difficult to define tourism due to its reliance on primary, secondary and tertiary levels of production and service, and the fact that it is so intricately interwoven into the fabric of life economically, socio-culturally and environmentally (Fennell, 2008:1). However trying to understand the meaning of “tourism” is important if we are to plan the use of natural resources and manage impacts associated with its development (Holden, 2008:2).

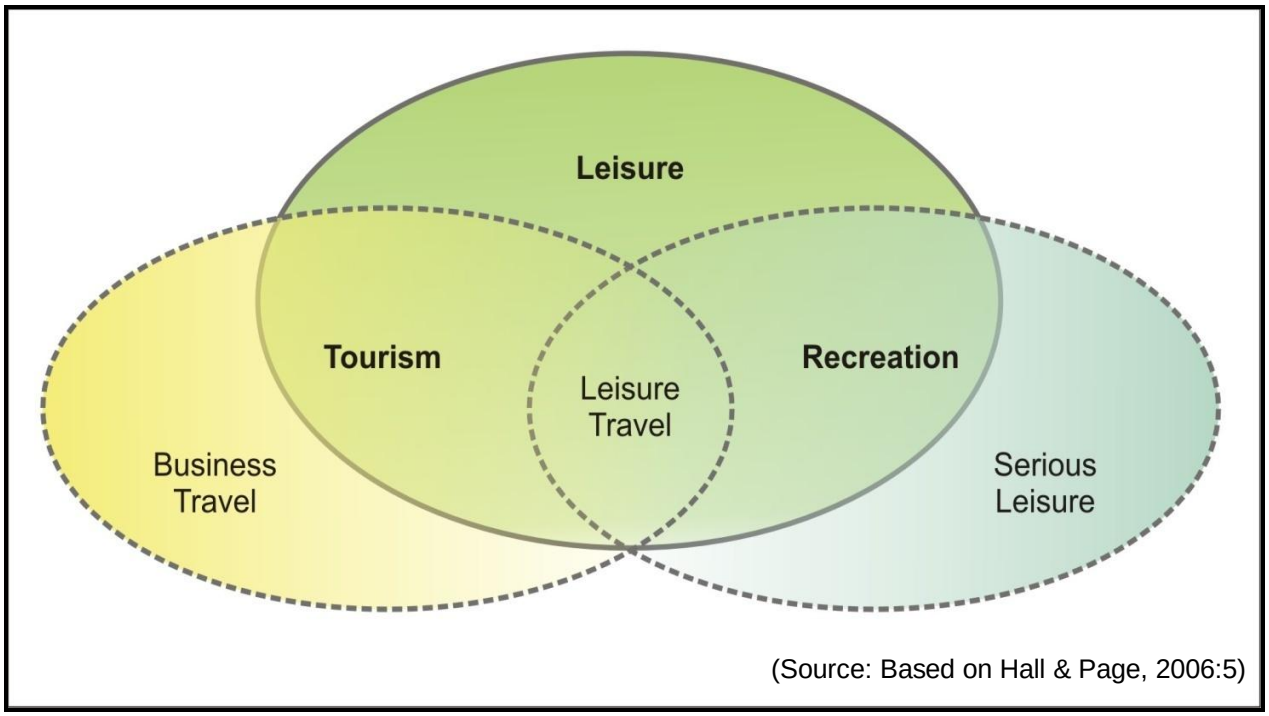
Tourism and recreation in forests are not usually considered on their own but as part of outdoor recreation, because as Font & Tribe (2000:2) point out, few visitors go to observe the forest itself but to carry out recreational activities in it. Nicolson (1998) highlights that there is a significant overlap between tourism and recreation and these two terms are often used interchangeably. Nicolson (1998) argues that much tourism is recreational, in that tourist activities are engaged in during leisure time, commonly outdoors, for the purpose of pleasure and personal/group satisfaction. Similarly, outdoor recreation overlaps with tourism in the distinctive characteristics and behaviour associated with each (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:313). In addition, a considerable amount of recreational use is just for the day and a significant portion of tourism involves no recreational component (Nicolson, 1998:8). The overlap between tourism and recreation can be seen in the following diagram (**Figure 1-1**).



(Source: Adapted from Nicholson, 1998:9)

Figure 1-1: Tourism and recreation

Hall & Page (2006:5) illustrates the relationship between recreation and tourism by viewing tourism and recreation as part of a wider concept of leisure. Figure 1-2 illustrates this relationship between leisure, recreation and tourism and it also indicates the considerable overlap that exists between recreation and tourism. The broken lines illustrate that the boundaries between the concepts are ‘soft’.



(Source: Based on Hall & Page, 2006:5)

Figure 1-2: The relationships between leisure, recreation and tourism

Evidently with the growth in tourism and recreation studies, many of these terms have become "fuzzy" and the overlap of and borrowing between concepts and terms have become the norm (Crompton & Richardson, 1986:38). It is clear that a universally accepted definition of leisure, tourism and recreation is an impossibility and that definitions will change according to their purpose and context (Hall & Page, 2006:4). The challenge also remains in defining new forms of tourism and concepts such as, nature-based tourism, ecotourism and forest-based tourism.

1.3.2 Nature-based tourism and ecotourism

Nature-based tourism is undoubtedly one of the most significant areas of research in tourism studies today (Hall & Boyd, 2005:3). Ever since the growth of the environmental movement and the increasing criticism of conventional mass tourism, new and alternative forms of tourism such as ecotourism have developed (Reid, 2003:117). Concepts such as ecotourism, nature-based tourism and new tourism have particularly been the subject of much research over the past decade (Svonorou & Holden, 2005;

Wurzinger & Johansson, 2006, Dawson, 2001, Luo & Deng, 2007). Ecotourism is now one of the most successful forms of tourism (Reid, 2003:117) and is often seen as the way forward as a 'softer' form of tourism.

Modern nature-based tourism focuses on experiencing flora and fauna in natural settings (Buhalis & Costa, 2006:113), and includes activities such as whale-watching, trips to forests and woodland areas; and viewing wildlife in National parks. Today the term 'nature tourism' is often used synonymously with 'ecotourism' (Flognfeldt, 2006:144), although it shares only some of ecotourism's requirements. Mihalič (2006:113), states that while nature-based tourism relates to nature, its attractiveness, and the visitor experience in natural settings, ecotourism takes unspoiled natural and socio-cultural attractiveness into account. He further states that ecotourism is closer to sustainable tourism since it also takes care of the environmental (natural and socio-cultural) impacts (Mihalič, 2006:113). There are also other numerous terms that are used interchangeably with ecotourism and nature-based tourism, such as green tourism, sustainable tourism, alternative tourism, ethical tourism, responsible tourism, conservation tourism and others (Dawson, 2001:44).

Another problem that has to be taken into account is that all these terms have been interpreted differently across the world and have often been interpreted in contradictory ways by various authors (Mieczkowski, 1995:459). For example, the term "ecotourism" is very widely accepted and used in countries such as South Africa, Sweden and Canada. In fact, South Africa markets itself as an "ecotourism destination". On the other hand, countries such as Finland and the Finnish tourism board have in certain circumstances dismissed the term eco-tourism altogether. In a document titled: "Sustainable tourism-the challenge of the 1990s for Finnish Tourism", ecotourism was seen as "not a solution to environmental problems in the tourist field" and a source of "misunderstandings". They preferred using an alternative concept and the term "sustainable tourism" was recommended (Björk, 2004). Saarinen (2000) further states that to distinguish between nature-based tourism and other forms of tourism is also problematic in a country like Finland, where nature is traditionally and widely recognized as the most important attraction for domestic and foreign tourists.

Therefore it is difficult to define exactly what forest tourism is, as the concept means different things to different people. For the purpose of the study, ecotourism and forest tourism are seen as subsets of nature-based tourism, and all three terms are seen as alternative forms of tourism. The next section discusses the relationships between these terms and defines forest tourism as a form of alternative tourism.

1.4 FOREST TOURISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE FORM OF TOURISM

Tourism may be defined as either mass tourism or alternative tourism (Dowling, 2001:288). The philosophy behind alternative tourism (AT) was to ensure that tourism policies should no longer concentrate on economic and technical necessities alone, but rather emphasise the demand for an unspoiled environment and consideration of the needs of local people (Krippendorf, 1982). Hampton (1998:9) argues that alternative forms of tourism provide local residents greater employment opportunities, maintain a greater share of economic benefits within the local area, and result in less negative impacts. On the other hand, mass tourism is viewed as environmentally and culturally destructive; and is associated with large-scale, high-density accommodations, contrived attractions, seasonal markets, and limited benefits to the local economy with minimal concern for carrying capacity and a lack of local involvement (Weaver 1995).

Many terms have been used to describe the alternative or more ‘desirable’ forms of tourism such as appropriate, green, nature, discreet, simple, low-impact, low-density, small-scale, slow growth, soft, environmentally friendly, nature-orientated, nature-based, environment conscious, responsible, sustainable, special interest, scientific, adventure, rural, farm, agri-tourism, wilderness tourism and sensitized tourism (Mieczkowski, 1995:459). In an attempt to solve these terminological controversies, Mieczkowski (1995: 459) has divided tourism into two broad categories, namely conventional mass tourism (CMT) and alternative tourism (AT) as can be seen in **Figure 1-3**.

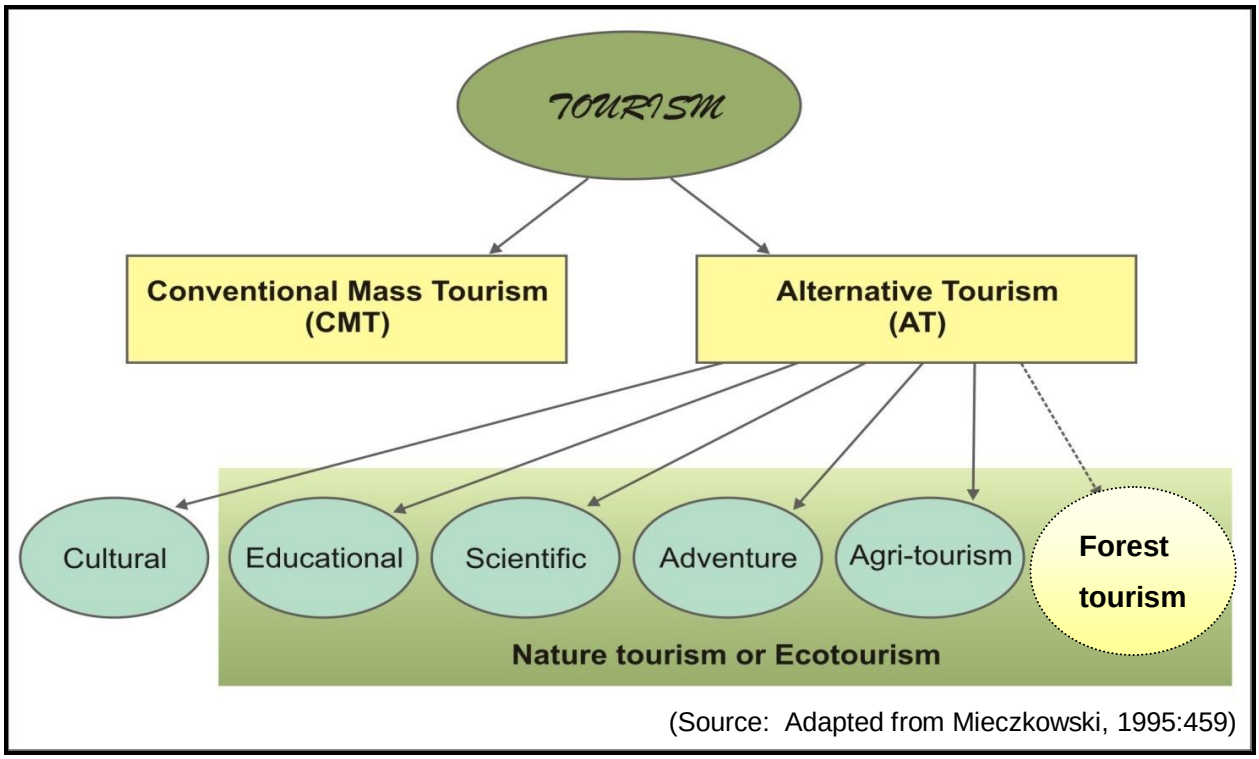


Figure 1-3: The alternative tourism

Dowling (2001:289) describes mass tourism and alternative tourism using a similar model to Mieczkowski (illustrated in **Figure 1-3**). However, there are minor changes for example Dowling (2001:289) does not consider adventure tourism as a form of nature-based tourism or ecotourism and it does not even feature under the umbrella term "environmental tourism". This is illustrated in **Figure 1-4:** An overview of tourism

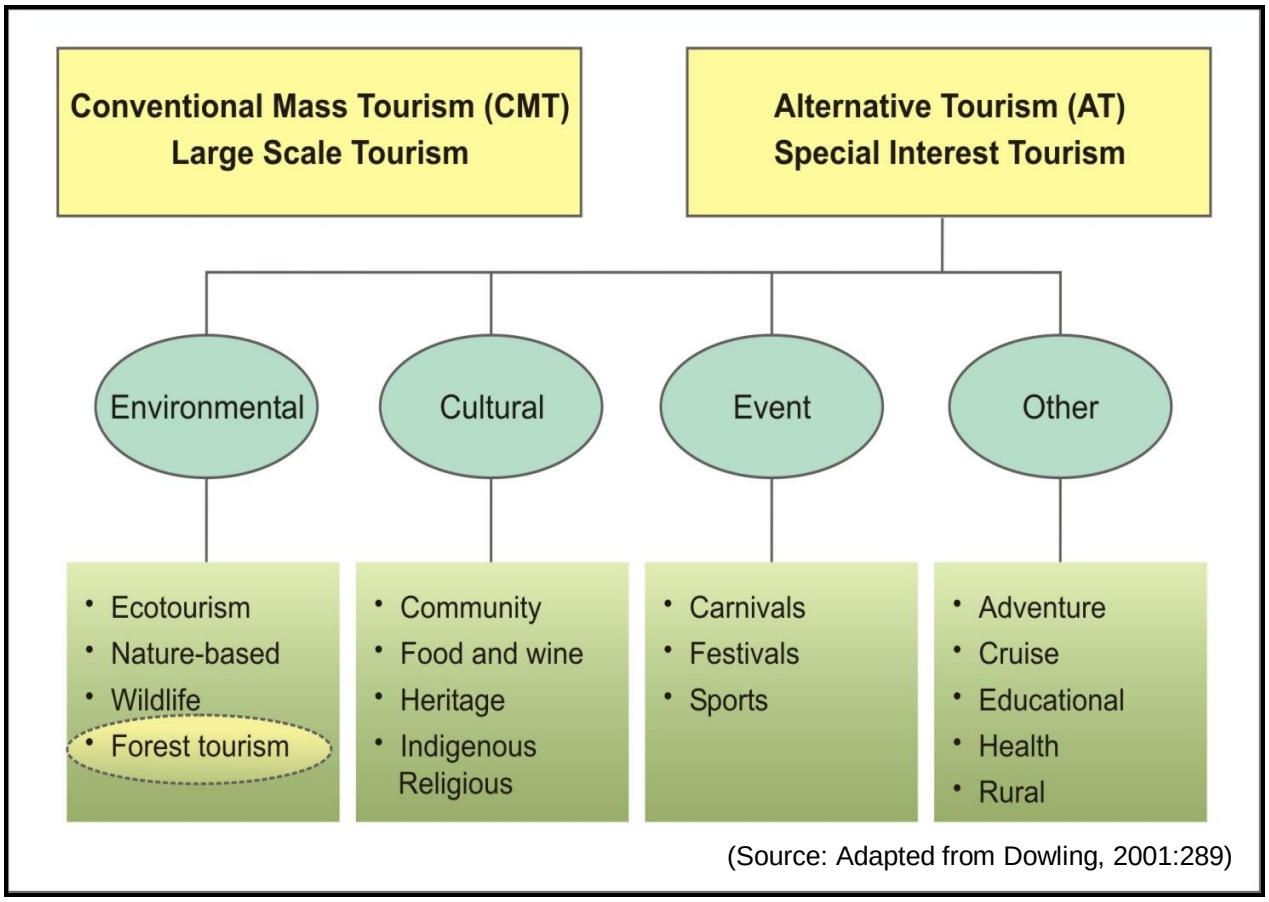


Figure 1-4: An overview of tourism

As illustrated in **Figure 1-3** and **Figure 1-4**, the term alternative tourism (AT) was conceived to encompass products and activities that were thought to be more appropriate than conventional mass tourism. Weaver (2006:38) contends that alternative tourism may therefore be regarded as an early form of engagement with the idea of sustainability. Mieczkowski (1995:460) distinguishes between five different forms of AT, namely cultural, educational, scientific, adventure and agri-tourism.

It is evident from the two models that overlaps do occur between the various types of alternative tourism. Cultural tourism, for example is to a large extent educational. Mieczkowski (1995:460) further points out the difficulty in placing ecotourism in the context of alternative tourism because while ecotourism is nature-orientated and nature-based, it is not necessarily always practiced in wilderness settings. Similarly forest

tourism also overlaps with cultural tourism but at the same time can be considered as a form of nature-based tourism.

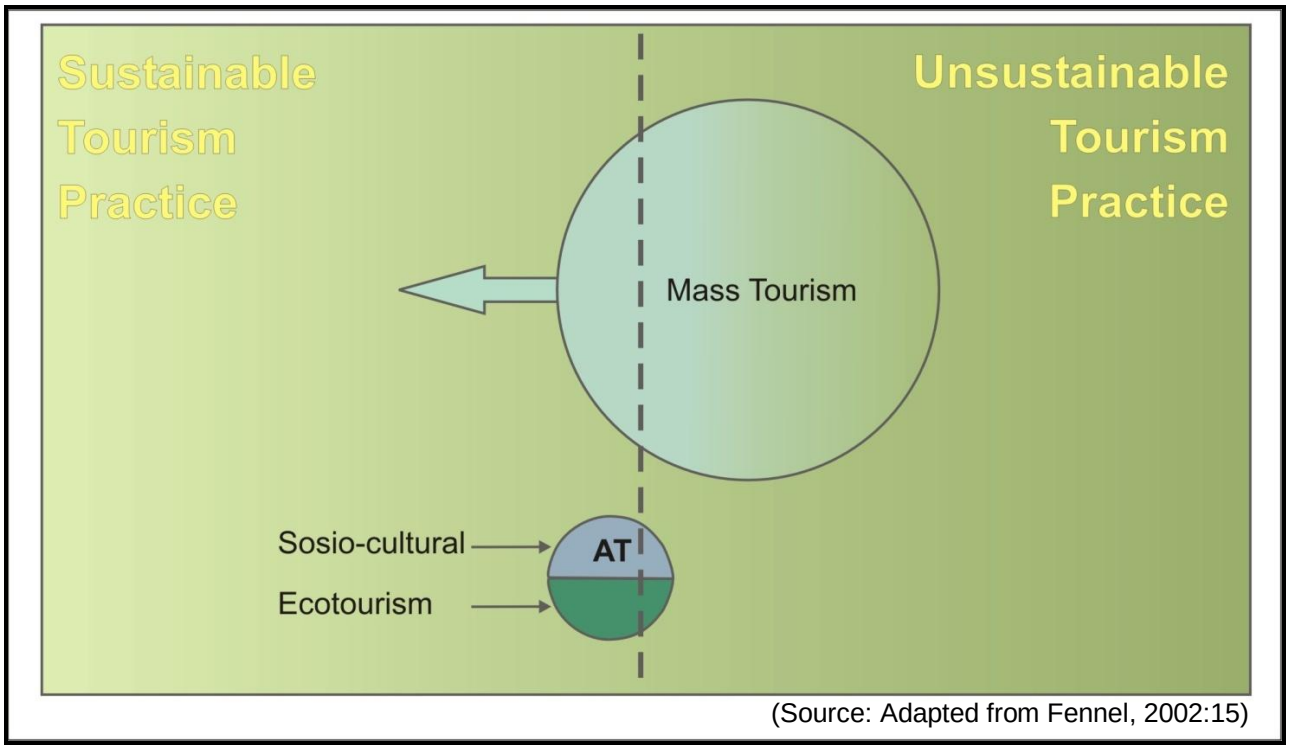
Dernoi (1981) identifies five major benefits of AT:

- there will be benefits for the individual or family for example families will acquire managerial skills;
- the local community will benefit in terms of the direct revenue generated by alternative tourism for community members;
- for the host country in terms of preventing leakage of tourism revenue outside the country;
- for those in the industrialised generating country as it is ideal for cost-conscious travellers and for travellers who prefer to have close contact with locals; and
- benefits for international relations in terms of promoting international, interregional and intercultural understanding.

However there has also been some criticism of emerging special interest or alternative tourism and the following identifies limits to its potential for solving the major problems of the global tourism industry such as (Derret, 2001:5):

- alternative tourism will only spread the negative influences of mass tourism over a wider area;
- it is not realistic to propose that the tourism industry can be controlled by local communities and be self-sustaining;
- the concept of alternative tourism is elitist and middle class;
- the economies of scale of individual operators may be inadequate to implement sustainable practices;
- alternative tourism places unrealistic faith in education and awareness marketing campaigns;
- alternative tourism is inequitable because it will increase the cost of travel; and
- proponents of alternative tourism equate it with maintaining the environmental status quo, which is unrealistic in the light of projected increases in world travel.

Much of the tourism that takes place in forests fits within new nature-based tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable tourism concepts (Kline, 2001:8). The researcher has added the concept of forest tourism as the sixth form of alternative tourism, on the premise that forest tourism and recreation is considered as a form of alternative tourism and nature-based tourism. In the context of where forest tourism fits in amongst sustainable tourism, Fennell's (2008:15), conceptual framework (**Figure 1-5**) helps us understand the relationships between mass tourism, AT and sustainable tourism better.



(Source: Adapted from Fennel, 2002:15)

Figure 1-5: Tourism relationships

Figure 1-5 illustrates that most forms of alternative tourism are sustainable in nature and is divided into two types of tourism namely socio-cultural tourism and ecotourism. Mieczkowski (1995:460) however states that although the alternative tourism has much better chances to be environmentally sustainable than the conventional mass tourism, it does not have the monopoly on environmental sustainability. To conclude, all tourism should, in fact strive to be environmentally sustainable, responsible, concerned and

appropriate and all forms of tourism, not only alternative tourism, should be planned, regulated and controlled (Mieczkowski, 1995:461).

1.5 TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Demand continues to grow with regards to many of the specific research issues related to world's forest (WFSE, 2003:5). Pröbstl (2007) mentions that even though there has been considerable research into forest recreation over the years there is a lack concerning its role in tourism. Pröbstl (2007) further emphasises the need to focus on forest related nature tourism, by bringing together the best minds and the best research approaches, reflecting not only the general aspects of these functions of forests, but also the regional and local differences in different continents. Kline (2001:8), states that evaluating the existing and potential role national forests can play in attracting local and regional tourism likely would aid national forests managers in natural resource planning.

World's forests, societies and the environments are a fundamental part of the ongoing globalization process and there is need for research findings on the critical interactions between forests, society and the environment (WFSE, 2003:5). The WFSE (2003:5) further states that understanding how to integrate and balance facts and values will help to create a vision of world forests, society and the environment to support the sustainable forest management and well-being of people.

There are also not yet many studies on the benefits that forestry brings to tourism (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:8) and links between forestry and tourism are poorly understood (Tabbush, O'Brien, Hislop & Martin, 2002:49). In a conference titled "Recreation and tourism in forestry", held in Germany in May 2007, it was emphasized that specific forest

tourism studies seem limited and the following research needs were emphasized regarding forests and tourism:

- common methodology for outdoor recreation studies;
- innovative methodologies for recreation research;
- perceptions and preferences of different target groups;
- role of forests/forested lands in tourism;
- economic aspects and marketing of benefits; and
- role of forest in tourism with regard to marketing opportunities.

In some countries timber is no longer considered the primary business but instead the importance of recreational and tourism opportunities are increasing. In many circumstances nature tourism is seen as more profitable than for example farming or agriculture. There is therefore a need for research on the current and potential role of forests in the tourism sector to identify the benefits and understand the relationship they have with one another. By doing a comparative analysis, the study wishes to identify and compare opportunities and challenges faced by the tourism and forestry sectors of each country and region.

1.5.1 Problem statement

The ways in which forests are perceived and used have changed dramatically over recent years (Mery, Alfaro, Kanninen & Lobovikov, 2005), and the values of forests and woodlands for tourism are much greater and diverse than has previously been recognised (Martin, 2004:55). As a result it is realised that there is a lack of knowledge of the role of forests in the tourism sector. The study sets out, by means of a comparative analysis, to investigate the current and potential role of forests in the tourism sector and the need to understand how these relationships can be developed to deliver benefits effectively. Furthermore there has been little research which has attempted to work directly with tourism providers to understand how they value and use forests and woodlands. Finally, it is useful to understand why people visit forests and woodlands and their attitudes towards the environment and forests.

1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to do a comparative analysis of the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector in selected regions of Finland and South Africa. The study aimed specifically to examine tourism provider's perceptions and attitudes towards forests, tourism and recreation, and sustainable tourism principles. The study also examined tourist's perception and attitudes towards the environment, forests and sustainable tourism principles. Results from the study were used to formulate tourism guidelines for organisations involved in managing forest-related tourism.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- present a general picture of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries (Chapter 3);
- assess the role that forests and woodlands play in tourism and recreation in the study regions (general objective);
- understand how tourism providers in Finland and South Africa value and use forests and woodlands (Chapter 5);
- measure the attitudes of visitors towards the environment and forests, and to investigate links between visitor attitudes and behaviour (Chapter 6);
- assess to which degree tourists and tourism providers share perceptions of the importance of the fundamental principles of sustainability (Chapters 5 and 6); and
- provide guidelines and recommendations regarding the future development of forest tourism and recreation in South Africa and Finland (Chapter 7).

1.7 A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

The researcher adopted a comparative approach to the study. The researcher took part in a 5 month exchange program in Finland and was involved in field work and data collection with the aim of comparing results obtained from survey questionnaires that were administered to tourism providers in South Africa and Finland. The study wished to understand how tourism providers in selected areas of Finland and South Africa value

and use forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation. The study further aimed to present a general picture of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries.

Using selected regions in South Africa and Finland as case studies, the researcher aimed to create awareness of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries. The regions used as case studies in the present study were the Mpumalanga province in South Africa and the Oulu province in Finland. Lindstad (2002) argues that creating awareness of the differences and similarities between regions is important to understand the variations in current situations and possible effects of various initiatives discussed in regional and international processes. Font & Tribe (2000:2) further argue that it is important to highlight examples of forest sites that have managed to combine multiple uses of forests, to consider their similarities and also their individual solutions to site-specific problems.

Warwick & Osherson (1973:6) states that "comparison in its broadest sense is the process of discovering similarities and differences among phenomena". Comparative studies require a more explicit and specific elaboration and identification of the factors and issues to be discussed, and they can therefore contribute to problem selection (Pearce, 1993:25). Masser (1981:22) gives two major sets of reasons why comparative studies are important: (1) one relates to the practical value of such studies and the transfer of experience which might result; (2) the second concerns the extent to which comparisons stimulate the development of theory. Furthermore, comparative studies can serve a very useful purpose in the search for generalizations in this field by providing sounder basis for comparing like with like and by establishing more clearly the role of contextual and causal factors (Pearce, 1993:26). Pearce (1993:24) also states that offering more general comparative studies of conditions in other countries' tourist industries can provide solutions to both specific and general problems.

However, it is important to remember that a comparative study involves more than the mere juxtaposition of case studies and in order for a study to be comparative, the

analysis must draw out and attempt to account for similarities and differences (Pearce, 1993:21).

1.8 METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods approach was used for the study, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Mixed methods have evolved in order for researchers to gain fuller insights into study phenomena by drawing on features of both methodologies (Jennings, 2001:152). Mixed methodology was found to be advantageous to the study for a number of reasons:

- words, pictures and narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers;
- numbers can be used to add precision to words, pictures and narrative;
- can provide quantitative and qualitative research strengths;
- researcher can generate and test a grounded theory;
- can answer a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or approach;
- a researcher can use the strengths of an additional method to overcome the weaknesses in another method by using both in a research study;
- can provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings;
- can add insights and understanding that might be missed when only a single method is used;
- can be used to increase the generalisability of the results; and
- qualitative and quantitative research used together produce more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice.

Mixed methods are also a component of triangulation and methodological triangulation was specifically used for this study. Methodological triangulation involves researchers using several methods to gather data relevant to the study (Jennings, 2001:151). A full

description of the research instruments used for data collection and techniques of data analysis is contained in Chapter 2.

1.9 REASONS FOR SELECTING THE STUDY AREAS

The study areas were selected from regions with distinct amount of forest resources. The present study's definition of forests includes both forests and woodlands. Two areas with presumably high recreational and tourism value in Finland and South Africa were studied: the Oulu province in Finland and the Mpumalanga province in South Africa.

The highest proportion of natural forests and plantations in South Africa are situated in Kwazulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Mpumulanga. However the researcher realised that an investigation of the role of forests covering all three provinces would not have been possible and would have been too excessive in scope. The Mpumalanga province constituted the most practical and accessible choice of site for this study. Since the researcher was situated in Oulu for the 5 month period of the exchange program, the Oulu region in Finland and it's neighbouring region Kainuu constituted the most practical and accessible choice of site for the study.

In regions such as the Kainuu region, tourism is fairly new, but increasing rapidly due to the decline of other sectors such as agricultural and forestry sectors. Also the fastest growth in tourism is taking place in Northern and north eastern Finland (Tyrvainen, 2006). For these reasons it was decided that the Oulu province would be a suitable case study to compare to South Africa, Mphumalanga. National and regional data for South Africa and Finland, and the selected regions were compared with the intent to present a general picture of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN

Pizam (1994:97) explains that “a research design is a form of a carefully developed and controlled plan to carry the research investigation.” The plan is the overall scheme or program of the research and constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:146). It indicates what steps will be taken and in what sequence (Pizam, 1994:97). The research design was developed so as to comply with the aim and objectives of the study and was therefore divided into phases which correlate with the specific goals of the study. Error! Reference source not found. illustrates the phases and associated goals of the research design. The table also illustrates which chapters deal with which phase of the research plan.

Table 1-1: Research design

Phase	Design Goals	Chapter
Phase 1	• Introduction and orientation to the research theme • Problem analysis • Formulation of research problem • Aim of the study • Objectives of study	Chapter 1: Background and orientation of the study
Phase 2	• Construction of conceptual framework • Definition of key concepts • Comparative approach to the study • Research methodology ▪ Methodological triangulation ▪ Quantitative methods: questionnaires ▪ Qualitative methods: semi-structured and unstructured interviews	Chapter 1 Chapter 2: Research design and methodology
Phase 3	• Literature study of the case study areas using a comparative approach • Identifying the similarities and differences between the case study areas in Finland and South Africa	Chapter 3: Literature review
Phase 4	• Literature review on the perceptions of tourists and tourism providers towards forests, tourism development and sustainability	Chapter 4: Literature review
Phase 5	• Analysis and interpretation of the data	Chapter 5: Analysis and findings
Phase 6	• Analysis and interpretation of the data • Descriptive statistics to present findings	Chapter 6: Analysis and findings

Phase	Design Goals	Chapter
Phase 7	• Synthesise and formulation of conclusion and recommendations	Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

1.11 ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

This study is organised into seven chapters, preceded by an introductory chapter (Chapter 1). Chapter 1 provides an outline of the study and articulates the significance of the study, the research problem, the formulation of the aims and objectives and the research design. This chapter contextualizes the study and states the overall aims and goals of the study as they crystallized during the researcher's preliminary reading and consideration of the problem.

Chapter 2 outlines the research design and methodology procedures used to achieve the stated aim and objectives of the study. The mixed method approach (combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods) used in the study is discussed and the development of the measurement instrument explained. The chapter also discusses the sample design, data collection techniques and methods of analysis used in the study.

Chapter 3 addresses objective 2 of the study, which is to present a general picture of the differences and similarities between selected regions in South Africa and Finland namely the Mpumalanga and Oulu province.

Chapter 4 reviews the literature covered and provides a theoretical basis and framework for assessing tourists and tourism provider's perceptions of issues relating to tourism development, forests and sustainability principles. This chapter also assists in forming the type and design of methodological instruments to be used for the data collection of the study. It further provides the main conclusions that have been reached in the literature regarding the role that forests play in tourism and recreation, as well as environmental issues regarding forests, forest planning strategies and tourism. The

chapter highlights the considerable value and wide-ranging resources the forestry sector has for tourism and recreation. Lastly the chapter highlights the need for sustainable development.

Chapter 5 presents the analysis, interpretation and description of the main results and key findings of the part of the study that measured tourism providers attitudes towards forests, tourism and sustainability principles.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis, interpretation and description of the main results and key findings of the part of the study that measured tourists' attitudes and behaviour towards forests, the environment and sustainability principles.

Chapter 7 concludes the study and addresses the final objective of the study which is to provide guidelines, principles and recommendations that can be applied to the development of sustainable forest tourism in South Africa. The researcher discusses the value of the study and indicates the gaps that still exist and points out future research needs with regards to the development of sustainable forest tourism.

1.12 SUMMARY

The purpose of chapter one is to provide a broad orientation of the study, introducing forest tourism as a form of alternative tourism within the field of nature based tourism. The chapter contextualises the main research problem providing clear reasons for researching the topic at hand and emphasising the need for research with regards to forest tourism and recreation. The chapter also discusses the main research aim and objectives of the study. Chapter one concludes with an outline of the forthcoming chapters in the study, presenting a brief discussion on the relevance and purpose of each chapter.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter focuses on research design and methodology procedures used in this study. The chapter begins with a discussion on the purpose and nature of tourism research. A discussion of qualitative and quantitative research design and methodology follows, which is then followed by a discussion on the multidisciplinary nature of tourism and the use of mixed methodology approach (triangulation). Included are details of the population selected for the study, a description of respondents, sampling procedures, the variables investigated, quantitative and qualitative instrumentation used and the data collection methods used.

2.2 THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF TOURISM RESEARCH METHODS

Research is an important tool for the tourism industry, both nationally and internationally (Jennings, 2001:26) and as tourism continues to expand its role as the world's largest industry, it also increases the need of academic research focused on highly specific segments and impacts of tourism (Theobald, 2005:459). Theobald (2005:459) states that tourism dramatically influences the entire range of economic, cultural, environmental and even political values that in some combination constitute the modern world.

Jennings (2001:26) highlights the importance of tourism and why it is needed:

- tourism research provides information for planning and management at local, regional, state, national and international levels;
- it provides information on the social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism;
- tourism research offers insights into the motivations, needs, expectations and levels of satisfaction of tourists;

- it highlights educational needs for commercial operators and service providers;
- tourism research generates temporal views of the past, present and future; and
- it offers data for use in the business sphere, such as marketing and promotion and allows comparisons to be made and policies to be developed.

It is therefore important for research to be conducted not only by academic institutions and academics but also by commercial bodies, government agencies and managers. Gunn (1994:3) contends that because of its great complexity of social, environmental, and economic aspects, tourism requires research input from many disciplines such as marketing, behaviour, geography, anthropology, business history, planning and design and many others. Such research is valuable when it comes to better development, management, policy making, and education in this important and growing field (Gunn, 1994:3)

2.3 MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN TOURISM

Tourism can be the subject of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research (Przeclawski, 1993:13). Gunn (1994: 8) contends that the complexity of tourism demands research input from many disciplines and as a result of the nature of tourism, solutions to problems will increasingly require cooperation and collaboration of research from several disciplines. Przeclawski (1993:13), states that to obtain a more holistic, comprehensive understanding of tourism, a more integrated approach is needed. Research from wildlife, forestry, and water-resource specialists can assist in solving issues centred on attraction development and natural resources (Gunn, 1994:9).

There exists a long list of disciplines applicable to the development of new information for tourism or to the solution of tourism problems such as psychology, pedagogics, sociology, anthropology, economics, marketing, law, geography, architecture, ecology, biology and business. Some of these disciplines are discussed below in more detail:

- Business: as a discipline, increasingly recognizes the value of research, and therefore, the business sector of tourism has much to gain from research. New paradigms such as sustainable development in businesses have become an important topic of research.
- Behaviour: Research techniques are increasingly employed to provide information and explanation of what activity takes place, as well as how, when, and where. Since tourism is dependent upon people's propensity, habits, and desires, behavioural research is a major element in building new knowledge and solving tourism problems.
- Geography: is defined as "the science concerned with the spatial location, distribution, pattern, and organisation of human activities on land and space." Tourism and geography are two disciplines which are closely related to each other. Yet despite the global significance of tourism and the potential contribution that geography can make to the analysis and understanding of tourism, the position of tourism and recreation studies within geography is not strong (Hall & Page, 2006:2).

It is evident that tourism can be the subject of many separate disciplines. It has been debated as to whether tourism should be multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary in nature (Jennings, 2001; Przeclawski, 1993). Gunn(1994:9) states that tourism is a complex phenomenon and research of tourism must utilize all the disciplinary approaches that will be most useful in solving problems and in providing new information.

2.4 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

Primarily there are two classifications for research methodologies namely, quantitative and qualitative methodologies. For the purpose of the study, it was deemed necessary to adopt both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to best achieve the desired objectives which are defined below:

- Quantitative methodologies: these are grounded in the positivist and chaos theory paradigms, wherein tourism phenomenon are considered to be either linear-causal or non-linear chaotic in nature and able to be numerically measured (Jennings, 2001:152).
- Qualitative methodologies: these are grounded in the interpretive social sciences, critical theory, feminist perspectives and post-modern paradigms. The use of qualitative methodologies ensures that these paradigmatic positions can gain in-depth knowledge of tourist phenomenon being studied. The resultant data provide rich and think descriptions for analysis. Qualitative research can add totally new dimensions to an issue or question under study. Qualitative research produces for us evidence as to the world of symbolism and meaning for individuals and groups (Clarke, Riley, Wilkie & Wood, 1999:101).

There are often debates about which methodology (qualitative or quantitative) is best (Jennings, 2001:129) however, both qualitative and quantitative approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, and advantages and disadvantages (Clark, Riley, Wilkie & Wood, 1999:39). Jennings (2001:135) argues that rather than debate which is the better method or which paradigm is superior, one should rather concentrate on which methodology is the most suited for the researcher's purpose and what is the best means to achieve the aims of the research. For the present study it was decided that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods would be the best means to achieve the aims of the research and would render the best results concerning the exploratory nature of the research.

2.5 MIXED METHODOLOGY APPROACH

The concept of mixed methods refers to mixing of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in varying ways and degrees (Jennings, 2001:133). Gunn (1994:5) states that because of the great diversity of the many elements that make up tourism, problems are not resolved by only one research method and that the breadth and complexity of

tourism requires the use of many methods. A combination of methods gives a much more rounded picture of someone's life and behaviour (Gunn, 1994:5). Furthermore, the use of more than one research method to examine a particular phenomenon may improve understanding of the phenomenon and each technique may reveal facets of the phenomenon that would not be yielded by the use of alternative methods (Clark, Riley, Wilkie & Wood, 1999:39).

As mentioned by Brewer and Hunter (1989), most major areas of research in the social and behavioural sciences now use multiple methods as a matter of course. Most researchers now use whatever method is appropriate for their studies, instead of relying on one method exclusively.

The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). What is most important is that research question-research methods should follow research questions in a way that offers the best chance to obtain useful answers. Many research questions and combinations of questions are best and most fully answered through mixed research solutions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:18). There is therefore a call for mixed-methods research in tourism. Many scholars have called for mixing of quantitative and qualitative research methods as a way of enhancing the understanding of a very complex social world that confronts tourism researchers (Pansiri, 2006:1).

2.5.1 Triangulation

In order to select the best approach for the present study, the benefits and shortcomings of different methodologies were compared and considered. It was decided that an integrated approach combining elements of both quantitative and qualitative data would be used. Thus triangulation was used for the present study as this approach would make it possible to gather the most needed data in order to achieve all the objectives of the study.

Triangulation can be applied to many elements of research methods, including strategies, settings for data collection, and sources of data (Scandura & Williams, 2000: 1249). Denzin (1978: 151) distinguishes between four types of triangulation:

- Data triangulation: which draws on various sources of data in the research process.
- Investigator triangulation: refers to the employment of several researchers or evaluators in a study.
- Theory triangulation: involves researchers using several theories or perspectives to analyse data.
- Methodological triangulation: involves researchers using several methods to gather data relevant to a study.

In this particular study methodological triangulation was used. Methodological triangulation involves researchers using several methods to gather data relevant for a study (Jennings, 2001:151). Methodological triangulation involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods and data to study the same phenomena within the same study or in different complementary studies (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Scendura & Williams (2000:1250), Sieber (1973) and Decrop (2004:162) identify some benefits of using a triangulation approach:

- increased triangulation should improve the ability of researchers to draw conclusions from their studies;
- the use of a variety of methods to examine a topic might result in a more robust and generalizable set of findings (higher external validity);
- recommendations for managers could be made with greater clarity and confidence;
- triangulation can improve internal and external validity as the combination of separate research strategies in one study helps to counter the trade-offs inherent in others;
- can assist with data collection, data analysis and research design; and

- triangulation limits personal and methodological biases and enhances a study's trustworthiness.

The next section discusses the sampling, data collection and measures used in the study.

2.6 SAMPLING DESIGN AND SAMPLING METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

2.6.1 Population and sampling frame

A population comprises all the study subjects (tourists, visitors, hosts, family, friends, employees and managers) or study units (attractions, transport providers, accommodation facilities) that are the focus of the research project (Jennings, 2001:136). In this study the target population consisted of:

- tourism providers in the Oulu Province of Finland;
- tourism providers in the Mpumalanga province, South Africa; and
- tourists who were taking part in tourism and recreational activities in the province of Mpumalanga.

The specific identities of the respondents were unknown and because of the absence of a sampling frame and the high costs involved in compiling a sampling frame, it was not practically feasible for the researcher to use a probability sampling method. A non-probability sampling method was used. More specifically a purpose sampling method was used as the main sampling method for both tourism providers and tourists. Tourism providers were chosen according to certain criteria. For this study the tourism providers chosen were required to have the following characteristics:

- Tourism providers chosen had to be:
    - Accommodation providers
    - Activity providers
    - Tour operators

- Tourism providers needed to be situated outside of conservation areas.
- Tourism providers needed to be situated in/near forest and woodland areas.

Tourism providers in Mpumalanga were chosen from the list of tourism providers advertised on the Mpumalanga Tourism website as well as all tourism providers that could be found advertised on the internet (provided they matched all the criteria mentioned above). Tourism providers in the Oulu province were chosen from the list of tourism providers advertised on the different tourism websites of the regions in the Oulu Province.

E-mail surveys were administered to the tourism providers in Finland. This method was the most applicable method as the researcher was based in South Africa and it was therefore not possible to hand the questionnaires out personally in Finland. In order to get the highest possible response rate, the researcher followed up on those tourism providers that failed to answer the questionnaire by sending a second e-mail and a third one if necessary. A combination of handed out surveys and electronic surveys were administered to the tourism providers in South Africa. Each tourism provider was contacted via telephone prior to sending the email surveys to explain to them what the study was about and to receive permission to send the email surveys to them. This ensured the highest possible response rate as all the tourism providers who were contacted confirmed that they would answer the questionnaire. If the questionnaire was not sent back within a week, the tourism providers were contacted again to ensure responses were received from each tourism provider.

Tourists were selected from the tourism providers' establishments that took part in the first questionnaire. Permission was obtained from the selected tourism providers before administering questionnaires to the tourists. Tourists were asked to read an attached consent form indicating their willingness to participate in the study by signing the form. Only those potential respondents who signed the consent form were asked to complete the self-completion questionnaire.

While taking field notes and doing observations in Finland for the period of 5 months, the researcher also conducted a semi-structured interview with the Land-use and Environment manager of Metsähallitus. The interview aimed to discuss issues such as how the recreational and other uses of forests are valued against wood production in Finland, what type of management is favoured, the impacts of tourism and recreation in forests and what the key challenges and opportunities are regarding forestry and tourism in the region (See Appendix D).

2.6.2 Sample size

This study aimed to achieve a sample size of 100 respondents. The researcher wished to achieve a target sample size of 50 Finnish tourism providers and 50 South African tourism providers. For the questionnaires handed out to tourists, the researcher wished to achieve a target sample size of 80 tourists who were taking part in tourism and recreational activities in the Mpumalanga province. The final realised sample included a total of 76 usable questionnaires (consisting of 45 South African and 31 Finnish tourism providers), representing a 76% response rate. The final realised sample for the survey administered to tourists included a total of 43 usable questionnaires, representing a 54% response rate.

2.7 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

For both quantitative and qualitative data collection, the sample was selected from the following categories:

1. The chosen tourism providers answered a self-administered questionnaire. For this study the tourism providers were required to have the following characteristics:

- Tourism providers included:
    - Accommodation providers
    - Activity providers
    - Tourist attractions

    - Tour operators
- Tourism providers needed to be situated outside of conservation areas.
- Tourism providers needed to be situated in/near Forest and woodlands areas.

2. Tourists visiting tourism establishments in the region were chosen to complete the visitor survey. Tourists were only approached at those tourism establishments that had taken part in the tourism provider questionnaire.

Table 2-1 provides a demographic profile of the respondents who participated in the study. The sample was slightly dominated by female respondents (58%). The majority of the respondents fell in the 16-24 (49%) category and were working full-time (86.05%).

Table 2-1: Demographic profile of tourists (n=43)

Travel behavior variables	n	%
Type of trip:		
On a short trip (of less than 3 hours) from home	7	17.07
On a day out (of more than 3 hours) from home	12	29.27
On holiday away from home staying in the area	21	51.22
On holiday visiting friends and relatives in the area	1	2.44
Total	**41**	**100**
Distinguishing tourists from leisure day visitors:		
Leisure day tourist	19	46.34
Overnight tourists	22	53.66
Total	**41**	**100**
Type of visit:		
Specifically set out to only visit the forest and woodland area	7	16.67
Visit forest and woodland area as part of trip combining more than one activity	26	61.90
Did not set out to visit forest and woodland area but decided to visit site on passing	9	21.43
Total	**42**	**100**
Number of people traveled with:		
1 - 5	28	70
6 - 10	4	10
11 - 15	8	20
Total	**40**	**100**

Travel behavior variables	n	%
Duration of trip:		
Number of nights staying in the area:		
1	2	7.69
2	18	69.23
3	2	7.69
4	1	3.85
5	3	11.54
Total	**26**	**100**
Number of times the forest and woodland area was visited:		
1	8	36.36
2	13	59.09
3	1	4.55
Total	**22**	**100**
Employment status:		
Working full-time	37	86.04
Working part-time	1	2.33
In full-time higher education	4	9.30
In further education or training	1	2.33
Total	**43**	**100**
Nationality:		
South African (Total)	**39**	**90.68**
Gauteng	18	41.86
Mpumalanga	10	23.25
Limpopo	2	4.64
Cape	1	2.33
Other (province not mentioned)	8	18.6
Other African countries		
Swaziland	1	2.33
Overseas (Total)		
Italy	**3**	**6.99**
Moscow	1	2.33
Asia	1	2.33
Total	1	2.33
	43	**100**

2.8 METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION USED IN THE STUDY

The initial questionnaires were pre-tested using a convenience sample of 10 Finnish tourism providers and 10 South African tourism providers. For the survey sent out to

tourists, the initial questionnaires were pre-tested using a convenience sample of 8 tourists in Mpumalanga.

In order to gather information on tourism providers perceptions of the role that forests play in tourism and recreation (in South Africa), 80 surveys together with unstructured personal interviews were carried out in the Mpumalanga Province over a four month period (November 2007 to February 2008). In order to gather information on tourism providers perceptions of the role that forests play in tourism and recreation in Finland, 70 e-mail surveys were sent to tourism providers working in the Oulu and Kainuu regions. The data collection was carried out over a three month period during the months of August, September and October 2007. Due to a low response rate, the questionnaires were then translated into Finnish and administered again in the months of February, March and April 2008. Follow-up e-mail surveys were sent out to those respondents who had not returned their surveys within a one-week period.

In order to gather information on tourist's travel behaviour, motivations and perception of issues pertaining to the environment and sustainable tourism, 80 questionnaires were administered to tourists who were taking part in tourism activities or recreation in the Mpumalanga Province. The data collection was carried out over a three month period during the months of November 2007, December 2007 and January 2008. No incentives were provided to respondents to complete the questionnaire.

Because of the relatively high response rates, it was decided that the final samples would be fairly good representations of the regions. The next section summarizes the primary and secondary research methods used for the data collection.

2.8.1 Primary research methods for data collection

Primary research methods for data collection consisted of:

- A questionnaire to tourism providers in Finland and South Africa: A Likert scale questionnaire survey was the main instrument provided for this study to assess tourism provider's perception of the role of forests and woodlands in tourism, how

they use and value forests as well as their perceptions on tourism development in the region and the importance of sustainability principles (See Appendix A).

- A questionnaire to tourists in the Mpumalanga Province: A second questionnaire was designed to measure tourists travel behaviour as well as their perception of forests, the environment and the importance of sustainability principles (See Appendix B).
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted, providing qualitative insights. A semi-structured interview was conducted with a state organisation in Finland (See Appendix D).
- Participant observation: the researcher made a number of visits to the forest and woodland areas in the Mpumalanga and Oulu Province and conducted conversation with various tourism providers and stakeholders in the region.

2.8.2 Secondary research methods for data collection

Useful information was obtained from various publications such as textbooks, journals, government publications, conference proceedings, reports, visitor record books, yearbooks, unpublished manuscripts and the World-Wide-Web (internet).

2.9 DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT USED IN THE STUDY

There were two main measurement instruments used in this study. One measurement instrument was designed to assess tourism provider's perceptions of how they value the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sectors in selected regions of South Africa and Finland. The second measurement instrument was designed to measure tourists' travel behaviour as well as there perceptions towards forests and the environment. Both questionnaires included a likert-type scale aimed at measuring tourists and tourism providers' perception of the importance they place on sustainability principles.

2.9.1 Questionnaire 1: Questionnaire to tourism providers in selected areas of Finland and South Africa

The questionnaire that was administered to tourism providers in Finland and South Africa consisted primarily of Likert-type scales where the respondents were asked to either indicate to what extent they agree with certain statements regarding the role of forests in the tourism sector in a 1 to 5 point Likert-type scale (where '1' means the respondent strongly disagrees and '5' means the respondent strongly agrees); or they were asked to indicate the importance of several issues in a 1 to 5 point Likert-type scale (where 1 = not important and 5 =essential). The scale was designed to elicit respondent's opinions on a range of issues relating to tourism development, forests and the environment; and sustainability.

Listed below are 24 statements which were used to measure the perceptions of tourism providers. The first 11 statements were used to measure respondents' perceptions towards the role and value of forests in tourism and recreation. The last 13 statements were divided into 3 categories which were contextualised within the Likert scale questionnaire and were used to measure tourism providers perceptions regarding tourism development in the area. The three categories included (1) perceptions of positive aspects of tourism development in forest and woodland regions; (2) perceptions of tourism impacts on the environment and (3) perceptions towards tourism and the local community.

Statements regarding perceptions towards the role and value of forests in tourism and recreation

- Forests attract tourists to visit
- Partnerships working to integrate different aspects regarding forests and the tourism sector is necessary in delivering sustainable development
- Forests are an important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism activities in the area

- Forests are valuable in terms of extending the length of time people stay in local tourism areas
- Involvement of tourism role players in forest management ensures a better link of facilities and services with tourism providers
- Forests play an important role in determining the identity of local tourism destinations
- Forests are valuable in terms of extending the length of the tourist season
- Increased environmental awareness results in more measures being taken to protect the forests
- There is too much deforestation taking place in the area
- Plantations do more harm to the environment than good
- The community is involved in decision making with regard to forest tourism

Statements regarding perceptions of positive impacts of tourism development in forest and woodland regions

- Tourism improves forest and landscape management
- Tourism promotes nature conservation
- Tourism can act as a key driver for the protection and enhancement of the forests in the area
- Tourism has contributed to the conservation of the forests in the area

Statements regarding perceptions of impacts of tourism on the environment

- Tourism activities cause pollution in the region
- Tourism activities cause an increase in waste production
- Tourism creates too much pressure on the environment
- Tourism results in the loss of biodiversity (flora and fauna) in the region
- Tourism results in the degradation of forests and woodlands in the region
- Tourism providers are aware of environmental issues

Statements regarding perceptions towards tourism and the local community

- There is a need to increase local community participation in the area
- The local community is aware of the impact of tourism in the natural environment
- Further tourism development is beneficial to the community and should be encouraged

Respondents were also given the opportunity to add comments regarding the role and perceived value of forests in the tourism sector at the end of the questionnaire in the form of an open-ended question.

2.9.2 Questionnaire 2: Survey to tourists in the Mpumalanga region

The second questionnaire measured tourist's travel behaviour as well as their attitudes towards the importance of forests and environmental values.

Travel behaviour

Respondents were asked 12 questions pertaining to their travel behaviour. The survey included questions pertaining to the type of trip they were taking, duration of trip, how often they visited forest and woodland areas, reasons for taking their trip, the activities they took part in while on the trip and whether they would visit the site again.

Forest Importance Scale

The most common way to measure attitudes is to use psychometric scaling techniques: measures which allow the individual to evaluate belief statements on an ordinal scale ranging from a strongly positive response to a strongly negative response (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003). To investigate attitudes towards forests, "The Forest Importance Scale" (FIS) was used. All scale points were labeled ranging from 1 ("Strongly disgree") to 5 ("Strongly agree"). No scale items were reverse-scored. **Table 2-2** lists the statements that were used for the present study.

Table 2-2: The FIS attitude scale items

	Statement
1	Forests are an important part of our national heritage
2	Forests for recreation and leisure are important for the well-being of the nation
3	Our landscape would look just as beautiful even if there were no forests
4	We should view the wildlife and plants in our forests as a national treasure
5	Forests offer me little or no opportunities for leisure and recreation
6	Visiting forests is important for my well-being
7	I feel perfectly safe when visiting forests
8	Forests make great holiday destinations for me and my family

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated in order to assess the internal consistency reliability. In the analysis three of the FIS items “Our landscape would look just as beautiful even if there were no forests”, “Forests offer me little or no opportunities for leisure and recreation” and “I feel perfectly safe when visiting forests” did not increase the reliability of the scale, therefore they were removed. The final Cronbach Alpha for the total scale was 0.66 which was deemed acceptable for the study. The final scale used is displayed in **Table 2-3.**

Table 2-3: The FIS attitude scale items used in the questionnaire

	Statement
1	Forests are an important part of our national heritage
2	Forests for recreation and leisure are important for the well-being of the nation
3	We should view the wildlife and plants in our forests as a national treasure
4	Visiting forests is important for my well-being
5	Forests make great holiday destinations for me and my family

To confirm the external validity of the test, the results were correlated against a behavioural indicator. For this study the frequencies of visits to forest areas were correlated against the results under the hypothesis that those with a positive attitude towards forests should undertake more frequent trips. The correlation with the frequency of forest visits showed that those who scored highly on the attitude scale also visited forests more frequently (Spearman rank correlation coefficient (SR) = 0.39, n = 43, P =

0.07. Correlations were significant at the 95% level. This is comparable to previous studies (Hill et al 2003:120).

The General Awareness and Consequence Scale

The General Awareness and Consequences (GAC) environmental attitude scale was used to measure general attitudes towards the environment using a 6-item scale. These environment values were evaluated on the premise that they are a contributory factor to general attitudes towards forest use. All scale points were labelled ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree"). Some of the item statements were expressed positively while some were expressed negatively. This was done in order to encourage respondents not to respond automatically, but to think about every item. No scale items in the General Awareness and Consequence scale were reverse-scored. **Table 2-4** lists the statements that were used for the present study.

Table 2-4: The GAC environmental attitude scale items used in the questionnaire

	Statement
1	Environmental protection will help people have a better quality of life
2	A clean environment provides me with better opportunities for recreation
3	Environmental protection will provide a better world for me (and my children)
4	Forests and woodlands are not essential to maintaining a healthy planet earth
5	Environmental protection is beneficial to my health
6	Environmental protection does not benefit everyone

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated in order to assess the internal consistency reliability. The final Cronbach Alpha for the total scale was 0.66 which was deemed acceptable for the study.

Importance of sustainability principles

The sustainability principles scale was included in both measuring instruments. The researcher aimed to compare tourists and tourism providers perception towards the importance placed on the principles of sustainability. Kaae (2001:291) highlights the

importance of the sustainable approach to tourism and states that it is relevant to the industry which needs to ensure its long-term viability to:

- resource managers, who need to secure the natural and cultural resource base;
- to local residents to ensure that their quality of life is maintained;
- and to the tourists, who prefer to maintain quality experiences in the destination that match their intrinsic motivation and recreation needs.

Respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point likert-type scale (where 1 = not important and 5 = essential) how important they feel the principles of sustainability are. Sustainability criteria often used in tourism include environmental, social, economic, educational and local participatory aspects (Mowforth & Munt, 1998). The environmental, social, economic, educational and planning issues included in this study have been structured into 12 principles of sustainable tourism. The 12 sustainability principles included in the study can be seen in **Table 2-5** below.

Table 2-5: Sustainability principles included in the study and their primary focus

Sustainability principle	Primary focus
Sensible use of nature resources	Environmental
Reduction of consumption and waste products	Environmental
Maintain diversity of plants and animals	Environmental
Studies of environmental and social impacts	Environmental and social
Responsible marketing of tourism	Environmental and social
Support of local economy	Economic
Tourism supports improvements in the area	Economic
Cooperation with local residents	Local participation
Consultation of interest groups including stakeholders	Local participation
Integration of tourism into local, regional and national planning	Planning
Information and nature interpretation for tourists	Educational
Training of staff	Educational

Source: Kaae (2001)

As the principles for sustainable tourism have already been grouped into 6 subdivisions, it was not possible to perform a factor analysis of data. This is comparable to previous research which used the same scale (Kaae, 2001).

Demographic variables

The questionnaire also contained questions to determine a respondent's age, gender, employment status and nationality (see Appendix B, questions 16, 17, 18 and 19).

2.10 DATA ANALYSIS OF LIKERT SCALE QUESTIONNAIRES

The Likert scale format was used for both questionnaires and respondents were asked to rank their responses to the questions according to this Likert scale format. This would make it possible to do the required analysis. The responses were coded and numerical codes were assigned for each response for the purpose of the analysis. Univariate and bivariate data analysis was then performed.

2.10.1 The analysis of univariate data used in the study

In order to analyse single variables, univariate data analysis was performed. Descriptive statistics enable the researcher to describe trends in the data and also to determine whether relationships exist between variables (Ramchander, 2004:121). For this study, the research made use of the following descriptive statistics:

- the calculation of frequencies and percentages expressed as tables, charts and graphs;
- measurements of the mean, used for ordinal and interval variables; and
- measurement of the standard deviation of the measurements.

2.10.2 The analysis of bivariate data used in the study

It was necessary to conduct bivariate analysis (i.e. analysis of two variables) in order to test for correlations and to test the significance of a difference between means.

The t-test was used to test the theoretical framework on which the study was based so as to determine whether there were significant relationships or differences among group mean totals, item mean scores and independent variables. Independent variables considered in the analysis were tourists' age, gender and trip type.

2.11 RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

Veal (1992:37) defines reliability as the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research were to be repeated at a later date or with a different sample of subjects. This was achieved by the following means:

- The anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents for both research instruments used in the study was ensured so that they were able to provide information for use strictly for the purpose of the study.
- The researcher did all the field work and administering of questionnaires herself which ensured that the discussion level was high and relevant to the study.

2.12 DESCRIPTION OF THE QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY USED IN THE STUDY

2.12.1 Case study

The researcher used two case study regions as part of the qualitative part of the study and the research design was further strengthened by examining two countries and regions to introduce a comparative dimension. Case studies have the following advantages over other types of research designs (Black & Champion, 1976:91):

- they are flexible with respect to data-collection methods used;
- they may be conducted in practically any kind of social setting; and
- they are inexpensive.

Furthermore the study introduced a comparative dimension within a case study to provide a focus for interpretation and analysis by comparing tourists and tourism providers' perceptions towards the importance of sustainability principles.

2.12.2 Semi structured personal interview

The researcher was given permission for recordings to be made during an interview with the land-use and environment manager at Metsähallitus. Metsähallitus is a state-owned enterprise that manages most of the protected areas of Finland and supplies wood to the country's forest industry. The interview was conducted for the purpose of getting a better understanding of the management structure and recreational and tourism use of forests in Finland. The respondent was assured that the information recorded would be used only for the purpose of the study.

The interview was based on an interview guide made up of a written list of questions and topics that needed to be covered in a particular order (See Appendix D). Semi-structured interviews can be very useful as they allow full exploration of the topic but at the same time retain a degree of structure, which ensures that most of the information obtained is relevant and manageable (Veal, 1997).

The qualitative data collected during the interview was coded and repeated themes and concepts were recorded. The recorded interview was then transcribed and coded into themes that were established in the interview guide. During the interview, the researcher clearly explained the purpose of the interview and assured the respondent that the information recorded would only be used for the purpose of the study.

2.12.3 Participant observation

The researcher made notes on observations in the field and conversations with various tourism providers during visits to Mpumalanga towards the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008. In the present study, the researcher also assumed the role of a tourist by staying at various accommodation establishments in the case study areas in both Finland and South Africa. In Finland, the researcher undertook a hike and various

recreational activities that took place in forests and in South Africa the researcher undertook various walks, hikes and stayed at various establishments in the case study areas. This allowed the researcher to undertake various conversations with other tourists and tourism providers. The researcher did all the field work and data gathering; and this ensured that the discussion level was high and relevant to the study and the process of analysis was ongoing.

2.13 SUMMARY

Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the choice of methodology used to conduct the present research. The range of methods and approaches that were applied fall within the paradigms of both quantitative and qualitative. The research supported the approach with a detailed description of the use of triangulation and its benefits. Lastly, the method of sampling, data analysis and the choice of statistics and data analysis used were discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 3: FOREST TOURISM IN SELECTED AREAS OF SOUTH AFRICA AND FINLAND: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

To exist as a nation, to prosper as a state, and to live as a people, we must have trees.

Theodore Roosevelt

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to achieve the second objective of this study, namely to present a general picture of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries with regards to the forestry and tourism sectors within each case-study region. This comparison illustrates the complexities and challenges associated with forests, tourism and the forestry industry in each country. The study also wishes to, through clarification of issues and the classifications produce a basis for further research in the field of nature-based tourism, specifically forest tourism. The chapter begins with a description of each study area followed by a discussion on specific issues relating to tourism and forestry in the regions.

3.2 CASE STUDY AREA 1: MPUMALANGA PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa

South Africa is a country, with about seven percent forest cover (Cashore, not dated), and consists of three main components namely (DWAF, 2005:2):

(i) savannas,

(ii) indigenous forests, and

(iii) plantations.

One third of South Africa is Savanna and approximately 9,2 million people live in South Africa's savanna areas, and depend upon the goods and services that they provide for some component of their livelihood (DWAF, 2005:2). Savannas are the largest biome in South Africa, and are characterized by a co-dominance of trees and grasslands thus contributing the bulk of the wooded land area of South Africa (Shackleton, 2006:561). **Table 3-1** presents some basic forest and economic statistics about South Africa.

Table 3-1: South Africa: Forest and economic statistics

South Africa	
Total area	122.3 million ha
Indigenous/natural Forested area	504 803 ha
Woodlands/Savannas	29 million ha
Plantations	1.4 million ha
Population	44 819 755
Population density (persons/km^2)	39/km^2
GDP per capita (billion $)	576.4
Unemployment rate (%)	28.2

Indigenous forests cover an area of 533 000 hectares (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:11), and almost three-quarters of these forests are conserved either as declared State forests or within formal protected areas (DWAF, 2005:2). Relatively few people live within these forests, but communities living nearby extract multiple resources for subsistence and income generation. Many of these communities have submitted claims under the Restitution of Land Rights Act (1994) for parts of these forest lands (DWAF, 2005:2). Land ownership of natural forests in South Africa is not known directly, however it is assumed that forest patches which do not have some form of protection have either communal or private ownership. Almost half of all natural forests in South Africa are found on private property or land under communal tenure (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:16).

The South African forestry industry is predominantly based on plantation forestry (Ham, 2004:2). Plantations cover an estimated 1.37 million hectares of South Africa (Institute of

Natural Resources, 2005:4) and over 80 percent of them are found in three provinces: Mpumalanga, Kwazulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape (DWAF, 2005:2). SAFCOL, the South African Forestry Company is charged with the management and development of the state's investment in forestry (South Africa.info, 2008)

Komatiland Forests (Pty) Ltd is a subsidiary of SAFCOL (The South African Forest Company) that operates 18 commercial plantations comprising a total surface area of 187 320 hectares in Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. It also consists of 60 000 hectares of unplanted natural vegetation that comprises a mixture of prime grassland, indigenous forests and wetland. Komatiland is actively involved in various environmental and conservation forums and conservation NGOs with the objective of contributing to the conservation of biodiversity. There are also various rare, threatened and endangered species which occur on the forestry land and specific management regimens are implemented to benefit of such species. The public is allowed access to afforested land by means of a network of ecotourism facilities such as hiking trails and day-visitor sites (Komatiland, 2005).

Trees outside forests are often referred to as woodlands. In South Africa, these woodland areas make up 27 percent woodland cover (Cashore, not dated) and are an often over-looked component of the national forest resource (DWAF, 2005:4). However, much of the agricultural landscape in South Africa is derived from natural woodland, and trees on farms represent an important asset for many farmers. DWAF (2005), states that the scale of active management of such trees is poorly known and perhaps the least well-understood component of forestry in South Africa. In a report by the Forest Policy and Environment Group it was emphasized that despite South Africa’s considerable woodland resource, benefits for the poor and forest livelihoods still remain little understood (ODI, 2002:22).

Trees are also a significant feature in villages, towns and cities throughout the country, where they make an important contribution to the well-being of the urban population (DWAF, 2005:4). Plantations and natural forests are recognized as playing a strategic

role in addressing some of the biggest challenges in South Africa, namely poverty reduction and job creation (Institute of Natural Resource, 2005:3).

Approximately two million households depend in some degree on forest goods, primarily for fuel wood, but also for additional medicinal and food supplies for their well-being. On the other hand, commercial forestry, non-timber forest products from plantation forests and the growing ecotourism industry offer employment as an escape from poverty for many families (Ackerman & Boshoff, not dated:8).

3.2.1 Growth prospects for forest based tourism in South Africa

Tourism is a key growth sector in the South African economy (DWAF, 2005:13). Forests and woodlands contribute significantly to South Africa's remarkable range of fauna and flora, and many national parks and eco-tourism ventures use forests and woodlands (DWAF, not dated). In a study done by the DWAF in 2005, it was estimated that 200 000 people were employed in the game park and ecotourism industry with regard to forest based conservation and tourism and it was identified that there are rural employment and ownership opportunities.

Lawes, Mander & Cawe (2000) point out that the tourism potential of forests is only limited by their relatively small area and fragmented nature. Tourism and conservation industry based on woodlands and indigenous forests offers substantial growth prospects, both in terms of employment and the establishment of small scale enterprises. Linked to this is a growth opportunity in local woodcarving and woodcraft products (DWAF, 2005:15). Nature-based tourism offerings such as ecotourism and adventure tourism offer a valuable income generating alternative to rural communities in areas where there exists very few economic development options (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005).

Lawes et al., (2000) further states that in order to develop the forest-based ecotourism potential in South Africa to the full, and ensure optimum, sustainable development in a forest area, the following points are important:

- The development of the industry should be seen as a long-term, dynamic process.
- Provision should be made in forest management systems, within the framework of approved policy and management objectives of a particular forest area, to accommodate the demand for forest-based ecotourism ventures in the long-term.
- To ensure the optimal use and development of an area for outdoor recreation and ecotourism, co-operative working relationships between managers of state-owned forest land and private entrepreneurship is essential.
- Forest-based ecotourism cannot be developed in isolation.
- Forest-based outdoor recreation facilities and ecotourism ventures cannot be developed in isolation from ecotourism initiatives in other biomes or settings, especially where forests are fragmented.
- As wide a variety of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities as possible should be developed in a management area or unit to ensure that it is financially viable.
- Good marketing and publicity are essential, not only to attract more visitors to specific facilities, but also to keep visitors in the region for a longer period.
- Active community participation is essential for the development of projects to ensure stakeholder support and benefit-sharing.

3.2.2 Mpumalanga Province

Although the highest proportion of natural forests are found in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga also has extensive natural forest and plantation resources and seven percent of the South African population is resident in the province (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:11). Mpumalanga is South Africa's dominant forestry production area, and approximately seven percent of Mpumalanga is covered by commercial plantations, representing more than 40% of the entire country's forested areas (MII, 2003). **Box 1** summarizes some basic information about the Mpumalanga province.

Box 1: Mpumalanga province: Basic information

Region:	Mpumalanga province
Surface:	79 490 km^2
Forest area:	34 542 hectares
Main type of forest:	Mpumalanga Misbelt, Afromontane forests
Ownership:	85.4% Private/communal ownership, 3.3 % National, 11 % Provincial
Population:	3.5 million
Activities for tourists:	Mountain and quad biking, horse trails, river rafting, big game viewing, adventure trails and hiking, agricultural tourism, arts and crafts, fishing and hunting, industrial tourism, water adventure and boating
Number of visitors per year: 1.1 million	
Type of visitors:	Adventure tourists, eco-tourists, sport enthusiasts, families, young tourists, nature-lovers, foreign tourists, business tourists
Unemployment rate:	37%

The forest biome occurring in Mpumalanga is recognized as the Mpumalanga Misbelt Forest. In Mpumalanga forests generally occur along the steep south- or east-facing slopes on the Escarpment (Emery, Lötter & Williamson, 2002:28). The total coverage of Afromontane forests for South Africa is 276 819 hectares, of which 14.6% occurs in Mpumalanga and a total of 0.51% of Mpumalanga's land surface is covered with indigenous forests (Emery, Lötter & Williamson, 2002: 32). The following utilisation activities take place along the escarpment (DWAF, 2002):

- collection of firewood by the local rural population;
- collection of medicinal plants and bark from selected indigenous trees in accessible areas;
- poaching of animals by the local rural population; and
- outdoor recreation (hiking trails, picnic sites, camps and forest drives).

The forestry industry and forest products make a vital contribution to Mpumalanga's overall economic performance and development. In Mpumalanga eight percent of the total population are reliant on the forestry industry for economic support (Edwards, 1998: 1). In the future, it is expected that the primary economic sectors will remain to be manufacturing, mining, agriculture, forestry and tourism (MII, 2003).

3.2.3 Demand for nature based tourism in Mpumalanga Province

Mpumalanga is one of South Africa's top tourist destinations, the landscape being characterized by mountains, panoramic passes, valleys, rivers, waterfalls and forests (SA-Venues, not dated). The tourism market in the province has been identified as one of the key sectors to Mpumalanga in terms of economic growth, job creation and the eradication of inequalities and poverty (Mpumalanga Provincial Government, 2007). Furthermore, it contributes significantly to the fastest growing segment of tourism in South Africa, which is ecotourism (Cowden, 2005). In 2005 total foreign direct spending in tourism related activities contributed approximately seven percent towards provincial GDP (Mpumalanga Provincial Government, 2007:19).

Every year, many people visit the Mpumalanga province to experience outdoor adventure, waterfalls and forests (Naidoo, Molobelo & Partners, 2003:41) and the tourism infrastructure for the international market has been growing (Mpumalanga Provincial Government, 2007:21).The National Forest Recreation and Access Trust promote access to and use of forests for recreation, education, culture or spiritual fulfilment (Balzer, 2007). **Figure 3-1:** Map of South Africa and Mpumalanga Province is a map of South Africa and the Mpumalanga Province.

(Source: Rainbow Nation, 2009)

Figure 3-1: Map of South Africa and Mpumalanga Province

3.2.4 Challenges and constraints

There are many key challenges and constraints facing the forestry and the tourism sectors in Mpumalanga, some of which are identified and discussed below.

SAFCOL, the company that owns the Komatiland Company, was under threat of being privatised, however it was confirmed in 2006 that the company would remain in the hands of the state. There still remains a threat of the company going into private ownership, which would be detrimental to the existence of the Komatiland Project, the only company which provides ecotourism opportunities for tourists in plantation areas in Mpumalanga (and partly in indigenous forests as well).

Threats to forestry in South Africa are arising from both direct and indirect human interventions. Increasing poverty, over-utilization, HIV/Aids and climate change are some of the greatest challenges and the greatest influences on the state of forests as reported by The Natural Resource Institute in 2005 (The Natural Resource Institute, 2005).

There is still much information lacking and research needed regarding the forestry sector in South Africa. Emery, Lötter & Williamson, (2002:32) identified the following forest research needs for the Mpumalanga province:

- maintenance of a database and GIS coverage listing and demarcating all the indigenous forests within Mpumalanga;
- determining the impact and distribution of alien vegetation on indigenous forests;
- determining which forest species are utilised by rural communities, and for which broad purpose (building, food, medicine, etc);
- evaluating the impact of selective bark harvesting, specifically the supply and demand of bark products;
- determining the impact of recreational activities on selected indigenous forests; and

- incorporate and assess existing data according to current National Forest Classification that is underway.

While there is relatively extensive information accessible for the plantation sector, largely from annual reports prepared by organizations such as Forestry South Africa; there is very limited and in some cases no information available for certain indicators in the condition of natural forests and also little information is available that is directly related to the social aspects (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:2). There is also limited information on the ecosystem values attached to South Africa's forests. While some estimates have been made, they have not apportioned what fraction of the benefits is captured exclusively or primarily by rural communities and what proportion by society at large (DWAF, 2005:7).

The 1996 White Paper on Sustainable Forest Development in South Africa and the National Forests Act (1998) provide the framework for sustainable development, co-operative governance and stakeholder participation, however, implementation of these broad statements of intent remains a challenge in South Africa, especially with regard to ensuring that the benefits of forestry benefit the poor to a much greater degree than has happened in the past (DWAF, 2005:4). Another challenge, especially for government, is identifying where the balance should lie between support for the commercial wood sector on the one hand and the broader, non-timber economy on the other, as both deliver benefits to the poor (DWAF, 2005).

Conserving the biodiversity within the country's forests is linked to the livelihoods of many people. However, there is a weak knowledge base on the status of this biodiversity in both savannas and indigenous forests of South Africa (DWAF, 2005:8). It is also emphasized that it is not just the numbers of species that is important, but the broader goods and services provided by biodiversity such as cultural and aesthetic services, recreation and tourism services, regulating ecosystem resilience and providing nutrient cycling and water regulation. These are all essential for the human life and well-being of the community (DWAF, 2005:8).

The way land reforms and restitution are implemented will have a significant impact on forests and woodlands throughout Southern Africa (African forestry and wildlife commission, 2004:6). Although many communities have submitted claims under the Restitution of Land Rights Act (1994) for parts of these forest lands, the pace of land restitution has been slow and there is uncertainty about when claims will be resolve (DWAF, 2005:2).

3.2.5 Summary

It is evident that forests and woodlands in South Africa provide a diverse range of activities and services to the population. Even though the forest environment makes up a small area in South Africa, these environments are extremely important for social, economic, environmental, cultural and spiritual reasons.

Both the forestry and tourism industries in Mpumalanga play a vital role in economic development and job employment and there is an increasing recognition especially of the considerable non-consumptive use potential of the forests particularly for eco-tourism ventures. However in order to ensure sustainable development in the region, it is vital that the benefits from both industries reach all stakeholders especially the local community. The challenge remains in improving cooperation between the two industries and equitably unlocking these opportunities.

3.3 CASE STUDY AREA 2: OULU PROVINCE, FINLAND

Finland

In Finland, forests have always played an exceptionally important role in social, economic and cultural development (METSO, 2006:1) and are among the most intensively managed in the world (Finland Association for Nature Conservation, 2004). Liisa Mäkijärvi, the Chief executive of The Finnish Forest Foundation describes the essence of Finnish forests (Hautala, Lehtinen & Rautiainen, 2002): “Forest, Finland’s biggest natural resource is an innate part of the Finnish identity. The sustainable care

and use of the forests is the guiding principle behind a broad network dedicated to the promotion of economic, social and cultural sustainability without which Finland would not be Finland".

Forests in Finland cover 23 million hectares (76 %) of the land area and are the primary habitat of almost half of the country's species diversity, the most common tree species of these boreal forests are pine, spruce and birch (Harkki, 2004:3). **Table 3-2** presents some basic forest and economic statistics about Finland.

Table 3-2: Finland: Forest and economic statistics

Finland	
Total area (km^2)	338,144 km^2
Indigenous/natural Forested area	20 000 000 ha
Population	5.25 000 032
Population density (persons/km^2)	16/km^2
GDP (billion $)	171.7
Unemployment rate (%)	6.9

Similar to South Africa's Komatiland Company, Metsähallitus (the Finnish Forestry company) has a business unit called the Wild North which is responsible for nature tours and activities all over Finland. In the past 10 years it has become one of the most successful international wilderness tour operators in Finland (Villi Pohjola, 2008).

3.3.1 Importance of nature-based tourism in Finland

The nature tourism sector and total demand and supply for nature-based activity services has risen rapidly during the last ten years in Finland; and is still growing rapidly (Aarne, Hänninen, Kallio, Kärna, Karppinen, Ollonqvist, Packalen, Rimmler, Toppinen, Kajanus, Matilainen, Rutanen, Kurki, Peltoniemi & Saarinen, 2005:175, Komppula, 2006). Because of the rapid decline in the importance of agriculture and forestry in rural and peripheral areas, the development of tourism has been considered as an alternative for enhancing economic wealth particularly in northern Europe (Törn, Siikamäki, Tolvanen, Kauppila & Rämet, 2008:8).

Natural environments, such as the lakes, the archipelago, the forests and the fell areas, constitute the major tourism attractions for people coming to Finland. These extended forests, rivers and lakes allow for a great variety of nature-based activities such as hiking, picking berries, collecting mushrooms, rock climbing, fishing, kayaking, sailing, snow scooter driving, bird watching, dog sledding and hunting, making Scandinavia a unique region from a nature-based tourism perspective (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:4).

In 1999, 3.4 million foreign travelers visited Finland and 20% of them in some action related to nature. In 2003 the Council of State adopted a Decision in Principle on an Action Programme for Developing Recreation Use of Nature and Nature Travel. It has been estimated in the programme that the number of jobs in the business may be doubled through development actions and will reach 64 000 jobs by 2010 (Hytönen, 2006:47).

Finland's national parks, wilderness areas and national hiking areas also play an important role in tourism and recreation, in addition to their primary purpose of nature conservation (Pouta, Sievänen & Neuvonen, 2004:347). The general perception has been that nature conservation and tourism and recreation can be done side-by-side in the same areas (Pouta, Sievänen & Neuvonen, 2004:347). Most companies operating are relatively new and it has been estimated that the employing effect of nature tourism was 32, 000 people in 2000 and by 2010 it could be even as much as 64,000 people (Aarne et al. 2005).

The current status of nature tourism in Finland shows that (METLA, 2004:6):

- forty percent of the adult population takes nature trips (one overnight included);
- on average nine trips per year/person;
- total amount of 14 million trips annually;
- of the 4.9 million foreign visitors, 25 % take part in outdoor activities;
- nature is the main reason mentioned by foreign visitors for choosing Finland as their travel destination;

- strong regional interest for creating new employment opportunities in rural and peripheral areas; and
- program for developing nature tourism and recreation aims at 100% increase in employment opportunities within the sectors by 2010.
- Forty percent of Finns do eco-travelling (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:4).
- Ninety percent of the destinations are forests (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:4).

In the field of nature tourism there are a lot of different terms of which some are not yet quite established. In Finland, the mostly used terms are nature tourism, ecotourism, environmental friendly tourism, sustainable tourism and forest tourism. Nature tourism is tourism, where essential aspects are related to nature (Saarinen 2001). Forest tourism as a term refers to tourism, which aims to introduce different ways of using forests for forestry (Turunen, 1995).

Recreational use of forests is significant in Finland and it includes all kinds of non commercial outdoor activities in forests such as walking, hiking, skiing, cycling, boating; as well as swimming, short camping, picking up berries and mushrooms, fishing and all the other activities related to nature, bird watching and hunting (Pouta & Sievänen 2001).

In recent years, public, scientific and governmental interest in ecotourism in Scandinavia has grown substantially (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:4). Ecotourism is traveling based on nature, when the purpose of the trip is somehow to use the recreational values of forest. Ecotourism is also related to trips to nature conservation areas. Special themes for ecotourism are fishing, hunting and birdwatching. Natural tourism on the other hand concentrates on traveling to the summer houses and cottages (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:4).

3.3.2 Oulu province

The province of Oulu is divided into two regions: Northern Ostrobothnia and Kainuu regions. **Figure 3-2** is a map of Finland and circled in red is the Oulu province which includes the two regions. These two regions will be discussed in more detail in the next section. **Box 2** contains some basic information about the Oulu province.

Box 2: The province of Oulu: Basic information

Region:	Province of Oulu
Surface:	61 582 km2
Forest area:	23 500 km2
Main type of forest:	boreal coniferous forests
Population:	215 000
Activities for tourists:	hiking, cross-country skiing, cultural activities, boating or canoeing, cycling, fishing, trekking, husky rides, snowmobiling, camping, horse-riding, Nordic walking, cross-country biking, cross-country running
Number of visitors per year:	1 300 248
Type of visitors:	business tourists, nature tourists, families
Unemployment:	13.8%

(Source: World-geographics.com, 2008)

Figure 3-2: Map of Finland and Oulu Province (Oulu and Kainuu regions)

3.3.3 Northern Ostrobothnia: Oulu province

The Oulu region belongs to the northern boreal coniferous forest zone. Tourism is an important industry for the Oulu province, creating income and employment opportunities for many (Oulu Regional Business Agency, 2006). According to the survey on the income and employment created by tourism in 1998, the direct income in the Oulu province was about € 126 million, and the indirect income was about € 59 million, altogether with a total of € 185 million (Oulu Regional Business Agency, 2006).

The Council´s work on behalf of tourism industry is based on Tourism Strategy 2006–2013 in the Oulu province which emphasizes the importance of the four most important tourist centres, Ruka, Iso-Syöte, Hiekkasärkät and the city of Oulu. The Strategy also points out the need to promote the importance of tourism at the regional level in order to have it better acknowledged and represented in decision making organizations and significant projects (Council of Oulu Region, not dated). The central market segments of tourism in the Oulu province are, meeting and congress tourism, and business and family travel. However, the number of nature enthusiasts and nature tourists are increasing rapidly (Oulu Regional Business Agency, 2006).

Impact of tourism on the income of the Oulu province in 2002 was Є511 million. The impact on income is expected to total Є767 million in 2013. A Total of 6 410 people were employed by tourism in the Oulu province in 2002 and the employment of the tourism industry is expected to rise up to 8 345 people by 2013. Total registered nights in Oulu province in 2005 was 1 300 248, of which the share of overseas tourists was 14,5 %. Total registered nights are expected to total 1 754 500 in 2013, of which the share of overseas tourists will be 18,5 % (Council of Oulu Region, not dated).

3.3.4 Kainuu region

Kainuu is a region in Finland located in the Oulu province and it borders the regions of Northern Ostrobothnia, North Karelia and Northern Savonia. The administrative capital is Kajaani. Kainuu's landscape includes hills, lakes and vast expanses of uninhabited woods and 95% of the land area is forest (Barents, 2008). Currently the population is in

decline mainly because the traditional livelihood is agriculture which is not very profitable any more in that region. The economy of Kainuu is also driven by the lumber industry, which employs eight percent of the workforce in the region (Barents, 2008).

There are about 15000 forest estates in Kainuu out of which only about 1200 still practice agriculture or farming. The decline of agriculture and farming in the Kainuu region has resulted in the area needing to find new sources of income for the area. This has resulted in increasing importance of other sources such as processing of organic and natural products; adventure, nature travel and ecotourism, and utilization of renewable energy forms, such as forest energy, in the future. The fastest growth of nature tourism is in northern and north eastern Finland which includes the Kainuu region (METLA, 2006:18) and the possibilities of developing nature travel further in the area are good. The work is carried out for example through pilot project for Kainuu nature travel (Ministry of Agriculture and forestry, 2006:22).

3.3.5 Challenges and constraints

The Finnish forest sector is in a period of transition due to recent and anticipated changes in the global operating environment and in the Finnish economy and society at large (METLA, 2006:4). Also due to globalisation the Finnish forestry is facing new challenges and there are consequent requirements for improvement in cost efficiency that need to be balanced with the multiple needs of people and society (Nuutinen, 2006:30). Furthermore, activities take place increasingly in timber production forests which remains a challenge to current forest management practices (METLA, 2007).

The following key issues were identified by Metla (2007) as challenges for the future with regards to tourism and forests:

- A need to adapt forest management in key tourism areas to meet the environmental needs of clients
- Use of forests based on ‘everyman’s right’ and in tourism entrepreneurship has to be clarified

- A need to develop forestry education to address recreation, tourism and landscape management aspects and
- A need to combine nature conservation and tourism goals in establishing new areas.

METLA (2006) also emphasized the need for new types of agreements and markets between entrepreneurs and private landowners to achieve mutual benefits in tourism development. Furthermore it was pointed out that a more flexible system of subsidies for private forest owners should be developed; the financial support should cover also landscape management measures needed in tourism development areas.

Information basis for nature tourism in Finland is limited and there is a need for more comprehensive information for example on social and economic impact of nature tourism for decision-making (METLA, 2006:27). In particular, with the growth in international nature-based tourism and the supply of nature-based tourism services in Northern Finland, there will be a need to develop high-quality tourism environments (METLA, 2006:7). The increase of the supply and diversity of nature-based tourism services in Finland will bring about income-earning opportunities and boost employment however all these changes will also bring some ecological, social and cultural challenges.

3.3.6 Summary

Tourism and recreation in Finland has increased considerably and specifically the value of nature based tourism in Northern Finland is increasing rapidly. It is evident that tourism is an important industry for both the Oulu and Kainuu regions. Since the rapid decline in the importance of agriculture and forestry in some regions, tourism development has been considered as an alternative means to enhance economic wealth especially in Northern regions such as the Kainuu region. The “everyman’s right” makes it easy for anyone to access forests in the Finland however there is still a substantial amount of information needed regarding nature tourism in Northern Finland.

PICTURES OF FOREST BASED TOURISM AND RECREATION IN THE MPUMALANGA AND OULU PROVINCE

Mpumalanga Province

Indigenous forests in Sabie nearby the Mac Mac Falls

Some of the adventure activities available in the areas managed by the Komatiland Project

A picnic site in the forests in Sabie managed by the Komatiland Project

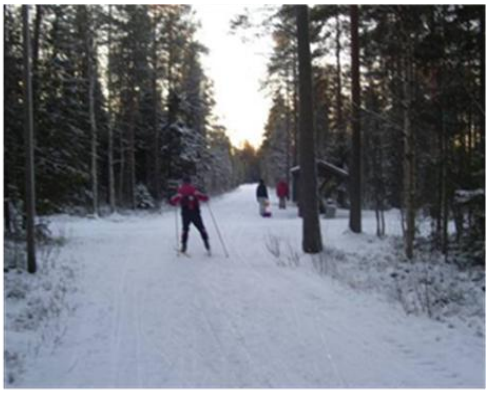
Grassland restoration areas which the Komatiland Project manages

(Source: N Lenhard, 2008)

Figure 3-3: Pictures of forest and woodland areas in the Mpumalanga Province

Oulu Province

Sunset in a forest next to a lake in the City of Oulu



A local person skiing through the forests in Oulu

Cross-country skiing over a lake

View of the forests and lakes in Oulu, at the Oulu University campus

Local children getting ready for a picnic in the forest

Metsähallitus: Administration building

(Source: N Lenhard, 2008)

Tourists hiking through forests during mid-winter in Northern Finland

(Source: N Lenhard, 2008)

Figure 3-4: Pictures of forest and woodland areas in the Oulu Province

3.4 FOREST POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

South Africa

There has been many significant changes in South African forestry over the past decade (DWAF, 2005:4). New forest policies place greater emphasis on identifying and increasing access to multiple resources from forests, as well as the relationship between people, resources and the environment. These forest policies are intended to strike a new balance and be supportive of both forests and people (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:64).

South Africa adopted a policy on Sustainable Forestry Development in 1996 (Ackerman & Boshoff, 2004:8), which addresses the sustainable development of the country's 1,5 million hectares of plantation forests, the 420,000 hectares of indigenous closed-forests and the 32-40 million hectares of woodlands (DWAF, 2004:3). In 1997 South Africa's National Forestry Action Program was developed as a result of recommendations of the intergovernmental Panel on Forests and is recognized as the most suitable planning process for sustainable forest development and implementation of Agenda 21 (Ackerman & Boshoff, 2004:8). Special provision is made in the NFAP to clarify land tenure and forest rights; which includes access rights, and creates the instrument of Community Forest Agreements (United Nations, 2006).

After 1994, the White Paper on Sustainable Forest Development in South Africa and the 1998 National Forest Act moved government's role away from managing State forests to promoting the needs, interests and participation of rural communities in forest management (DWAF, 2005:4). The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) has responded to this new policy context with a range of initiatives and in 2003 produced a Vision Statement to guide its forestry activities: "Forests are managed for people and we need to create an enabling environment for economic and social development through sustainable forestry, especially at the local level". This enabling environment concerns the extent to which relevant policy and legislation promote positive outcomes for the poor; how accessible and tailored the bureaucratic procedures

are; and how responsive the market structure and system is to the needs of new entrants or small-scale producers. The Vision implies a significant departure away from DWAF's previous role of forest manager to one that puts people at the centre of all its activities (DWAF, 2005:4).

A range of policies and regulations guide the management and conservation of natural forests and plantations in South Africa. They also guide tenure, utilization, and distribution of benefits from natural forests and plantations (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:25).

Finland

In Finland, during the past decade, the general framework of forestry has dramatically changed and multi-objectivity has become typical of current forest policy. This means that forests should produce reasonable incomes while at the same time promoting conservation and recreational considerations (Kangas, not dated:36). In Finnish forest policy, specifically the relative importance of recreation and tourism has increased (METLA, 2006:3).

Finland's National Forest Program 2010 is seen as an important tool for directing and promoting economically, ecologically and socially sustainable development in the forest sector (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2005). The National Forest Program is a strategic action plan approved by the Council of State and aims to develop the management, use and protection of forests as one entity, as an extensive forest sector (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2006:6). The National Forest Program can be seen as a continuation of the policy process and stakeholder co-operation, which has facilitated Finland to create one of the most competitive forest industry clusters in the world during the past 20 years (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2005).

The regional forest programs are led by the Regional Forestry Centre and supported by the Regional Forestry Council and are the corresponding regional element to the National Forest Program (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2006:6)

Forestry research in Finland is moving away from its focus on growing tree stands and forest management towards a more customer-orientated research approach that serves the policy and economic sectors (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:95). In a report conducted in 2005 which presents the findings of an interim evaluation of Finland's National Forest Programme 2010, stakeholder groups emphasized the need for more research being done in the following areas:

- trends and changes in the supply and demand of the recreational use of nature;
- diversification of logging methods and research into silviculture that employs alternative procedures;
- evaluation of the benefits of forests that are not connected with wood production; and
- compatibility of reindeer husbandry with forestry.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (2007:95) further emphasizes the need for research to be developed in chemical forest industry, wood products industry, recreation and ecotourism, and natural products industries.

3.5 FOREST OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Throughout the world the paradigm has shifted away from 'protection through exclusion' towards participatory management approaches (UNFF, 2004:5). Participatory Forest Management (PFM) is a loosely used term to define approaches to forest management centred on the creation of partnerships between government and local people, based on the sharing of benefits and management responsibilities (UNFF, 2004:5). South Africa and Finland have both adopted a participatory approach with regard to forest management.

South Africa

In South Africa a participatory forest management approach was introduced to help address inadequacies and injustices of traditional "top-down" approaches to forest

management (UNFF, 2004:5). It has had mixed success because the transfer of rights to users has not accompanied changes in policy (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:64). However, participatory initiatives are still considered as the way forward for forest management in South Africa (Grundy & Michell, 2004).

According to the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, significant progress has been made in implementing the system of participatory forest management (DWAF, 2002:90). The DWAF aims to ensure that South Africa's forests are managed in a sustainable manner and that they contribute as much as possible to social and economic development. The forestry programme oversees, regulates, protects and manages both indigenous and commercial forests and offers support to rural communities in managing forest resources. The indigenous Forest Management sub-programme manages large areas of South Africa's indigenous forests (DWAF, 2002:90).

Management of woodlands is to a greater or lesser extent done by institutions, such as Provincial Department of Agriculture and/or conservation, NGOs, and landowners. There is also an overlap between DWAF's mandate and that of other departments, such as DEAT (in terms of setting aside land for conservation and reporting on the state of the woodlands) and DoA (in terms of providing extension services and support to land owners and communities) (NEPAD-CAADP, 2007:2).

Finland

In Finland, the aim of forest management is to safeguard the production of high-quality round wood, the biodiversity of forests and the preconditions for the multiple functions of forests (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:13). Within the limits permitted by the law, forest owners make decisions regarding all measures undertaken in their forests and cooperation among forest owners also aims at long-term sustainable forest management (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:12).

Forests in Finland are mainly owned by private people and families (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:11) and Finnish forestry is commonly termed family forestry as small-scale forestry run by ordinary families (The Nordic, 2006). Over half of

Finland's forests are in small private holdings (54 %), while a significant proportion is owned by the state (33 %). Only a small amount is owned by companies (8 %) and by other owners such as municipalities and the church (5 %) (Finnish Forest Research Institute, 2003). In Southern and central Finland, about ¾ of all forests are in private ownership and State forests are for the most part situated in northern and eastern Finland (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:12).

Forest-related services and the use and maintenance of non-wood products are a natural component of forest management in Finland (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:6) Non-wood forest products can have considerable importance locally and for individual households, although value of forest services and non-wood products is slight compared to the sales value of timber nationally. Economically the most important non-wood products of forests are environmental tourism and game (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2007:6).

3.6 RURAL AREAS

It is well recognized that forests and forest products add to the well-being and at times the very survival of millions of rural poor throughout the world (Shackleton, 2004). Many rural service sectors today are growing in size, changing in composition and diversity. They are exporting services and are "basic" economic sectors in recreation and tourism, health services, construction or retirement and transfer incomes (Kennedy & Thomas, 1996:31).

Tourism is the world's largest and most rapidly growing industry and according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), about 10% of the world's gross national product (GNP) was based on tourism in 1996 and about 10% of the world's employed population worked in the tourism sector. Therefore, tourism is an increasingly important element of the rural economy (Tabbush, O'Brien, Hislop & Martin, 2002:44) and is seen as an interesting new livelihood for many people living in rural areas, both in developed and developing countries (Kajanus, 2001:4). In fact, in many regions of developing

countries, but also in peripheral areas in developed countries, the possible income from nature based tourism is often higher than the direct income from forestry or agricultural land use (Pröbstl, 2007).

South Africa

In South Africa approximately 44% of the population lives in rural areas (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:28). Tourism is the fastest growing economic sector in South Africa contributing over seven percent of national GDP and is especially a major source of employment in rural areas (DWAF, 2005:7). The majority of forest areas in South Africa are located within these rural areas where forestry plays an important role in the creation of economic activities and is therefore positioned as a potential key player in rural poverty alleviation (Shackleton, 2004). In many respects, Southern Africa's forests and woodlands are regarded as the poor people's safety net, providing as much as 35% of rural household income, and natural products are often essential for the survival of rural peoples (Cavendish, 1999:31).

These forests are a key resource for tourism in the region and for the country as a whole. Although much of this value is captured by large commercial operations and not by poor rural communities directly, these commercial tourism enterprises are a valuable source of employment. In addition, this sector provides infrastructural investment in remote areas, where few economic alternatives exist for local communities (DWAF, 2005:7).

Finland

Finland is one of the most rural countries in the EU, with only a fifth of the population living in urban areas and many of the urban dwellers own rural land or have part-time rural pursuits (Nylander, 2001:77). In addition to culture and rural people, water bodies, forests, landscapes and four distinct seasons are the main elements of the image of rural tourism in Finland. Rural areas are going through a profound economic conversion, and the services are growing weaker, however, in spite of these things nature tourism is a growing business (Maukonen, 2006:18).

In Finland the tourism industry is still fairly young and of minor significance (Kajanus, 2001:4). However nature-based tourism is increasing rapidly and the possibilities of nature-based tourism is seen as promising (Kajanus, 2001:4), especially in regions such as Kainuu, where agricultural and farming services are decreasing and other forms of services are need.

For a long time already tourism has been considered one of the few possibilities to maintain employment in the rural areas. Similar hopes are also shared elsewhere in the world (Havai, not dated). To ensure that forestry continues to play an increasing role in the alleviation of rural poverty the impact of forestry on the rural poor should be evaluated over time in terms of access and benefits, job and wealth creation, benefits to the disadvantages, women and disabled and the distribution of costs and benefits (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:29).

However, in many rural regions the key development areas have been identified as forestry and tourism, which often have to be pursued in the same areas and therefore means that heavy forest management practices may be in use also in tourism development areas (Tyrväinen, Silvennoinen, Nousiainen & Tahvanainen, 2001:134).

3.7 ACCESS TO FORESTS

For public to benefit from recreational and tourism use of forests and woodlands, they must have access to these spaces. Also, the recognition of community property and access rights is an important prerequisite for participation by users in forest management (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:72). Forestry can only be considered socially sustainable if the access needs of many different sections of society are catered for (Tabbush, O' Brien, Hislop & Martin, 2002).

South Africa

In South Africa the policy regarding access to state forests for outdoor recreation, education, culture or spiritual purposes has been revised and now provides a new framework to accommodate changes in the national forest policy. This policy is based on international forest policy, as well as current trends and developments in tourism and outdoor recreation (CD:DWAF, not dated). According to the policy and sections 19 and 20 of the National Forests Act, 1998 (NFA), all people have the right to reasonable access to State forests, for the purposes provided for in this policy. Access to state forests for outdoor recreation, education, culture or spiritual purposes, is recognised as one of the accepted multiple uses of State forest land, but these rights of people to access the State forests are subject to certain conditions and restrictions (CD: DWAF, not dated).

Finland

In Finland the right of public access has largely shaped the development of recreation and nature tourism (Tolvanen, Rämet, Siikamäki, Törn & Orell, 2004:264). Outdoor recreation and more passive enjoyment of the outdoors are essential components of the 'way of life' in the Nordic countries; and public access seems to be of utmost importance in Scandanavia with regard to quality of life linked to aspects such as exercise and relaxation, as well as emotional and social perspectives on contact with nature (Kaltenborn, Haaland & Sandell, 2001:419).

Traditional customs in Finland provide that everyone should have equal access to recreational uses of nature. The public right of access to nature, which is called "everyman's right", guarantees wide access to all commercial forests in Finland (Finnish Forest Research Institute, 2005:174). When nature is used in accordance with "everyman's right", no permission is needed to enter the area, nor can a fee be demanded for using it (Pouta, Sievänen & Neuvonen, 2004:347), therefore people are not very used to paying for common land recreational services (Finnish Forest Research

Institute, 2005:174). This right is enjoyed equally by all Finns and citizens of other countries (Pouta, Sievänen & Neuvonen, 2004:347).

However, with the growing commodification of nature and tourism activities, debates about the right of public access have increased. It is argued that the growing tourism industry, particularly nature-based tourism will pose a threat to opportunities for outdoor recreation and to the quality of environmental conditions (Kaltenborn, Haaland & Sandell, 2001:429).

3.8 SUMMARY

Forests are widely recognized as providing a range of essential goods and services (Shackleton, 2006:1) both in Finland and South Africa. It is evident that the value of forest ecosystem services in South Africa and Finland are very high however there are many gaps in scientific understanding and few practical solutions to reconciling the conflicts that arise from the competing values that different user groups ascribe to different forest services (Gonzalez et al. not dated).

This chapter highlights some important challenges for both countries and recognizes the lack of research and information regarding certain issues in tourism and forestry. Gonzalez et al. (not dated:588) states that reliable and comprehensive data and information are essential for determining forest conditions and trends and for development of national and international forest policies. Furthermore it is important to conduct continuous research on the impacts of tourism and forestry to ensure that the environment is managed sustainably.

Both South Africa and Finland recognize the need for sustainable development in the forest sector and have adopted policies that highlight the multiple resources that forests offer. New forest policies have been implemented in order to be more supportive to both forests and people highlighting the important relationship between people, resources and the environment. But it is still uncertain in certain regions whether the multiple

resources are being used optimally to ensure benefits reach all the stakeholders. Furthermore, it is questioned what is the value of non-timber forest services such as tourism and recreation when compared to the value of timber. Specifically the value of ecosystem services in South African forests is unknown.

Both South Africa and Finland have adopted a participatory management approach towards forest management, however this management approach has had mixed success in South Africa but is still considered the way forward. The participatory approach has been successfully implemented in Finland and is the preferred approach to forest management. There is much information found on the multiple uses of Finnish forests however not much information was available on current levels of multiple uses of forests in South Africa.

Forest ownership in South Africa differs considerably from Finland's. While the majority of forests are privately owned by people and families in Finland, in South Africa forests are predominantly owned by the state.

Even though the precise patterns and trends differ among continents, countries and regions (Buckley, 2003:1), many of the issues pertaining to tourism development and the natural environment in Finland and South Africa are very similar. The rising importance of non-timber forest goods and services, including tourism and recreation, as well as protection of biodiversity, are leading to higher actual or potential benefits for those living in or near the forest (Barents Euro-Arctic region, 2001:26). In both South Africa and Finland, the benefits of forests and woodlands to the natural environment and rural communities are extremely important. Tourism is an increasingly important element of economic development especially in rural communities and it is realized that the possible income from nature based tourism is often higher than the direct income from forestry or agricultural land use.

CHAPTER 4: ATTITUDES TOWARDS TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I never before knew the full value of trees. Under them I breakfast, dine, write, read and receive my company

Thomas Jefferson

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical bases and framework for assessing tourism providers' perceptions of the role that forests play in tourism and recreation and the benefits that tourism and recreation has to forest and woodland environments. The study also assesses tourists' perceptions and attitudes towards forests and the environments as well as their travel behaviour.

The chapter begins with a discussion on the relationship between tourism and the natural environment, and then focuses specifically on forest and woodland environments. An extensive literature review discusses visitor attitudes and behaviour towards the environment and forests and includes social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism towards the environment. This is followed by a discussion concerning the attitudes that tourism providers have towards the role of forests and woodlands with regards to tourism and recreation. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the notion of sustainable tourism and sustainable forest management.

4.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

There has been much research and literature written on the relationship between tourism and the natural environment (Romeril, 1985; Mieczkowski, 1995; McCool & Moisey, 2001; Meyer-Arendt, 2004; Hall & Page, 2006). Tourism is largely dependent on the natural environment and its resources (Gössling & Hall, 2006:1), as natural

environments provide the resource base essential for many forms of tourism, particularly nature-based tourism and ecotourism (Leung, Marion & Farrell, 2001:22). Furthermore, tourism is the only economic sector that offers the natural environment as a crucial part of its product (Mieczkowski, 1995:11), and therefore environmental quality itself is essential for all forms of nature tourism (Mihalič, 2006:112).

The tourism-environment relationship is often referred to as a symbiotic relationship as each is dependent upon the other for maintaining a balance (Page & Connell, 2006: 374). Shaw & Williams (2002:296) state that there is a general assumption that the relationship between tourism and the environment is fundamental, with a strong element of mutual dependency. Mathieson and Wall (1982:97), commented that in the absence of an attractive environment, there would be little tourism and further states that the environment is therefore the foundation of the tourist industry. Successful tourism development therefore depends on the proper handling of the relationship between tourism and the environment (Tuohino & Hynönen, 2001:1).

Shaw & Williams (2002:296) points out that as a result of such perspectives; there has been a rapid take-up of the concepts of sustainability and ecotourism, with the aim of securing this symbiotic relationship. Many countries and regions around the world are now focusing on the supply of an ecotourism product as a means of tourism development (Fennell, 1999; Garrod and Wilson, 2003). The environmental movement has boosted awareness of the importance of natural resources for tourism development and business (Buhalis & Costa, 2006:112) and the environment represents not merely a constraint for tourism development, but a resource and an opportunity (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:347).

In both South Africa and Finland, the natural environment is a crucial part of the tourism product, attracting thousands of tourists every year. Schoemann (2003:116) contends that South Africa's diverse resources makes the country ideally suited for nature-based tourism such as ecotourism. Similarly Finland's main tourism product is its abundance of natural and unspoiled environment and nature is the main reason mentioned by foreign

visitors for choosing Finland as a travel destination (Finnish Tourism Board in Tyrväinen, 2004).

In particular there is an increase in adventure tourism in both countries. Buckley (2003:2) highlights that there is an increasing demand for commercial outdoor adventure activities worldwide. Forest lodges that previously offered nature walks as their only visitor activity have now installed canopy cables, and national parks are under pressure to host multi-sport endurance races (Buckley, 2003:2). However with the increase in visitor numbers conflict might arise between different user groups for example between hikers and horse-back riders. Tourism providers need to be aware of the different user groups and activities which are offered in the regions in which they operate.

Tourism based on natural environment has become a huge international industry with major economic, social and environmental consequences at both local and global scales (Buckley, 2003:1). It is therefore of great importance to understand the relationships between recreation, tourism and the environment so that ways can be identified of managing resources in harmony with the attractiveness of many of the recreational and tourist activities (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:314). It is however difficult to generalize on the relationship between tourism and the environment. The relative importance of each influential factor varies with the location and situation, and negative effects need to be balanced against positive impacts (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:326).

4.3 THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM AND RECREATION

Tourism is an activity that impacts on the physical, socio-cultural and natural environments (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:313) and therefore cannot be studied in isolation from the complex economic, environmental, political and social environments in which they occur (Mason 2003). The increasing attention given to the impacts that tourism and recreation may have on the environment is partly a response to the growth of tourism and the impact that increased numbers of visitors will have on specific sites.

The environmental impacts of recreation and tourism vary with the type of activities offered at a destination. The nature and degree of the environmental impact of recreation and tourism appear to depend on the interaction between usage rates (including both intensity and frequency), site specific vegetation, climate and edaphic factors (Sun & Walsh, 1998:325). So it is important to know the types of activities that occur in sites where tourism takes place such as forests and woodland areas (Sun & Walsh, 1998:325).

Research on the physical impacts of tourism and tourism development on the environment is still at a relatively early stage of development and presents an important area of future research, particularly with respect to sustainable tourism development (Gössling & Hall, 2005). An important concept that is mentioned and dealt with in many previous studies of environmental impacts of tourism and recreation is carrying capacity, which has become an important concept in developing nature-based recreation and tourism management plans (Sun & Walsh, 1998:325). There are four types of carrying capacity namely (Holden, 2008:188):

- economic carrying capacity – the extent of the dependency of the economy upon tourism;
- psychological carrying capacity – the expressed level of visitor satisfaction associated with the destination;
- environmental carrying capacity – the extent and degree of impacts of tourism upon the physical environment; and
- social carrying capacity – the reaction of the local community to tourism.

However, the carrying concept has shown to have many constraints (Fennell: 2008:63). One problem that has been identified in previous studies is that despite the limitations on numbers of tourists visiting an area, visitation annually increases beyond these limits because tourism is seen as the solution to the economic despair in developing countries (Fennell, 2008:63). Various other models and planning and management frameworks have been developed such as the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS), the limits of

acceptable change (LAC), the visitor impact management (VIM) process and the visitor activity management process (Fennell, 2008:66).

Kline (2001:8) contends that the increasing recognition of the role of national forests as tourism destinations may imply a need to expand traditional outdoor recreation planning to include enquiry into the economic, social, and ecological impacts of tourism. Furthermore a more comprehensive coverage of environmental issues is needed at a time of pollution, depletion of natural resources, deforestation and rising environmental consciousness (Kuvan & Akan, 2004:692). The emerging view is that continued tourism development will only be sustained by the recognition of the interdependencies that exist among environmental and economic issues and policies (Dowling in Douglas, Douglas & Derret, 2001:287).

4.4 FOREST AND WOODLAND ENVIRONMENTS

"…we expect far more of our forests than previous generations…" (Mery et al., 2005:8)

According to the World Bank, 1.6 billion people rely heavily on forests for their livelihood and both natural and planted forests make an important contribution to national and local economies (Mery et al., 2005:7). Society's demands for goods and services from forests and the forest sector are changing and growing (Schmithuesen, 2002:1). Changing demographic factors such as urbanization and changing age distribution is likely to have an important impact on the world's forests, through changes in demand for agricultural and forest products and services (WFSE, 2003:12). Furthermore, WFSE (2003:12) highlights that there has been a gradual decline in the percentage contribution of the forest sectors production activities due to services increasingly dominating the global economy.

It is difficult to define exactly what "forests" are due to varying climatic, social, economic and historical conditions and there is no single agreed definition to date (Gonzalez et al., not dated:590; Prasad, 2006:12). Mery et al (2005), refer to forests as complex

ecosystems which sustain livelihoods and provide a range of products and environmental services. The Global Biodiversity Outlook (not dated: 91) defines forests as “ecosystems in which trees are the predominant life forms” and further notes that because forests occur in many different ecosystems, at different densities, and in different forms, a more precise definition remains elusive. In context of this study, “forests” are defined broadly to include both trees and woodland areas in the study regions.

4.4.1 Benefits of forest and woodland environments

The benefits of forests and trees to the natural environment and rural communities are well known throughout the world, including in South Africa and Finland and these benefits span the social, aesthetic, health, environmental and economic spheres (Shackleton, 2006:1). Bishop (1998:1) states that human demands on forests are changing rapidly due to the increasing awareness of the important environmental benefits forests provide. Also, the desire for a more equitable distribution of the benefits from forests is emerging as an important guiding principle among decision makers in many parts of the world. These benefits affect a wide range of different groups.

Society

Society as a whole benefits from the many environmental services that forests provide (Mery et al., 2005:17). Forests also provide non-market benefits such as recreational benefits, enhancement of landscape and biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. These have economic value, but are often harder to quantify: they do not produce direct revenues, but provide benefits in terms of quality of life (Dickie & Rayment, 2001:4).

Households, communities and local and national governments who use forest products

Forests are important for the products and services they supply and increases in both population and wealth have led to an increase in demand for the products and services of the forest (WFSE, 2003:16). Rural communities are particularly dependant on forest

resources (Gonzalez et al., not dated). Forest ecosystems serve important ecological functions and provide wood and numerous other products that contribute significantly to human well-being at local, national and global levels (Gonzalez et al., not dated).

Forest and wood related enterprises

Timber and wood-processing industries provide jobs and are important contributors to the national economies of many countries (Snowdon, not dated). Research shows that forests supply about 5000 different commercial products and the forestry sector contributes about two percent of global GDP (FAO 1997). Other benefits for local economies, for example through timber processing and marketing, tourism, and in aiding regeneration: revenues are produced elsewhere in the timber industry and in other local businesses (Dickie & Rayment, 2001:4). Forests provide amenity services that attract people to visit forests and these visits involve expenditure that generates income for local businesses and supports employment and economic output (Snowdon, not dated).

Conservation and recreation groups (Mery et al, 2005:17)

Forests offer recreation and constitute an important potential for tourism (Anon, 2002:5). Forests are an intrinsic part of all cultures with a forest heritage and occupy a central position in the daily lives of many people (WCFSD, 1999:20). Plant species of importance for tourism usually have aesthetic, nutritional or medical properties, for example in Europe flowering plants covering forest floors attract a large visitor numbers in spring, while in autumn, mushroom collection has great touristic appeal (Gössling & Hickler, 2006:97). Forests as the venue for outdoor recreation offers substantial benefits for society (WFSE, 2003:32) and because forests are popular for walks, nature observation and outdoor activities, including extractive activities such as picking mushrooms or berries, hunting or fishing; forest-related activities might often be the last 'authentic' links that people in industrialised countries have to the natural environment (Gössling & Hickler, 2006:102). Furthermore, access to State forests for participation in nature-based activities provides individuals, groups and communities with a variety of

experiences through which they learn about the environment, forest management and conservation (NSW, 2005-2009).

Ultimately everyone has an interest in forests, whether as consumers of forest products, as beneficiaries of the general development which forests support, or for the environmental services which forest provide (WCFSD, 1999). It is clear that the value of forest ecosystem services is very high (Gonzalez, not dated:588) and it is therefore essential to safeguard the functions of forests, which require an integration of the environmental, economic and social benefits derived from forests (WCFSD, 1999).

4.4.2 Managing forests for multiple-use

Forest goods and services are derived from plantations, natural forests and woodlands (FAO, 2002), and fall into two broad categories namely (1) the direct use value of a resource as an input or consumption good, its indirect use value through protection or sustaining economic activity; (2) and its non-use value to people who derive satisfaction from the mere existence of a resource (Bishop, 1998:2). These direct and indirect use values are illustrated more clearly in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1: Forest values and valuation techniques

	Use Values		Non-use Values
Values Techniques	**1. Direct** • Wood products (timber, fuel) • Non-wood products (food, medicine, genetic material) • Educational, recreational & cultural uses) • Human habitat • Amenities	**2. Indirect** • Watershed protection • Nutrient cycling • Air pollution reduction • Microclimatic regulation • Carbon Store	**3. Existence** • Biodiversity • Culture/heritage • Intrinsic worth

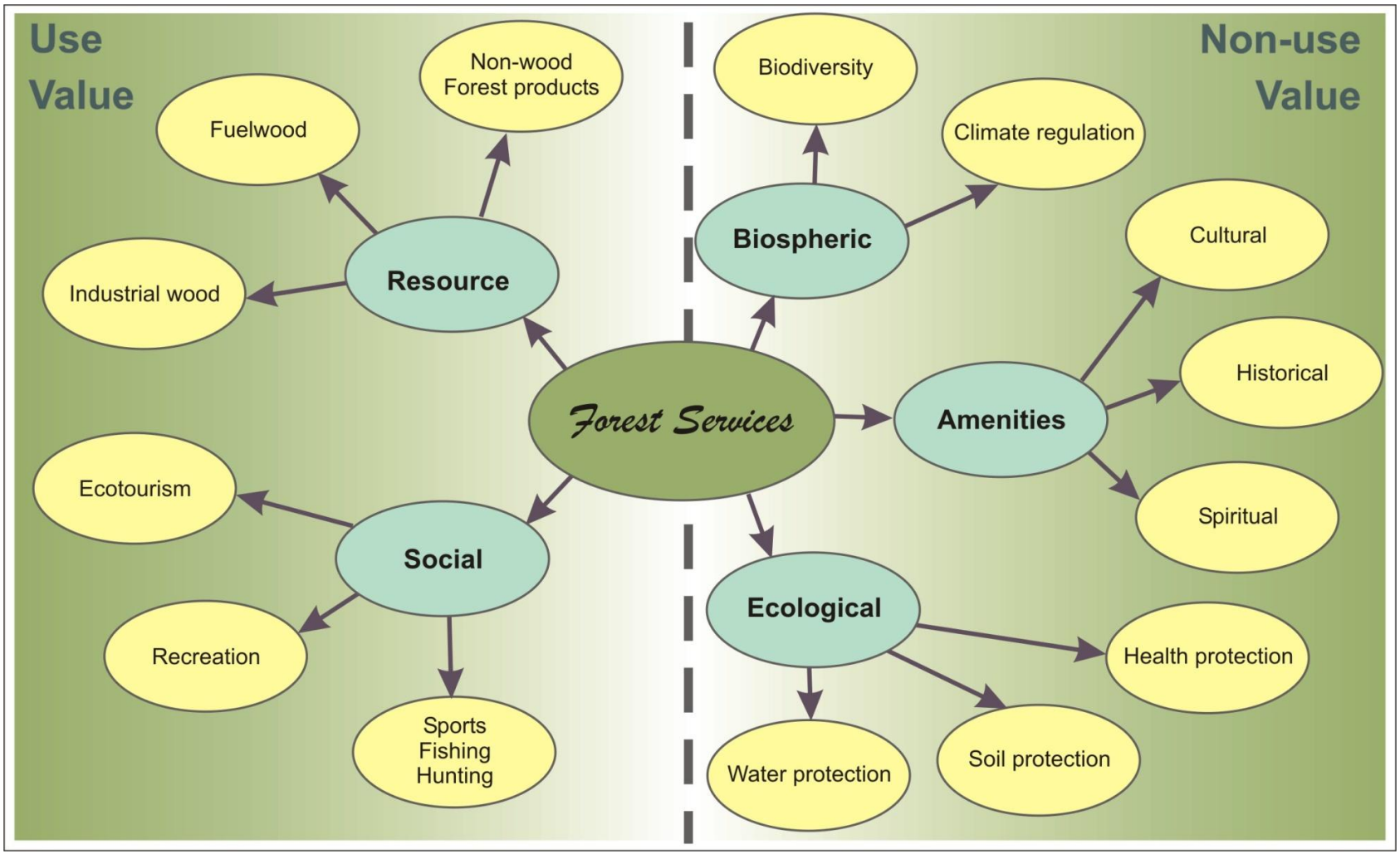
(Source: Adapted from Bishop, 1998:3)

Forests and woodlands provide a diverse range of services (Gonzalez, Hassan, Lakyda, McCallum, Nilsson, Pulhin, Rosenburg & Scholes, not dated) and clearly have multiple

uses, from the industrial to the aesthetic (Gluck, 2002). These are illustrated in **Figure 4-1**.

Multiple-use forestry began to be discussed in the 1930s, but was only seriously considered after World War II when demand for recreation, wildlife, water, and other non-timber forest resources began to increase (Bengston, 1994:515). The basic idea of multiple-use forestry was to broaden forestry's focus on timber production to include the production of other commodities. A multiple-use plan strives towards regulating different uses in order to reach an optimal solution for all users (Hörnsten, 2000:12). By the 1970's, the recognition of the important role of forests in the life of rural small holders and local communities refocused attention on multiple values and stakeholders (Garcia-Fernández, Ruiz-Pérez & Wunder, 2008:1468). At the close of the 20th Century, there was an increasing need for rural areas: 1) to store and recycle urban sold, liquid, gaseous and nuclear wastes, 2) for multiple uses (e.g. recreation/tourism or water), and 3) for general environmental amenities and services of healthy, diverse, sustainable regional eco- and socio-economic systems (Glück & Weiss, 1996:42).

Even though multiple-use management has become a prime objective under the sustainable forest management concept (Garcia-Fernández et al 2008:1474), Bengston (1994:516) argues that the practice of multiple-use forest management has fallen short of the ideal and the long-held doctrine of "timber primacy" has continued to dominate forestry practice. In order to make multiple-use forest management work, special scenarios with favourable conditions are needed including a new mindset and incentives to successfully compete with more specialized land-use options (Garcia-Fernández et al 2008:1474).



(Source: Adapted from Gonzalez et al., not dated:601)

Figure 4-1: Major classes of forest services

The above paragraph largely describes the development of multiple-use forestry in the Northern American situation. Multiple use forest management has been adopted by many countries in eastern and southern Africa. Countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, Zanzibar, Zambia, Congo, Malawi, Mainland Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa have acknowledged shortcomings in their policies for forest management and have implemented new national forest policies and enacted new forest laws (Wiley, 2000:19). New forest policies place greater emphasis on identifying and increasing access to multiple resources from forests, as well as the relationship between people, resources and the environment (Roberson & Lawes, 2005:64). Furthermore, these laws provide for the involvement of people who live within or adjacent to natural forests in determining the future of the forest (Wiley, 2000:19). In Congo, for example, the integration of timber and non-timber forest resources plays a key role in the subsistence and market economies of rural communities, enhancing their well-being and reducing economic risk (Ndoye & Tieguhong, 2004).

However, one of the main issues for governments across Africa is on deciding where the balance should lie between support for the commercial wood sector and the broader, non-timber economy (DWAF, 2005:4). The integration of timber and non-timber is further hampered by factors such as the overlap of actors with different interests and bargaining power, weak institutional support to communities, inappropriate policies and incentives, poor law enforcement to control timber operations and communities fragile tenure and use rights (Garcia-Fernández, Ruiz-Pérez & Wunder, 2008:1470). Some forest classifications account for as many as 100 different kinds of forest services which relate to each other in many different ways, ranging from synergistic to tolerant, conflicting, and mutually exclusive. It is therefore clear that the paradigm of multiple use forest management is often very difficult to implement in practice as a result of difficult choices and trade-offs (Gonzales et al. Not dated).

The 1992 U.N. Forest Principles identified the multifunctional purpose of the world's forests as: "Forest resources and forest lands shall be managed and used sustainably to fulfill social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations" (Forest Principles, 1992). The DWAF (Not dated: 700), states that multiple-

use approach to forest management in South Africa has been adopted by the state, with the broad management objectives of all state indigenous forests being: nature conservation; recreation, education and spiritual access; and forest use. According to the Institute of Natural Resource (2005:48), the following list (refer to Error! Reference source not found.) of potential goods and services is provided to indicate the diversity of goods and services supplied by forests and associated natural habitats in South Africa:

Table 4-2: Goods and services supplied by natural habitats associated with forestry

Goods and services supplied by natural habitats associated with forestry	Key delivery habitats
Atmospheric management - reduces CO2 in the atmosphere	Forest, plantations
Air pollution dispersal - disperses noxious and nuisance air emissions	Grasslands
Climate management - cooling the built up urban areas with trees	Plantations, forests, dams, grasslands
Wind management - keeping wind velocity under control	Forests, plantations
Water supply regulation - supplies water at the same rate as demand - all year round despite only summer rains	Wetlands, dams, forests
Soil erosion control - maintaining soil on the land for production	Forests, plantations, grasslands
Flood mitigation - reducing the magnitude of flood and flood damage	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, dams
Uncontrolled fire management - reducing the risk and intensity of uncontrolled fires	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Disturbance regulation - manages the impacts of major environment events – floods and droughts	Forests, wetlands
Refugia for wildlife - nurseries for fish, protection area for wildlife	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Genetic, species and landscape conservation - conservation of national assets	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Landscape character - creates a sense of place for the EM	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Pollination - access to bees for pollinating agricultural crops	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs,dams

Goods and services supplied by natural habitats associated with forestry	Key delivery habitats
Noise management - noise absorbed and reduced by vegetation	Forests, plantations
Pest control – rodents	Grasslands, forests
Chemicals supply – traditional medicines	Forests, wetlands and grasslands
Construction materials – poles, laths, thatch	Forests, plantations and grasslands
Energy supply – wood fuel	Plantations and forests
Food production and supply	Wetlands, grasslands, rivers, dams
Sport and outdoor adventure activities – swimming, canoeing, water skiing, fishing, mountain biking, hunting, hiking, rock climbing	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams, plantations
Leisure activities – picnicking, game viewing and bird watching	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams, plantations
Spiritual and religious activities - baptisms, meditation and other spiritual activities	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Education activities	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams
Research and knowledge creation	Grasslands, forests, wetlands, rivers, cliffs, dams

(Source: Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:49)

According to the Department of Water Affairs and Forests, there is some potential for tourism however it would require intensive development, partnerships with established businesses and training. (DWAF, 2005:26). Increased research is still needed concerning multiple-use of forests in South Africa. Forests in South Africa have not been managed specifically for the delivery of ecosystem services (Institute of Natural Resource, 2005:49). Even though the state has adopted a multiple-use approach to forest management (Michell, 2004:700), not much information was available on current levels of multiple uses of forests in South Africa.

4.4.3 Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

The basis for community based natural resource management rests on the principle that by involving rural communities in natural resource management, direct benefits from the management of the natural resources will motivate communities to protect and use the resources in a sustainable manner, which will ultimately then lead to the conservation of those resources (WWF, 2009). CBNRM in Southern Africa is therefore an approach to

conservation and development that recognises the rights of local people to manage and benefit from natural resources, ultimately to the conservation of those resources (WWF, 2009). In the context of this study, CBNRM is defined as (Josserand, 2001:3)

"Joint management of resources by a community, based on a community strategy, done in partnership with other legitimate stakeholders. This implies that the community plays an active role in the management of natural resources, not because it asserts sole ownership over them, but because it can claim participation in their management and benefits for practical and technical reasons."

Before the 1980s, natural resource management regimes in Southern Africa excluded communities from participating in the protection and management of biodiversity (WWF, 2009). However, by the twentieth century, many parts of eastern and southern Africa had acknowledged shortcomings in their policies for forest management (Wiley, 2000:19). As a result of the increasing urgency and importance of the need for conserving the environment, governments across Southern Africa committed themselves to developing new polices and revising legislation in order to conserve biodiversity and protect critical ecosystems (WWF, 2009). Furthermore, forest policies became increasingly directed towards improving rural livelihoods in the context of sustainable resource management (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:64). Thus countries such as Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe recognised the need to promote and commit themselves to the implementation of CBNRM (WWF, 2009). In Namibia, for example, movement towards more community-based forest management, where three vast woodlands originally demarcated to become State Forests was handed over to local owner-management (Wiley, 2002:8). There has also been much progress in Tanzania where five hundred Village Forest Reserves (VFR) have been declared by communities out of communal lands. Their new national forest policy (1998) and new law (2002) makes community based forest management a main focus (Wiley, 2002:8).

Community participation in forest management aims to protect forest-based subsistence livelihoods by incorporating the interests of resource users, while simultaneously

diffusing threats to biodiversity by managing resource use (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:64). In South Africa, the promotion of community-based forestry is seen as an important component of the strategy to counter the degradation of natural woodland by people who rely on fuel wood as an energy source (Ackerman & Boshoff, not date). The local population has increasingly been recognised as part of the tourism resource, and therefore the importance of community involvement has been acknowledged. Andereck, Valetine, Vogt & Knopf (2007:483) argue that local residents must be involved in tourism development decisions if support for, and thereby the sustainability of, the industry is to be maintained.

However, in order for CBNRM to realise its full potential, a number of challenges have been addressed namely: (1) to bring all countries to the same level of CBNRM implementation, without having to re-invent the wheel in each country; (2) to address the slow pace of legislative reform and policy implementation, as illustrated by failed devolution and lack of a clearly defined CBNRM policy framework; (3) and to address and resolve the issues of proprietorship, rights and access to use of natural resources, and benefit sharing so that more effective implementation of CBNRM can take place (WWF, 2009).

4.4.4 Uses of forests and woodlands by tourism providers

The present research shows that tourism enterprises in South Africa and Finland use forests and woodlands in a diverse range of ways. Forests and woodlands are seen as important as they are often the preferred environment/nature for many people because they are often perceived as 'real' nature where people can get away from their busy lives (Konijnendijk, 2007). Furthermore, forests also have a high buffering capacity and are attractive elements of recreational landscapes (Konijnendijk, 2007). Martin (2005:56) highlights a number of key qualities which make forests and woodlands suitable and sometimes favoured spaces for tourism activities:

- Visual screening abilities,
- Noise absorption abilities,

- Extensiveness (especially in the case of publicly owned forests),
- Physical robustness (especially in the case of coniferous plantations),
- Ability for year-round use, and
- Ability for all-weather use.

Consequently it is argued that forests and woodlands are well suited to accommodate tourism uses, as they can (Martin, 2005:56):

- Absorb a relatively large number of people;
- accommodate a wide diversity of uses;
- accommodate physically destructive, noisy and/or visually intrusive uses (particularly coniferous woodlands);
- promote year-round tourism; and
- attract visitors regardless of the weather.

These uses of forests and woodlands by tourism providers can further be put into two broad categories and are explained further in **Table 4-3** (Martin, 2005:59):

- Direct uses: which take place in forests and woodlands.
- Indirect uses: which utilise forest and woodland characteristics, biological materials and infrastructure, but do not take place within forests and woodlands.

Table 4-3: Indirect and direct tourism uses of forests and woodlands

Indirect uses **Images, text and verbal references to:**	**Direct uses** **Physical uses of:**
Forests and woodlands (imagery) in marketing literature, e.g. websites, leaflets, brochures, guide books, CD Roms, and in conversations with guests and potential visitors.	**'Natural' space and biological materials and their related ambience and acoustics** for activities e.g. forest theatre and adventure activities, which do not specifically focus on the use of built facilities such as trails and visitor centres.
Facilities and services, e.g. trails, visitor centres, car parks and guided walk services, in forests and woodlands.	**Man-made facilities** such as trails, interpretation, visitor centres, toilets and car parks for activities, e.g. guided walking and horse riding tours.

Indirect uses Images, text and verbal references to:	Direct uses Physical uses of:
Biological products (plants and animals) found in forests and woodlands. Also physical use of biological materials gathered in forests and woodlands by others to provide products for visitors, e.g. food and drink, furniture and textiles.	**Biological materials** (viewing and gathering) to make products such as food and drink, arts and crafts, or as a means of providing enjoyment education and learning.

(Source: Martin, 2004:60)

Tourism providers play an active part in the tourism sector and therefore have a significant potential to control and develop tourism in socially and environmentally beneficial ways (Welford, Ytterhus & Eligh, 1999:105). According to Clarke (1997), research energy should be channelled into practical ways of assisting all forms of tourism to move the industry towards sustainable development.

4.4.5 Factors facilitating the growth of forest tourism

Nature-based tourism, including tourism in protected and pristine wilderness (such as forests and woodlands) is one of the most rapidly growing sectors (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:92). Forests play important cultural, spiritual and recreational roles in many societies (Gonzalez et al., not dated), providing spiritual and recreational services to millions of people through forest-related tourism (Prasad, 2006:15).

Human demands on forests are changing rapidly; as society becomes more aware of the important environmental benefits they provide (Bishop, 1998:1). Forests are increasingly under pressure from many different groups and are a particular focus of public concern in many countries as the demand for non-timber forest benefits may be increasing faster than demand for wood products (Bishop, 1998:1). Although it is difficult to estimate what proportion of regular tourism has been redefined as “nature-based” or how many “nature-based tourists” are drawn to destinations because they are forested, Gonzalez et al.,(not dated: 607) points out that it is nevertheless evident that forests, woodlands and the species they support are a significant element of many ecotourism destinations-from the boreal forests of Scandanavia to the tropical forests and woodland areas of Southern Africa.

Studies by Mieczkowski (1995:464), Urry, (1995), and Johnson (2000), indicate that there are multiple reasons for the growing interest in forest tourism:

- Tourism is increasingly built on the marketing of nature and the natural environment, which have become central elements of travel.
- Nature has, in many contexts, become a play ground for adventure and experience-seeking tourists.
- Overall, tourists seem more environmentally aware and there is a general trend towards more educative and challenging vacations.
- Non-timber forest uses such as recreation, tourism and biodiversity have increased in importance due to their potential to provide alternative income and employment opportunities for the local economy.
- Travellers have easier access to remote destinations.
- Access to better information through the internet and greater travel experience of a growing number of tourists.
- People are becoming less interested in passive vacations, and want to be active travellers to new destinations. They are more interested in nature and conservation, and they are likely to be informed and educated.
- Demand for new forms of tourism such as forest tourism, has arisen from increased concern or interest on unique and fragile ecosystems and a growing desire to travel to new and exotic places (Kline, 2001:1).

National forests have undoubtedly played a major role in attracting tourism in many communities, particularly in relatively undeveloped settings (Kline, 1002:8). Gössling and Hickler (2006:98) contend that it is likely that tourism and recreation in forest areas will continue to increase in the future. In developed countries, this development is as a result of the wish to recover from daily urban life, and in developing countries due to the growing interest in nature tourism by both domestic and international tourists (Font & Tribe, 2000:54). Much of the forest-related tourism and recreation fits with new nature-based tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism concepts.

4.5 MEASURING RESPONDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS FORESTS, TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The second section of the research deals with measuring tourism providers attitudes towards the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector. Tourism providers in South Africa and Finland were used for the purpose of the research and were asked to fill in questionnaires to ascertain how they use and value forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation.

Interest in the identification and measurement of attitudes about the environment began in the scientific literature, in the mid-1970 and continues to grow (Frost, 2000). Tourism and hospitality are activities in which attitudes play a significant role in decision making (Clark, Riley, Wilkie & Wood, 1998). In addition to examining the role of forests in the tourism sector, it is helpful to understand why people choose to visit forests and woodlands and their attitude towards forests and the environment. The survey of forest visitors collected data on tourists' attitudes towards the natural environment and forests. At micro-level, the attitude of tourists to the place they are visiting is important (Shaw & William, 2002:315). Such analysis provides useful information for organisations involved in managing forest-related tourism. Furthermore, knowledge of public environmental attitudes and behaviours can help managers to alleviate conflict between recreationists (Thapa & Graefe, 2003:75).

Attitude surveys are one effective means of determining how people perceive the natural world and their degree of environmental concern (Parry 1992). Attitudes can be measured using psychometric scaling techniques in which respondents are asked to evaluate the extent to which they agree with a set of belief statements (Snowden, not dated). In this study, the "Forest Importance Scale" (FIS) was used to measure attitudes towards forests for recreation among tourists and recreationists. The Forest Importance Scale (FIS) has been used in previous studies (Snowden, 2003) to measure attitudes effectively and has shown to have internal reliability and validity.

Environmental values were also evaluated on the premise that they are a contributory factor to general attitudes towards forest use. Here, environmental values are conceived of in terms of people's general attitudes towards the environment. General attitudes towards the environment were measured using a six-item scale based on the General Awareness and Consequences (GAC) environmental attitude scale. Information about people's values and the relative importance of forest values is essential to helping managers establish and justify appropriate goals and define the broad, strategic guidelines within which ecosystem management is practiced (Bengston, 1994:525).

Lastly, the importance that tourists place on sustainability principles were measured and then compared to that of tourism providers. McDougall and Munro (1994:117) state that incorporating some of the relevant situational factors, in this case the importance of sustainability principles could help towards fully understanding the relative role of attitudes in shaping behaviour.

For this study, no distinction was made between leisure and tourism. Hall & Page (2006:88) contend that the analysis of behavioural issues in recreation and tourism research indicates that 'in behavioural terms then, there seems little necessity to insist on a major distinction between tourism and leisure phenomena and a greater commonality between the research efforts in the two areas would be of advantage'.

4.5.1 The attitude-behaviour relationship

Attitudes of individuals are seen as a major factor that explains motivations for different forms of behaviour such as visiting forests and woodlands (Snowdon, not dated). They are built upon the perceptions and beliefs of reality, but are closely related to deeply held values and to personality (Wang, Pfister & Morais, 2006:411). The conceptual definition of an "attitude" used in this study is "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour' (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

The main theory in this field was developed by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) – the theory of reasoned action. The theory states that a person's behaviour is determined by their

attitudes towards the outcome of that behaviour and by the opinions of the person's social environment. In the case of forest recreation preferences it is hypothesised that one of the key contributors to attitudes to the importance of forest is the environmental values of the individual, which fundamentally measures the relationship of the individual to the natural environment (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:117). **Figure 4-2** shows the conceptual model which was based on the theory of reasoned action.

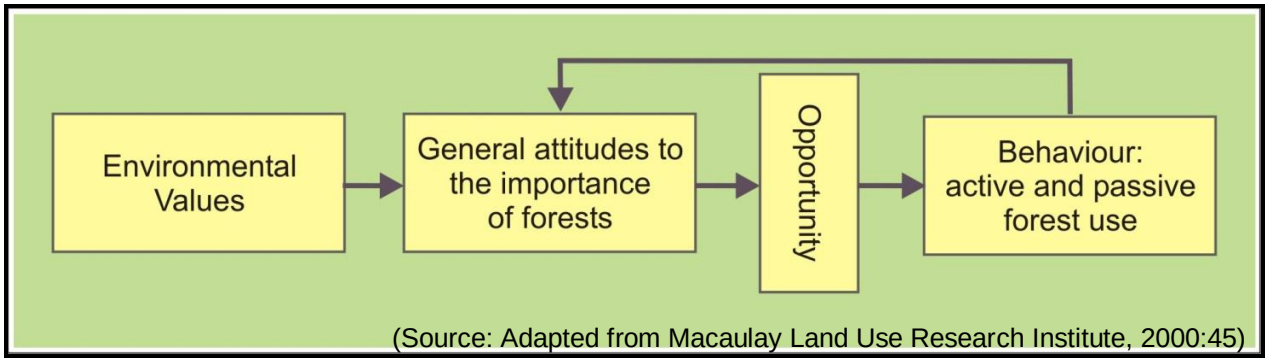


Figure 4-2: Conceptual framework for attitude work

Previous studies, using the same model, identified the need to add the role of opportunity in order to subscribe to the conditions for attitude-behaviour consistency laid out in the Fishbein-Ajzen models. The role of opportunity was also added for the purpose of the study and concerns features such as the presence of woodland (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:118).

The apparent consensus among researchers is that attitudes are generally good predictors of behaviour but that factors exist that can affect the strength of this relationship (McDougall & Munro, 1994:117). McDougall & Munro (1994:117) point out some of the major factors that have been found to influence the attitude-behaviour relationship and these are the:

- extent to which behaviour is influenced by situational factors (Belk, 1975);
- importance an individual places on complying with norms established by relevant others (Snyder & Tanke, 1976);
- relevance or importance of an attitude (Houston & Rothschild, 1978);

- manner in which an attitude is formed (Regan & Fazio, 1977); and
- degree of confidence associated with an attitude (Smith & Swineyard, 1983).

McDougall & Munro (1994:117) argue that in addition to fully understanding the relative role of attitudes in shaping behaviour, it would be useful to incorporate some of the relevant situational factors. They also contend that this is likely to be particularly insightful in the travel and tourism domain where such forces are known to be operant.

4.5.2 Values of forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation

Valuation is about perceptions and preferences, viewpoints, desires and expectations, and about perceptions of what others expect one to give importance to (Chipeta & Kowero, 2004). A forest or woodland will have different values to different stakeholders and forest users (Bengsten, 1004:525). Bengston (1994:525) emphasizes that in a period of rapid and significant change in forest values, understanding the relative importance of forest values and key factors affecting ratings of relative importance could be useful in developing socially acceptable ecosystem management approaches and in dealing with conflict over the management of public forestland. Even though there is much research on the value of forest ecosystem services, Gonzalez et al. (not dated:588) states that there are many gaps in scientific understanding and few practical solutions to reconciling the conflicts that arise from the competing values that different user groups ascribe to different forest services.

Forests also have significant cultural value and contribute to human well-being and health. Forests occupy a central position, most notably for many indigenous and rural communities and are an intrinsic part of all cultures with a forest heritage. In some parts of the world, forests have become increasingly important for recreation, especially around large urban centres. The recognition of the potential of traditional knowledge to assist in increasing the welfare of world societies is another emerging concept (Mery et al., 2005:16). Others still find the roots of their modern cultural identity in the forest, whether as formerly forest-worshipping Scandinavians or Japanese, as Canadians with their maple leaf flag, or as new urbanites from Jakarta to Sao Paulo. Everywhere, even

people without obviously forest-defined cultures go to forests to enjoy their special aesthetic and recreational qualities (Salim & Ullsten, 1999:20).

Recreation is a natural part of daily life among the Nordic people and forests are their most usual environment for outdoor recreation (Sievänen 1997). According to Finnish 'National Outdoor Recreational Demand Survey' (LVVI in Tyrväinen, 2004), outdoor recreation is an important component of the Finnish way of life, as 97% of Finns take part in some such activity during the course of the year, and two-thirds engage in outdoor pursuits such as walking, swimming in natural waters, staying in summer cottages, berry picking, cycling, fishing, boating, skiing, mushrooming, and sunbathing on the beach/shore.

Forest tourism also has a substantial economic value (Gössling & Hickler, 2006:98). Tourism and recreation is a significant economic activity in many forest areas as by attracting visitors to rural areas they bring benefits to local economies (Dickie & Rayment, 2001:15), thereby playing an increasing role in economically sustaining local communities (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2003:6).

Furthermore, the economic importance of nature-based tourism is estimated to grow faster than that of any other segment of tourism in the future (Hall & Page, 1999). On a global scale, nature tourism might generate as much as seven percent of all international travel expenditure (Lindberg et al,.1998). A proportional share of the turnover from international tourism can therefore be attributed to the existence of ecosystems, often forests (Gössling & Hickler , 2006:98). Figures from previous studies have suggested that, at local level, the influence of forestry on tourism output has the potential to exceed the value of output from the forestry sector itself (Forestry Commission Native Woodlands Advisory Panel for Scotland, 1999). China, for example, has found a tourism goldmine in preserving and conserving its natural forest heritage, turning it into forest tourism. China's forest tourism, consisting of its state-owned forest parks, has generated almost US$1 billion income by 2005, helping rural farmers to shake off poverty. They predict that forest tourism will become the main industry in Xinjiang region in the 21st industry (Sulaiman, 2007).

Although forest tourism can be a source of employment for local people, generate extra revenues and enhance the quality of life; high tourist pressure may, in certain sites, have negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:6). Through overuse or inappropriate use, nature tourism can lead to degradation or destruction of the environmental assets on which it is based and thereby go through a boom-and-bust cycle (Aylward, 2003). Font & Tribe (2000:1) further state that with this increasing demand in ecotourism and outdoor recreation, the increasing pressures on land use are becoming more obvious in both developed and developing countries (Font & Tribe, 2000:1). This has led to sustainability becoming a core concept in tourism development especially in natural environments.

Tourism and recreation will be increasingly attracted by the use of the world's forest resources (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:10); therefore having both negative and positive environmental impacts. But if managed wisely, it offers potentially valuable opportunities for generating revenues not only for development but also for conservation (Aylward, 2003:3). Font and Tribe (2000) contend that there is a potential for the co-development of tourism and forests as forests could absorb more tourism by increased recreational provision and tourism could benefit forest owners by providing direct income that can be used for supporting sustainable forest management. It has even been argued that in many countries, especially in Northern Europe, the growing importance of forests for recreation and tourism has promoted forest expansion and it is suggested that afforestation is correlated to the growth of tourism (e.g. Gössling & Hickler 2006). In conclusion, it is necessary for forest managers and tourism stakeholders to be able to balance the needs for timber against the growing use of forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation. The next section discusses the concept of sustainability in more detail.

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has without a doubt become the central issue in tourism development policies throughout the world (Yunis, 2003:11), and the study of tourism has had to adapt itself to the creation of a whole new branch of the discipline namely “sustainable tourism” (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:80). Pickering & Weaver (2003:7) further argue that the goal of sustainability is especially imperative in the nature-based tourism sector given the size, growth rate, ubiquity, diversity and variable impacts of nature-based tourism. As a result there has been an increased adoption of voluntary initiatives related to sustainability in tourism, such as ecolabels, certification schemes, environmental awards and similar programmes (Yunis, 2003:12). The era of environmental concern is therefore of immediate relevance to tourism (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006:347). The concept of sustainability encapsulates not only the growing concern for the environment and natural resources (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:18) but rests on three integrated elements: the ecological, socio-cultural and economic (Saarinen, 2006:1123).

4.6.1 Sustainable tourism

During the past two decades, the paradigm of conventional tourism development has substantially shifted to the new way of developing destinations, namely sustainable tourism (Hunter 1997). Sustainable tourism was born out of hopes and desires for a better future and concerns and fears about conventional tourism development and has been popularized as the best of the known alternatives (Choi & Sirakaya, 2008:381). Ever since the Brundtland Report introduced the concept of sustainable tourism (WCED, 1987), the concept has increased in popularity worldwide. So to has the importance of tourism in sustainable development and the need for tourism to integrate sustainability principles. This is evident in international policy statements such as: The UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 7th session, 1999; The WTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, 1999; Convention on Biological Diversity, Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development, 2003; Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism, 2002; and World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002 (UNEP & WTO, 2005:15).

The concept of sustainable development represents a major shift in our understanding of human development by treating economic development as a complement to environmental protection. It encompasses the interplay of global trends (such as population growth, urbanization and private capital flows to developing countries) that are driving major changes in the ecological and economic landscapes of forests, and underscores the threats and opportunities that are associated with these trends (WFSE, 2003:12).

Tourism is often thought of as a sustainable alternative to primary and extractive industries, such as mining, fishing and forestry, which transforms raw material into finished goods and in the process change those resources permanently (Reid, 2003:173). In some situations, the environment is so damaged by past industrial processes that tourism development is expected to help upgrade environmental quality (Shaw & Williams, 2000:300). Tourism is therefore often seen as the last possibility for nature protection (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:9). However, it is debatable whether or not primary resources fare better when used for tourism and it is clear that using natural resources for tourism purposes is not without costs or damage to the environment (Reid, 2003:176)

Tourism, like other sectors, faces major global challenges and some of the key global challenges for more sustainable tourism include (UNEP & WTO, 2005:12):

- managing dynamic growth;
- climate change;
- poverty alleviation;
- support for conservation; and
- health, safety and security.

One major issue which continues to be one of the major criticisms of the notion of sustainable tourism is the lack of clarity concerning its definition. The meanings attached to sustainable tourism have varied significantly, with little apparent consensus among authors and government institutions. This lack of consensus on meanings is becoming a

significant pitfall in the search for sustainability, for the different meanings result from significantly different perceptions of tourism and its role in society (McCool & Moisey, 2001).

Hunter (1997:859) argues that perhaps the most appropriate way to perceive sustainable tourism is not as a narrowly-defined concept reliant on a search for balance, but rather as an over-arching paradigm within which several different development pathways may be legitimized according to circumstances.

4.6.2 Sustainable tourism principles

Twynam and Johnston (2002:1165) state that as sustainable tourism principles become more refined and more widely practiced in various parts of the world, assessment of their use in different settings is vital. The present study assesses the degree to which tourists and tourism providers share perceptions of the importance of the fundamental principles of sustainability and sustainable tourism.

Kaae (2001:292) emphasizes that the sustainable approach to tourism is relevant to the industry. Furthermore adding the perceptions of tourists and tourism providers toward sustainability and the environment to the ongoing academic and industry-related debate on sustainable tourism is relevant as changes in tourism toward more sustainable practices need the support of both the tourists and the host community. Also from a destination perspective, it is relevant for planners and managers both inside and outside the tourism industry to evaluate the level of support and priorities among tourists and residents of changing the current tourism towards more sustainable practices (Kaae, 2001:290). It is therefore relevant to investigate to what degree tourism providers and tourists place importance on sustainability principles. Sustainability criteria used in the present study included environmental, social, cultural, economic, educational and local participatory Table **4-4** lists the principles and their definitions.

Table 4-4: The key principles of sustainability

Criteria	Detail
Ecological sustainability	Ecological sustainability is often the only way sustainability is publicly perceived. It is clear that there is a need to minimise the environmental impacts of tourism activities.
Social sustainability	The ability of a community, whether local or national, to absorb inputs, for short or long periods of time, and to continue functioning either without the creation of social disharmony as a result of these inputs or by adapting its functions and relationships so that the disharmony created can be alleviated.
Cultural sustainability	The ability of people to retain or adapt elements of their culture which distinguish them from other people.
Economic sustainability	A level of economic gain from the activity sufficient either to cover the cost of any special measures taken to cater for the tourist and to mitigate the effects of the tourist's presence or to offer an income appropriate to the inconvenience cased to the local community visited – without violating any of the other conditions – or both.
The educational element	A greater understanding of how our natural and human environment works is often a goal of the activity.
Local participation	Recognition that sustainability cannot be achieved, nor significant progress made toward it, without the support and involvement of the whole community.

(Source: Mowforth & Munt, 2003:97)

The researcher would like to emphasize that these principles are not meant to represent a 'correct' or absolute version of the meaning of sustainability as there is no absolutely true nature of sustainability (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:97).

4.6.3 Sustainable forest management

The future of the world's forests is an issue of major public concern (DWAF, not dated) and as a result, a major shift in thinking with regards to management of the world's forests has occurred (CIFOR, 1998:9). The concept of sustainable forest management has its origins in international concerns about the negative consequences of declining forest cover, and in the global movement to promote sustainable development (DWAF, not dated). Furthermore, forests are a particular focus of public environmental concern as in many countries the demand for non-timber forest benefits may be increasing faster than demand for wood products. One result is that certain forest areas are increasingly valued, by the public as well as their political representatives, more for the

environmental benefits they provide than for their timber (Bishop, 1998:4). Forests are complex ecosystems that must be managed wisely as part of the landscape to provide a balance of goods and services while minimising long-term environmental damage (CIFOR, 1998:9). More sustainable forest management and other initiatives are driven by growing concerns that the world's forests will require more protection and better management if they are to meet future needs, including demand for both timber and non-timber forest goods and services (Bishop, 1998:1).

Sustainable forest management has been described as forestry's contribution to sustainable development. This is development which is economically viable, environmentally benign and socially beneficial, and which balances present and future needs (Higman, Mayers, Bass, Judd & Nussbaum, 2005:4). There are many different definitions for sustainability and sustainable forest management but they all have the same elements (Higman et al., 2005:4).

"Sustainable forest management is the process of managing forests to achieve one or more clearly specified objectives of management with regard to the production of a continuous flow of desired forest products and services, without undue reduction of its inherent values and future productivity and without undue undesirable effects on the physical and social environment."

Another commonly accepted concept is that of the Inter-Ministerial Conference on European Forests in Helsinki, Finland, in 1993, where Sustainable Forest Management was defined as (The Forestry Authority, 1998:8):

"Sustainable management means the stewardship and use of forest land in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration, capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now, and in the future, relevant, ecological, economic and social functions at local, national, and global levels; and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems."

This definition encompasses not only producing sustainable timber, but also catering for recreation and tourism as social and economic functions (Font & Tribe, 2000:4) , as well as other functions shown in **Figure 4-3**.

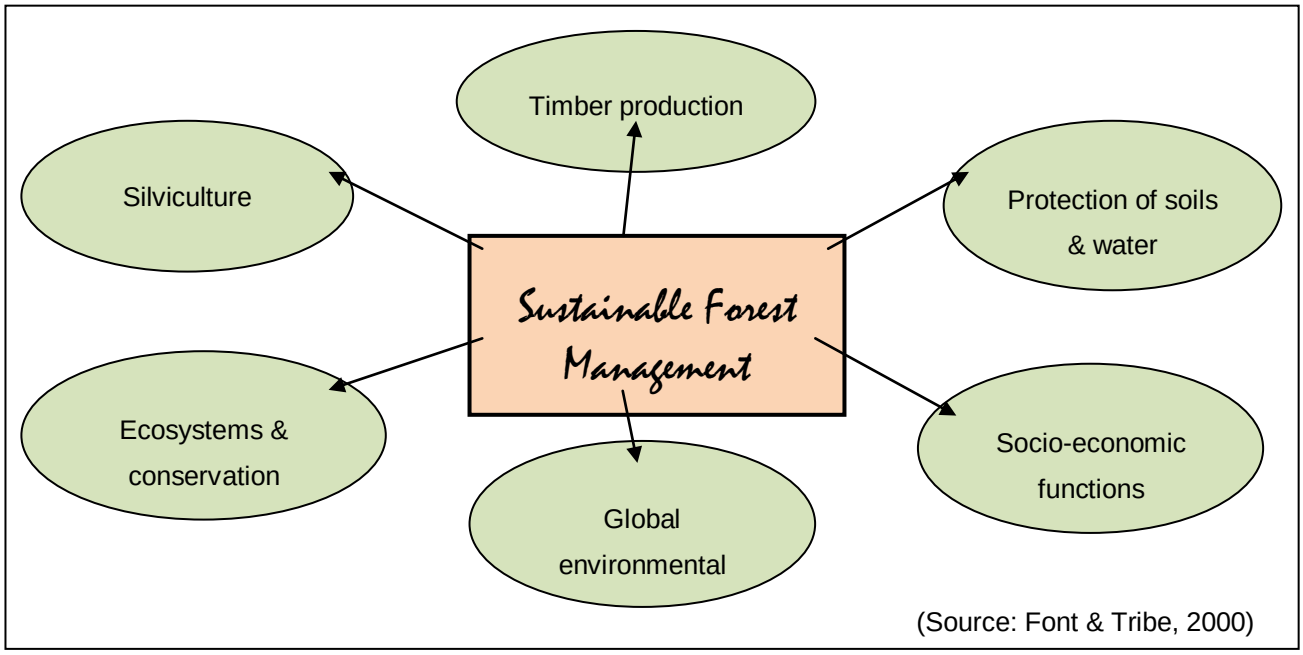


Figure 4-3: Multiple uses of forests

According to the United Nations Environment Programme-UNEP (2003), forests often suffer negative impacts of tourism in the form of deforestation caused by the use of land for accommodation and other infrastructure provision, and the use of building materials. However, in many regions forests have become an increasingly important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism product (Kuvan, 2005:264) and it is argued that making tourism more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative impacts of the industry as tourism is in a very special position to benefit local communities, economically and socially, and to raise awareness and support for conservation of the environment (Yunis, 2005:2). Shaw & Williams (2002:300) argues that in some situations tourism's role can turn from being negative to positive with regard to the environment. Furthermore it is argued that within the tourism sector, economic development and environmental protection should not be seen as opposing forces –

they should be pursued hand in hand as aspirations that can and should be mutually reinforcing. Policies and actions must aim to strengthen the benefits and reduce the costs of tourism (Yunis, 2005:2).

Forests as a key touristic and recreational resource are an integral component of the tourism product together with accommodation, transport facilities and service infrastructure (Kuvan, 2005:264) and to achieve sustainable forest management and minimize or eliminate the negative impacts of tourism on forested lands, it is necessary to have a sound knowledge of such use and impacts, and a good understanding of how tourism creates such impacts (Kuvan, 2005:264). However, McCool & Moisey (2001:18) emphasize that successful management of the environmental impacts of tourism implies not only an understanding of the relationship between use and the natural environment, but also the development of frameworks for implementing and measuring the outcomes of a variety of management options. Kuvan (2005), further states that for managing and sustaining forest ecosystems under changing environmental conditions and in changing socio-economic contexts – with altered needs of society, increasing public awareness and number of stakeholders – new management approaches and a widened scope of forest management is needed.

The challenge for sustainable forestry today is to identify and define the attributes of forest ecosystems that are ecologically and societally important and to optimize and sustain ecosystem goods and services in the face of change (Kuvan, 2005). Kuvan (2005) states that to achieve these goals, a more comprehensive understanding is needed of the:

- role of forest properties for ecosystem functioning;
- relation between ecosystem functioning and goods and services provided by forests;
- interaction and trade-offs between goods and services provided by forests; and
- interrelationships between land-use history, management practices and ecosystem functioning.

In many parts of the developing world, deforestation continues to accelerate in tandem with poverty and high levels of population growth. For these regions, the transition to sustainable forest management is a much greater challenge (Gonzalez, Hassan, Lakdya, McCallum, Nilsson, Pulhin, Van Rosenburg & Scholes, Note dated). In some countries, practical, technical constraints still exist on forest manager's ability to implement SFM practices and in order to implement SFM, forest managers also need (Higman, Mayers, Bass, Judd & Nussbaum, 2005):

- knowledge about SFM;
- information about the forest resource;
- management techniques;
- understanding the environment and conservation;
- consultation and working with stakeholders;
- training; and
- resources.

It is apparent that the protection of the natural and cultural resources upon which tourism is based is essential for the sustainable development of a location (Hall & Lew, 1998) and due to their attractiveness for recreation and leisure activities, forests play an important role in this process. The FAO (1985), emphasize that improving the condition of forests and their contribution to human well-being is an important and urgent task, both nationally and internationally. It is further realised how difficult it is to achieve sustainable forest management in the contemporary world and that many problems remain to be solved in order to realize the potential benefits that forest and woodlands have to offer (Gonzalez, not dated:614).

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE 1: TOURISM PROVIDER SURVEY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 presents the results of the quantitative and qualitative components of the part of the study where surveys were administered to tourism providers in the Oulu province of Finland and the Mpumalanga province of South Africa. The chapter starts with a description of the type of business operation, the target markets that were important to the establishments and a description of the different activities and services offered at the establishments. The chapter then discusses respondent's responses towards statements regarding the role and value of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector; and their perceptions towards tourism development in the region. This is followed by a comparison between the Finnish and South African tourism providers' responses regarding their interest in the principles of sustainable tourism. These results will provide the basis for the formulation of guidelines and recommendations pertaining to sustainable tourism development in forest and woodland areas.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative research are presented as follows in this chapter:

Table 5-1: Section reference for quantitative and qualitative results

Research method used	Data Analysis performed	Section results are displayed
Quantitative (Likert Scale Instrument):		
• Type of business, activities and services	Univariate descriptive statistics	5.3
• Importance of target markets	Bivariate	5.4
• Distribution of responses to statements pertaining to the role of forests and tourism development	Bivariate	5.6 and 5.7

Research method used	Data Analysis performed	Section results are displayed
Qualitative:		
Interview	Content analysis	5.12.1
Participant observation	Field notes	5.12.2

5.2 TOURISM PROVIDER SURVEY

The research sample for the study consisted of 76 tourism providers. The tourism providers consisted of 45 South African tourism providers and 31 Finnish tourism providers and were collected over a period of five months from November 2007 to March 2008. A purposive sampling method was used. Tourism providers were chosen according to certain criteria. For this study the tourism providers chosen were required to have the following characteristics:

- be either accommodation providers and/or activity providers or tour operators;
- situated outside of conservation areas; and
- situated in/near forest and woodland areas.

Tourism providers in Mpumalanga were chosen from the list of tourism providers advertised on the Mpumalanga Tourism website as well as all tourism providers that could be found advertised on the internet (provided they matched all the criteria mentioned above). Tourism providers in the Oulu province were also chosen from the list of tourism providers advertised on the different tourism websites of the regions in the Oulu province. E-mail surveys were administered to the tourism providers in Finland. A combination of handed out surveys and electronic surveys were administered to the tourism providers in South Africa.

While taking field notes and doing observations in Finland for the period of five months, the researcher also conducted a semi-structured interview with the Land-use and Environment manager of Metsähallitus. The interview aimed to discuss issues such as how the recreational and other uses of forests are valued against wood production in Finland, what type of management is favoured, the impacts of tourism and recreation in

forests and what the key challenges and opportunities are regarding forestry and tourism in the region (see Appendix D).

5.3 TYPE OF BUSINESS

The majority of the South African tourism providers were classified as both accommodation and activity providers (22%). The Finnish tourism providers were predominantly just activity providers (30%) or a combination of accommodation and activity providers (28%). **Figure 5-1** compares the type of businesses that were offered by the tourism providers in the Mpumalanga and Oulu Provinces.

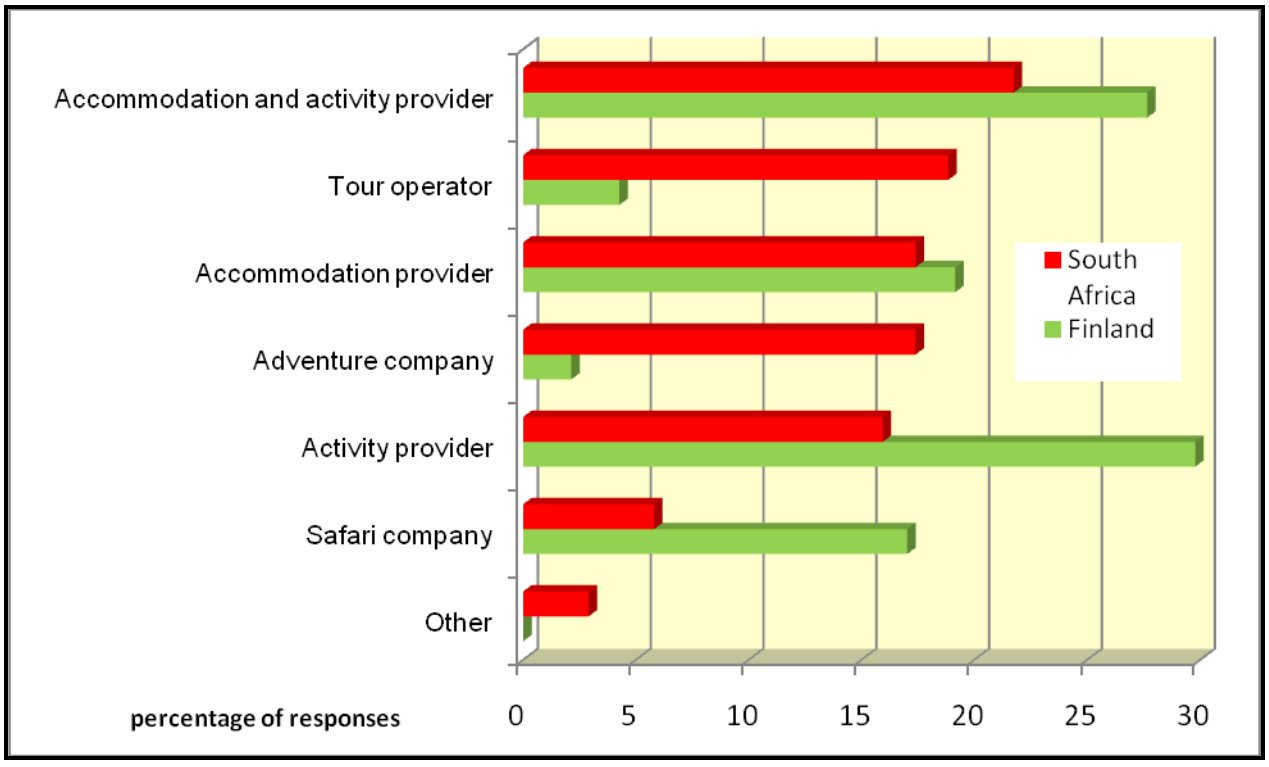


Figure 5-1: South Africa and Finland: Type of business

There were considerably more adventure companies amongst the South African tourism providers (17%) than amongst the Finnish tourism providers (2%). South Africa is described as one of the adventure tourism capitals of the world, and is often referred to as an adventure destination (Holt-Biddle, 2002). It was therefore expected that South Africa would have a higher percentage of adventure tourism establishments. Finland on the other hand had considerably more Safari companies (17%) than South Africa (6%).

5.4 LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THE TARGET MARKETS/SEGMENTS

Overall, the mean scores for the levels of importance attached to the different target markets for the South African tourism providers were slightly higher than that of the Finnish tourism providers. For both the South African and Finnish tourism providers, the highest level of importance was attached to nature-orientated tourists (SA: M=4.37, SD=0.85; Finnish: M=4.23, SD=0.88) and international tourists (SA: M=4.36, SD=0.72; Finnish: M=4.29, SD=0.9). Relations were tested by cross-tabulation of variables. The level of significance was tested with the t-test for independence using SAS. Differences were significant at $P < 0.05$.

Only one score for the South African tourism providers was below the mean (researchers: M=2.88) compared to four target market mean scores for the Finnish tourism providers. This suggests that Mpumalanga tourism providers in South Africa place a higher importance for a wider selection of target markets than the Oulu and Kaniuu regions in Finland. There was a significant difference between South Africa and Finland and the importance they attached to sport enthusiasts, day-trip visitors, adventure tourists and young people. The South African tourism providers perceive younger, sport enthusiastic, adventure orientated tourist as more important than the Finnish tourism providers.

The third most important target market for SA tourism providers were young people (aged 18-35), and for Finnish tourism providers the third most important tourism market

were middle aged tourists (aged 36-59). Previous research has shown that especially young middle aged take part in nature-based tourism in Finland (METLA, 2008). One reason for the higher importance given to the younger market by the South African tourism providers could be that there were considerably more adventure tourism establishments in South African when compared to Finland. The SA tourism providers placed a significantly higher importance on adventure tourists than the Finnish tourism providers. Adventure tourists are amongst the fastest growing tourist market in the world and there is an increasing demand for commercial outdoor adventure activities worldwide (Buckley, 2003:2). **Figure 5-2** illustrates the mean scores for the level of importance attached to each target market.

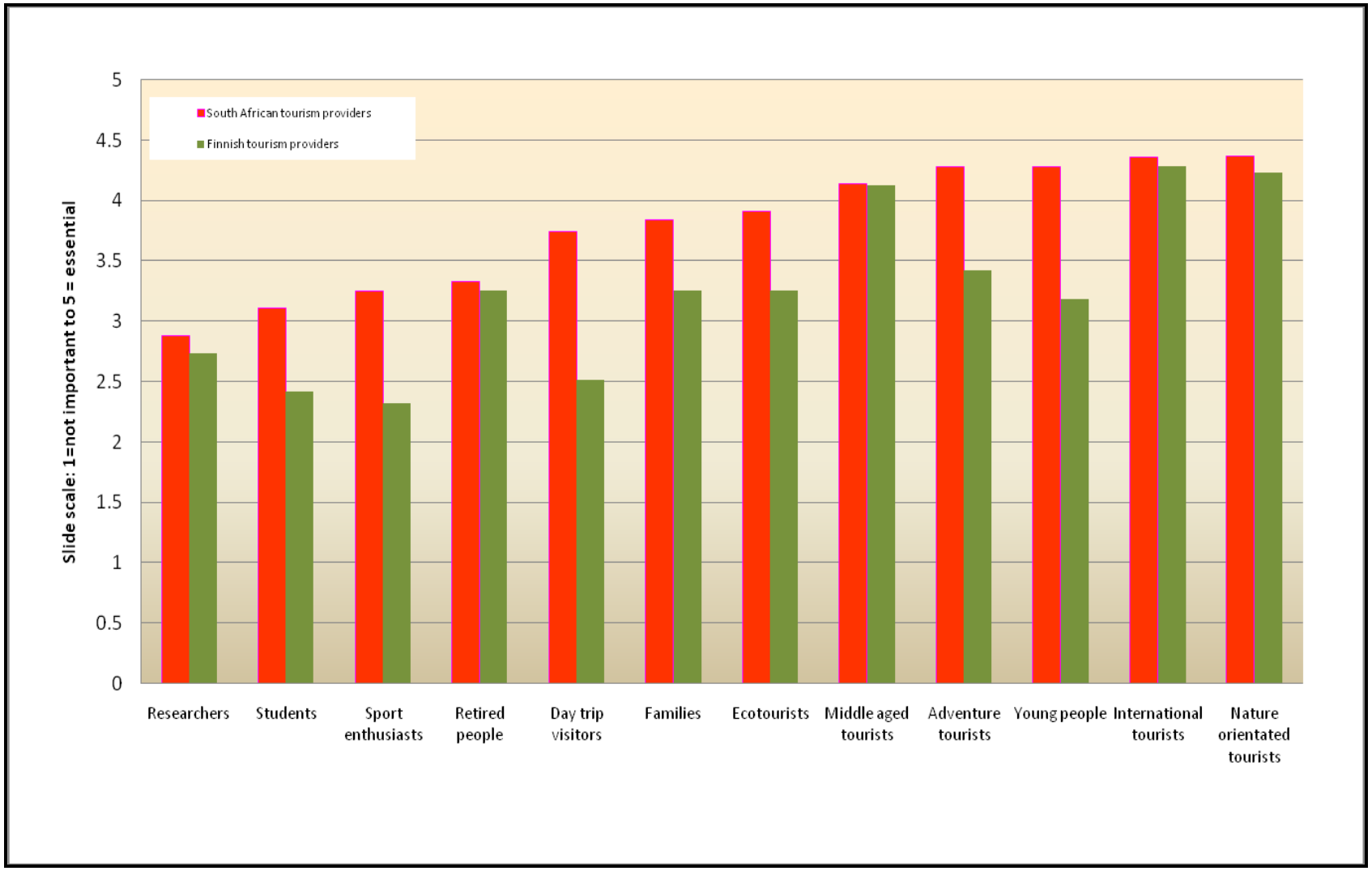


Figure 5-2: Level of importance attached to target markets

5.5 ACTIVITIES/SERVICES OFFERED AT THE TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

A wide variety of activities were offered by the tourism providers in both regions of South Africa and Finland. The most popular activities/services offered by tourism providers in Mpumalanga, South Africa were walking/hiking, wildlife observation, horse-back riding and biking/cycling. The most popular activities/services offered by tourism providers in the Oulu province, Finland were walking, canoeing, fishing and skiing. The results indicate that forest and woodland areas in the selected regions of South Africa and Finland are used for a diverse range of tourism and recreational activities.

Despite South Africa having distinctly less forest area than Finland, there was almost the same number of activities offered by South African tourism providers than the Finnish tourism providers. This could be attributed to the fact that South Africa's forest biome supports a high proportion of the country's plant and animal diversity (Institute of Natural Resources, 2005:48). The Institute of Natural Resources (2005:48) states that the more diversity in natural habitats associated with the forestry activity, the greater the diversity of goods and services generated. Another reason could be the mild climate of South Africa which makes it possible to have activities/services offered all year round. This is the opposite for Finland where activities such as Ski-ing would only be offered in the winter season and canoeing only during the summer. Although one of the strategic points set by Metla, the Finnish Forest Research Institute is to develop round-the-year tourism in Northern Finland (METLA, 2006). **Figure 5-3** compares the different activities and services offered by tourism providers in the selected regions of South Africa and Finland.

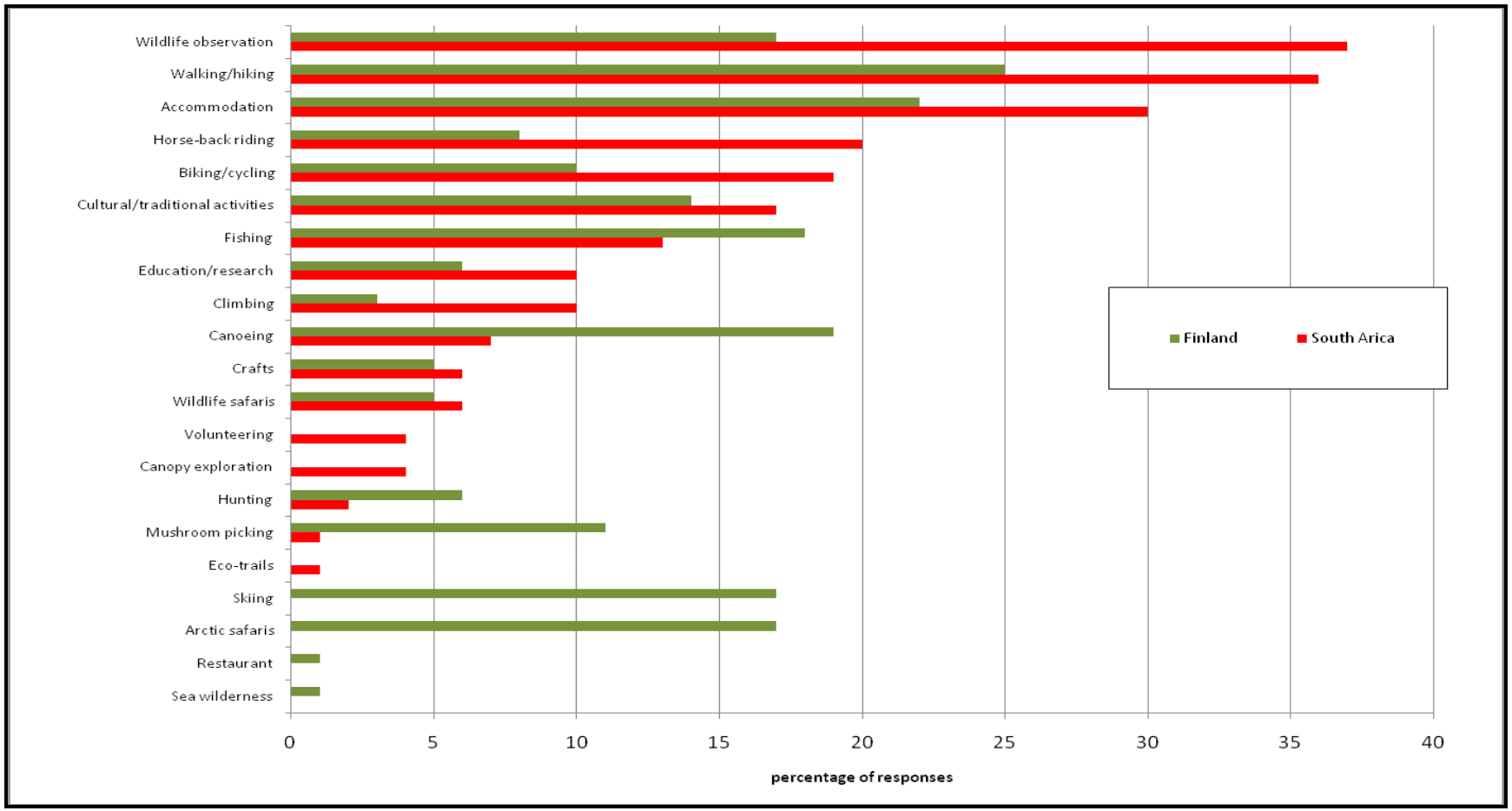


Figure 5-3: Activities/services offered at tourism businesses in South Africa and Finland

5.6 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TOWARDS THE ROLE AND VALUE OF FORESTS IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

Frequencies, means and standard deviations were the descriptive statistics used in discussing the distribution of responses gathered during the quantitative component of the study. The stacked graph in **Figure 5-4** presents the frequency distribution in the form of percentages for all responses (according to level of agreement) to the 11 statements pertaining to the role and value of forests in the tourism sector. The graph is arranged from the highest percentage of responses to the lowest percentage of responses on a particular variable (according to South African responses).

The findings suggest that the presence of forests and woodlands play an important role in the tourism sector of each region. The results show that the majority of responses agreed that forests and woodlands in the area attract tourists to come visit (93.42%), are valuable in terms of extending the length of time people stay in local tourism areas (78.95%), are valuable in terms of extending the length of the tourist season (82.9%), play an important role in determining the identity of local tourism destination (93.43%) and are an important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism activities in the area (84.21%). The majority of the responses (82.9%) also similarly agreed that increased environmental awareness generated by tourism, results in more measures being taken to protect the forests and woodland in the area.

Three statements were positioned close to the “unsure and disagree” categories. Overall, a large percentage of tourism providers (52.63%) were either unsure or disagreed with the statement that “the community is involved in decision-making with regard to forest tourism”. The high percentage of uncertainty regarding the involvement of the local community is of concern as there is increasing awareness that sustainable use is not achievable without partnerships with local users (Wiley 2000). Both direct and indirect support of community residents’ participation is the foundation of the sustainability paradigm (Hunter, 1997). Bass (2001) further argues that ‘genuine sustainability must ultimately be people centered’.

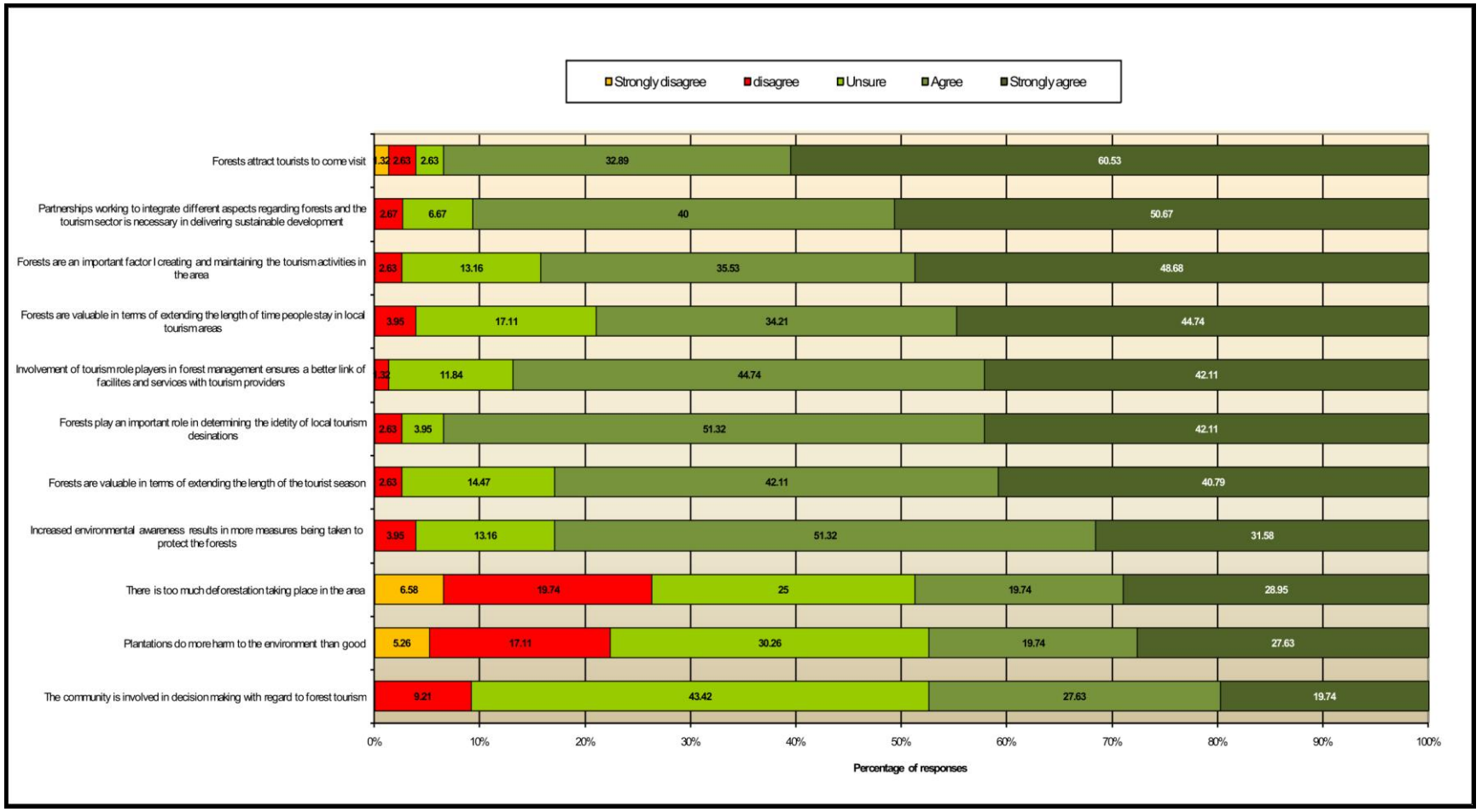


Figure 5-4: South Africa and Finland: responses to statements regarding the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector

5.7 A COMPARISON BETWEEN FINNISH AND SOUTH AFRICAN RESPONSES TOWARDS THE ROLE OFF FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

Frequency distribution and measurements in the form of means and standard deviations (SD) are reflected in **Table 5-2**. A higher mean indicates a stronger level of agreement with the statement. **Table 5-2** reflects high mean values for both groups of respondents (South African and Finnish tourism providers), indicating an overall strong agreement with the majority of statements pertaining to the role and value of forests and woodland in the tourism sector.

Table 5-2: The role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector (n=76)

	South Africa		Finland	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. Forests and woodlands in the area attract tourists to come visit	4.71	0.46	4.16	1.04
2. Forests and woodlands play an important role in determining the identity of local tourism destinations	4.47	0.50	4.13	0.85
3. Involvement of tourism role players in forest management makes it possible to better link facilities and services in forests with surrounding tourism providers	4.47	0.63	4.00	0.77
4. Forests and woodlands are an important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism activities in the area	4.44	0.66	4.10	0.94
5. Partnerships working to integrate different aspects regarding forests and the tourism sector is necessary in delivering sustainable development	4.41	0.73	4.35	0.75
6. Increased environmental awareness generated by tourism, results in more measures being taken to protect the forests and woodlands in the area	4.38	0.61	3.71	0.82
7. Forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of time people stay in local tourism areas	4.29	0.73	4.06	1.03
8. Forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of the tourist season	4.27	0.72	4.13	0.88
9. Plantations do more harm to the environment than good	4.02	1.20	2.68	0.70

	South Africa		Finland	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
10. There is too much deforestation taking place in the area	3.76	1.21	3.00	1.26
11. The community is involved in decision-making with regard to forest tourism	3.58	0.99	3.58	0.81

Scale values range from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree")
M = mean, SD = standard deviation

The South African responses were slightly higher than those of the Finnish responses. Overall, most statements for both groups were positioned close to the "agree and strongly agree" categories. Both groups were in strong agreement that:

- forests and woodlands in the area attract tourists to come visit;
- forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of time people stay in local tourism areas;
- forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of the tourist season;
- forests and woodlands play an important role in determining the identity of local tourism destinations; and
- forests and woodlands play an important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism activities in the area.

Figure 5-5 illustrates and compares the perceptions of Finnish and South Africa tourism providers towards the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector.

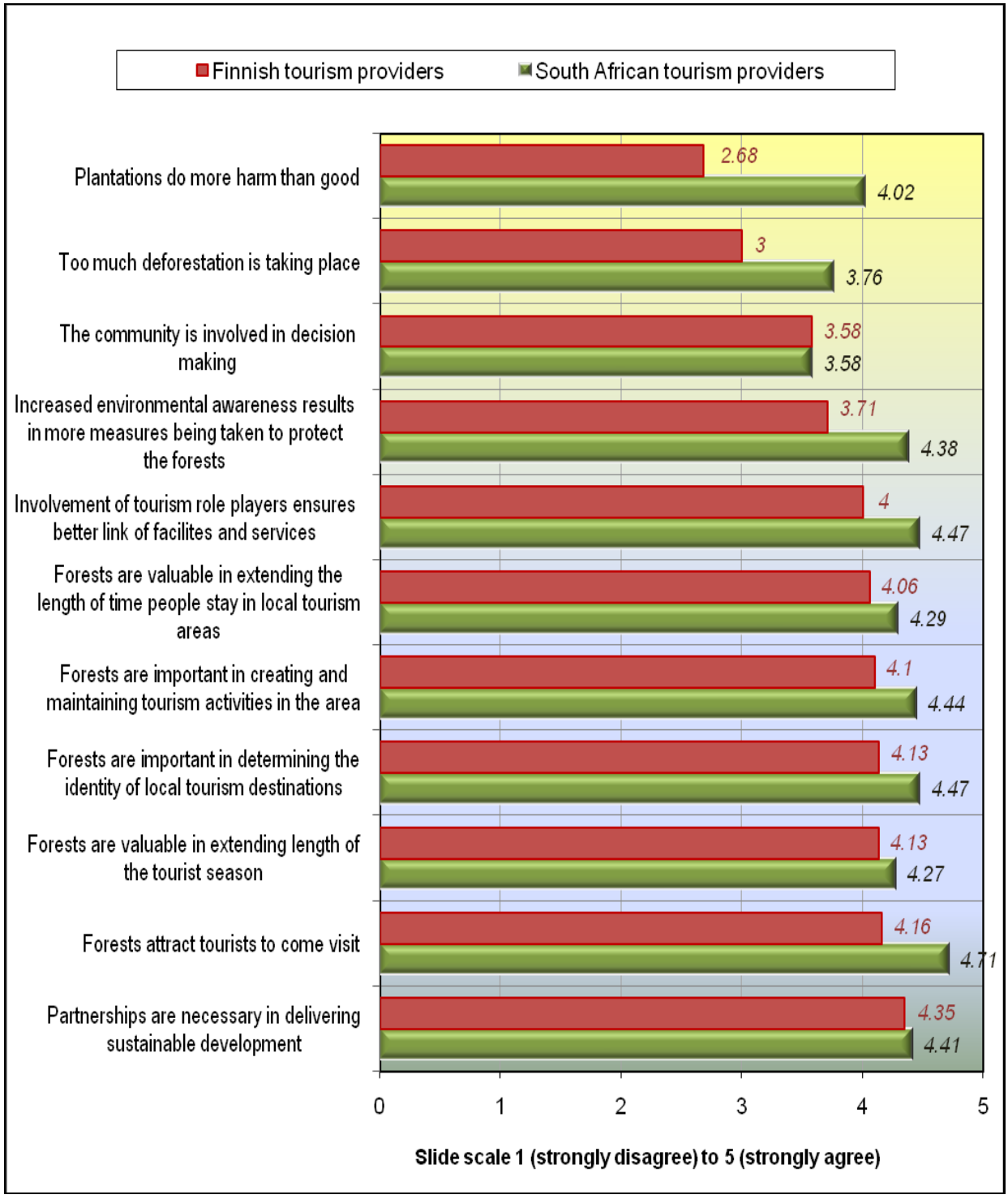


Figure 5-5: Perceptions towards the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector

The most differing opinions were found in relation to the following statements: (1) “plantations do more harm to the environment than good” and “there is too much deforestation taking place in the area”. The results indicate that the majority of South African tourism providers strongly agreed that plantations do more harm to the environment than good and agreed that there is too much deforestation taking place in the area. In South Africa plantations primarily consist of exotic trees which cause much damage to the environment and therefore are perceived more negatively. However, in Finland an important feature of forest dynamics in temperate and boreal zones of Finland is natural reforestation and expansion of forests (Gonzalez, not dated:609). Plantations are therefore not perceived as negatively as by South Africans. Relations were tested by cross-tabulation of variables. The level of significance was tested with the t-test for independence using SAS and differences were significant at $P < 0.05$.

5.8 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TOWARDS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN FOREST AND WOODLAND AREAS

Frequencies, means and standard deviations are the descriptive statistics used in discussing the distribution of responses gathered during the quantitative component of the study. **Figure 5-6** illustrates and compares the Finnish and South African tourism provider’s responses towards tourism development in the area. The results were very similar for both South Africa and Finland and indicated that both South African and Finnish tourism providers had positive attitudes towards tourism development in the region.

Perceptions of tourism development and local community involvement in the regions

Overall there was a positive attitude towards tourism development in the area. The results show that the benefits of tourism development in the forest and woodland areas are especially seen as important.. Responding to the statements regarding tourism development in the region on the Likert scale questionnaire, respondents were in strong agreement that:

- tourism improves forest and landscape management;
- tourism promotes nature conservation;
- tourism can act as a key driver for the protection and enhancement of the forests in the area;
- further tourism development is beneficial to the community and should be encourage; and
- tourism has contributed to the conservation of the forests in the area.

Saarinen (2005:48) contends that nature-based tourism and tourism in general are potentially good tools for regional development and the production of well-being, sustainable use of environment and resources in peripheral areas. However, only if tourism is managed, developed and monitored in a sustainable way is this possible. The social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism should be measured and monitored continuously to ensure sustainable development.

The results indicate that a high percentage of respondents (76.31%) felt that there was a need to increase local community participation in the area. Community involvement is one of the vital components of ensuring sustainable tourism therefore it is important to monitor the level of community involvement in an area to ensure sustainable tourism development. A high percentage of respondents agreed that tourism providers are aware of the environmental issues in the region (76.32%). However, more than half the respondents (58.67%) either disagreed or were unsure regarding the statement that the

local community is aware of the impact of tourism in the natural environment. Refer to Figure 5-6 for the comparison between the Finnish and South African tourism providers.

Perceptions of tourism impacts on the environment

The results indicate that tourism providers were in agreement with only one statement that dealt with the negative impacts of tourism in the area namely “tourism activities cause an increase in waste production in the region”. The rest of the negative statements pertaining to tourism development in the region indicate that tourism providers disagreed that:

- tourism activities cause pollution in the region;
- tourism creates too much pressure on the environment;
- tourism results in the loss of biodiversity (flora and fauna) in the region; and
- tourism results in the degradation of forests and woodlands in the region.

Many of the tourism establishments used for the study consider themselves as ecotourism establishments and this could be the reason why they disagree that tourism in the region causes damage to the environment. A broad majority of Scandinavians, as well as tour operators and tourism organisations generally conceptualise Scandinavian tourism as ecotourism and therefore the view is that many forms of tourism in Scandinavia meet the requirements of ecotourism (Gössling & Hultman, 2006:2). However, virtually any kind of tourism activity will result in some impact to natural resources somewhere (Hunter 1997), therefore it remains crucial that the impacts of tourism are measured and monitored continuously by establishments. Refer to Figure 5-6 for the comparison between the Finnish and South African tourism providers.

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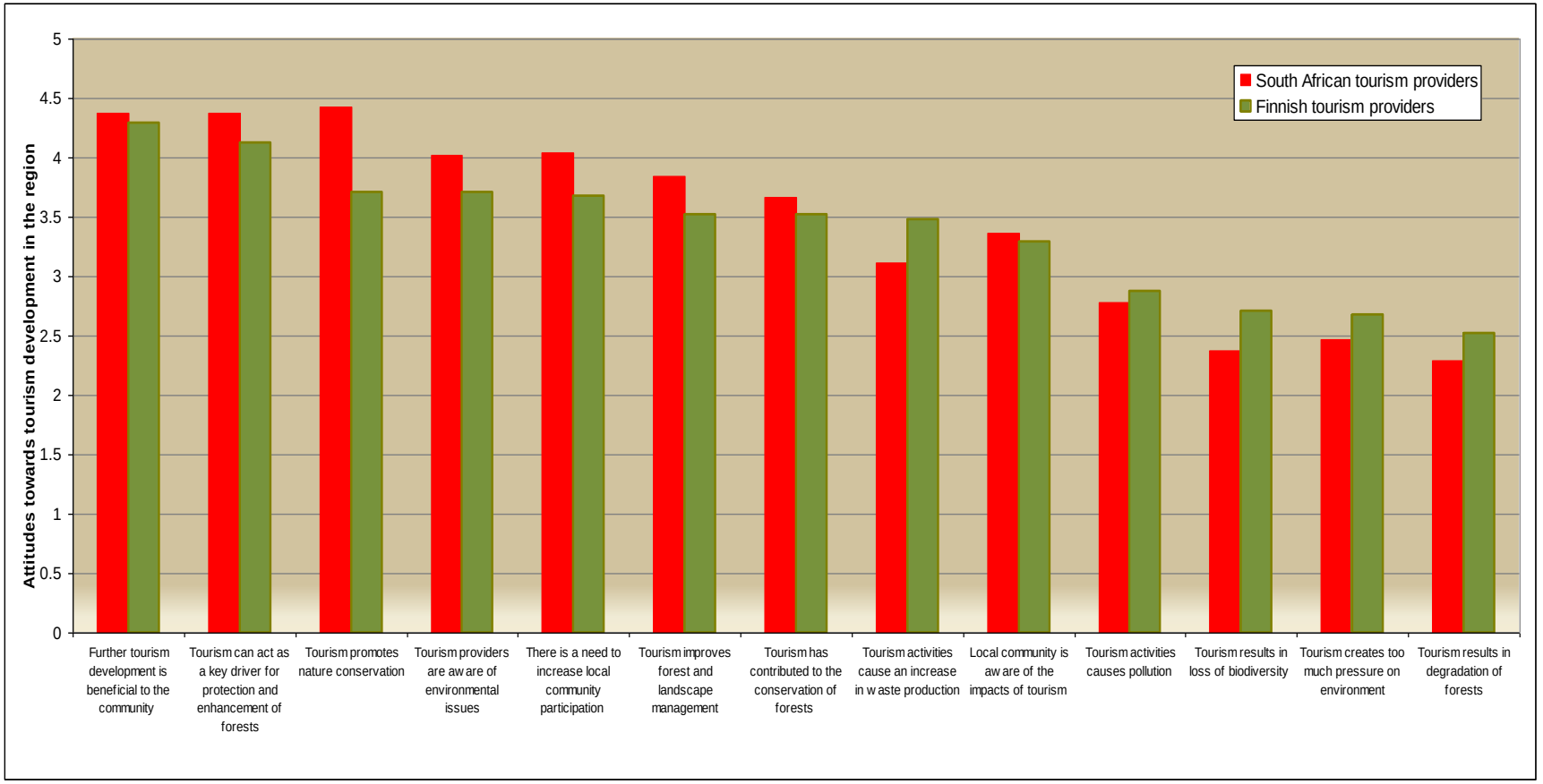

Figure 5-6: Perceptions towards tourism development in the region

5.9 INTEREST IN THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of the 12 principles of sustainable tourism. As seen in **Table 5-3**, the majority of South African and Finnish tourism providers found the principles of sustainable tourism to be of high or some importance. The environmental principles were found to be of the highest importance amongst both South African and Finnish tourism providers. These include the maintenance of the diversity of animals and plant life (SA: M=4.78; F: M=4.19), sensible use of natural resources (SA: M=4.73; F: M=4.39) and the reduction of energy and water consumption, garbage, and wastewater production (SA: M=4.76; F: M=4.07). Both South African and Finnish tourism providers found that tourism was important for supporting the local economy. Overall, South African tourism providers were generally more interested in the sustainability principles than the Finnish tourism principles.

Table 5-3: Interest in the principles of sustainable development (n=76)

	South Africa		Finland	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Maintenance of the diversity of animals and plant life	4.78	0.47	4.19	0.79
Reduction of energy and water consumption, garbage, and wastewater production	4.76	0.48	4.07	0.78
Sensible use of natural resources	4.73	0.54	4.39	0.80
Tourism supports the local economy	4.69	0.51	4.19	0.70
Information to tourists about natural and cultural qualities of the area	4.56	0.69	4.10	0.75
Environmental training of tourism staff	4.52	0.70	4.03	0.84
Environmental considerations in marketing of tourism	4.51	0.63	3.94	0.81
Studies of impacts of tourism on environment and local community	4.40	0.81	3.81	0.95
Tourism is integrated with local, regional, and national planning	4.36	0.74	4.10	0.87
Cooperation with local residents in the development of tourism	4.27	0.81	3.87	0.72
Tourism can contribute to improvements in the destination	4.27	0.69	3.94	0.68
Involvement of interest groups in tourism development	4.00	0.77	3.84	0.73

Scale values range from 1 (‘Not important”) to 5 (“Essential”)
M = mean, SD = Standard deviation

While South African and Finnish tourism providers had a similar ranking of the top priorities, some differences were found in relation to the environmental and social principles and local participation principles. South African tourism providers found the involvement of interest groups in tourism development to be of the lowest importance, while Finnish tourism providers gave the lowest priority to studies of impacts of tourism on environment and local community. The reason may be because the majority of Scandinavian tourism providers consider themselves as ecotourism destination.

Differences were significant for all factors except for environmental considerations in marketing of tourism, involvement of interest groups in tourism development and the integration of tourism with local, regional and national planning. Relations were tested by cross-tabulation of variables. The level of significance was tested with the t-test for independence using SAS and differences were significant at $P < 0.05$.

The results of this part of the study add a demand and supply perspective to the ongoing debate on sustainable tourism. The high interest and fairly similar ranking of the sustainable principles suggest that tourists and tourism providers largely share the definition of sustainability. This may however be unique for the regions and perceptions of tourists and tourism providers in other regions and countries need to be added to the debate.

5.10 THE EFFECT OF INCREASING RECREATIONAL VALUE OF FORESTS

Respondents were asked what they perceived would happen if the recreational value of forests and woodlands would increase in the future. **Figure 5-7** compares Finnish and South Africa tourism providers' perceptions towards the effect of increasing recreational value of forests. There was no significant difference between the responses of the South African and Finnish tourism providers.

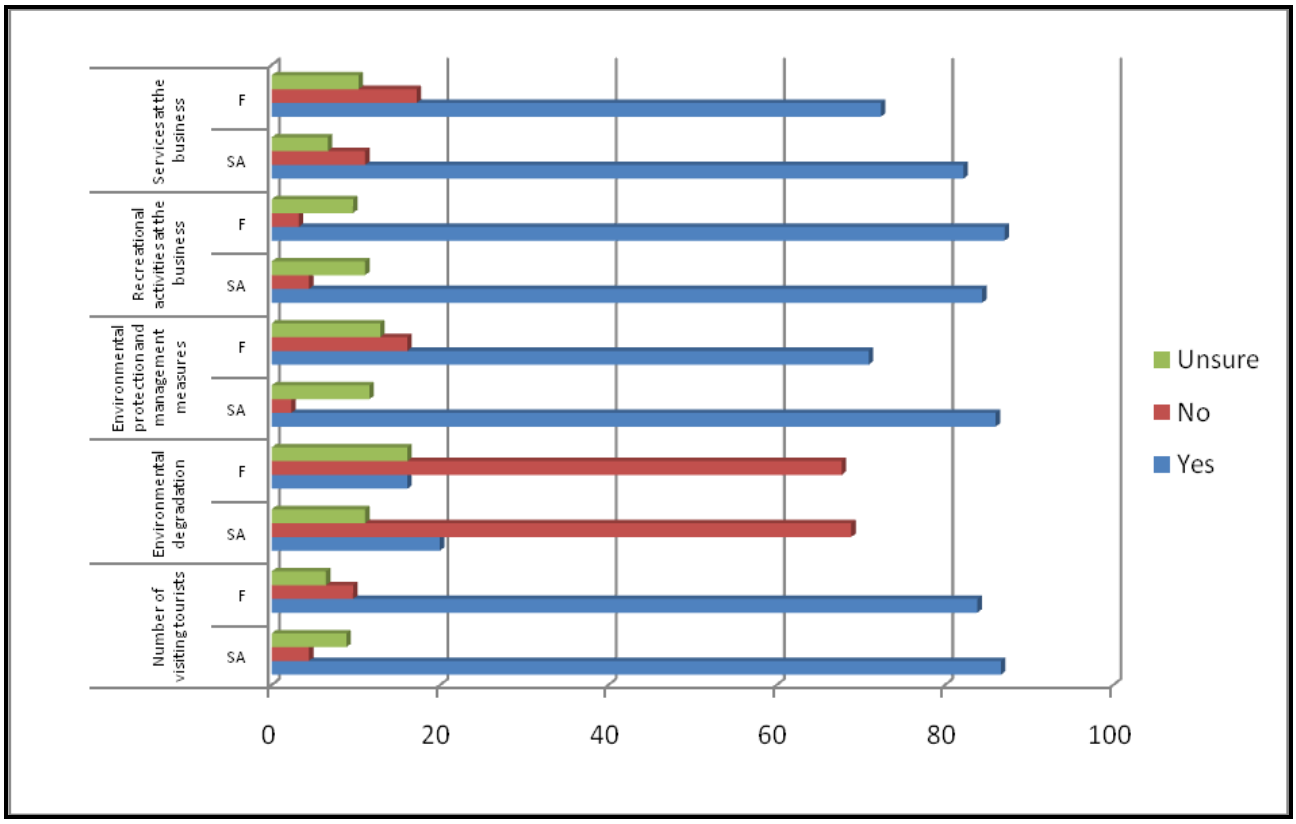

Figure 5-7: Perceptions of the effect of the increasing recreational value of forests and woodlands in the area

The majority of respondents expected an increase in: the number of visiting tourists at their business (85.53%), the environmental protection and management measures at their business (79.73%), recreational activities offered at their business (85.53%) and the services available at their business (78.38%). The majority of the respondents also believed that an increase in the recreational value of forests and woodlands will not increase the environmental degradation in the region of the business (68.42%). There is thus an overall positive attitude towards the increase of recreational activities in forest and woodland areas in the region.

5.11 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

During field notes, participant observations and various semi-structured interviews, the following main themes were identified:

***Mpumalanga Province*:**

- Forest and woodland areas were valuable in terms of sustaining tourism products and attracting tourists to the area.
- Forest and woodlands enabled tourism businesses to organise guided walks in a beautiful and peaceful environment.
- There was an increase of tourism activities, particularly adventure activities such as quad trails and canopy tours.
- Some tourism providers gave educational talks about forest environments and their importance which provided educational and learning experiences for tourists visiting the region.
- Tourism provider's perceptions about tourism development in the region were positive in terms of aiding in environmental conservation. Tourism development in the area had resulted in greater awareness and conservation of endangered species e.g. Blue Swallow and wild horses.
- Tourism is an important provider of employment. Many cases where people who had previously worked in the forestry industry are now running tourism establishments in the area
- Business tourists from the forestry industry were an important factor in increasing occupancy levels at the tourism establishments. Often business tourists extended the length of the stay in order to take part in recreational activities in the area.
- Tourism providers mentioned the need for better cooperation between the forestry and tourism sectors
- Participatory management is the main management approach in forests.
- Komatiland Company, important for providing tourism and recreation activities in forest/woodland areas.

Oulu Province:

- Forest and woodland areas are valuable in terms of sustaining tourism products and attracting tourists to the area.
- Currently no management tool (example carrying capacity) to limit the number of people entering a specific site
- Participatory management is the main management approach in forests.
- Wild North Program, a hugely successful program providing ecotourism, adventure and recreational opportunities
- Increase of adventure activities such as motorized sports
- Partnership and cooperation between tourism and forestry sector. Tourism sector can make an agreement to use a part of land (owned by forestry sector) to build base of tourism establishment in return for rent. Certain trails are then made available for hiking and motorized sports.

5.11.1 Results from semi-structured interview

The researcher was given permission for recordings to be made during an interview with the land-use and environment Manager at Metsähallitus. Metsähallitus is a state-owned enterprise that manages most of the protected areas of Finland and supplies wood to the country's forest industry. The interview was conducted for the purpose of getting a better understanding of the management structure and recreational and tourism use of forests in Finland. The main points highlighted and discussed in the interview are discussed below:

The increased use of forests and woodlands for tourism and recreation was addressed and it was acknowledged that there has been a definite increase in the amount of tourism and recreational activities that take place in both commercial and state forests in Finland. There are many nature-based tourism opportunities available in both state and commercial forests. It was further stated that Metsähallitus offers great hiking services to tourists and the local community such as (Metsähallitus, 2007):

- fantastic opportunities to feel revitalised in national parks, hiking areas and trails and in regular managed forests;
- hiking services for nature lovers – some free, some for a fee; and
- hunting and fishing permits, and cabins and wilderness huts.

It was mentioned that motorized sports such as snow-mobile safaris and motor biking through forests was becoming increasingly popular. However motorized sports in state forests are forbidden and only take place in commercial forests.

Regarding partnerships and cooperation between the tourism industry and forestry industry, it was stated that privatized tourism establishments were allowed to make agreements with the forestry industry for them to use a part of their land to build the base of their tourism establishment in return for rent. Certain trails are then made available for hiking and motorized sports.

Participatory management was identified as the main management approach adopted in Finland. Its importance was emphasized especially in getting all the stakeholders involved in the planning process in order to best reconcile all the different uses of forests.

When asked about carrying capacity as a management tool, it was mentioned that there were no real limits in the park to how many people could enter the park at one time. However there are marked nature trails that tourists have to stick to. This prevents too much erosion from taking place and limits the damage to the environment. These routes also prevent tourists from entering the very sensitive areas.

The Wild North program is a unit of Metsähallitus that organizes and makes available various recreation and tourism activities and services to tourists and the local community. It has been running for over 10 years and mostly sub-contractors are used to market and run the tourism establishments. They own about 200 to 300 wilderness huts and cabins which are mostly available to tourists at no additional cost. Most cabins are free and owned by the state; however there are also some cabins which are rented

out to visitors. Nowadays there are even private cabins which are rented out by Metsähallitus.

5.11.2 Results from the researcher's field notes during participant observation

The researcher made notes on observations in the field and conversations with various tourism providers during visits to Mpumalanga towards the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008.

Below are views of four respondents that were approached. The four respondents are labeled respondent A, respondent B, respondent C and respondent D.

Respondent A managed horse-riding tours through natural forests and plantations. The forests and woodlands enabled the tourism business to organize guided walks in a beautiful and peaceful environment which would not have been possible were it not for the forests and woodlands environment. During the guided tour, tourists are given an educational talk on forest environments and the importance of sustaining such environments. Tourists therefore learn to appreciate forest environments and awareness is created in protecting these fragile environments.

Respondent A was one of the few tourism providers situated in the middle of a plantation and due to an agreement with the plantation site, was given permission to use a part of the land for the running of the tourism establishment. The tourism provider however still expressed a negative attitude towards plantations in the area even though parts of the tours that are conducted go through plantation. He further described his views towards plantations as a 'love-hate' relationship. It was further mentioned that very few tourism establishments are given access and permission to the plantations. Most of the plantations are inaccessible and it is forbidden to enter the plantation site. He further expressed the need for increased partnerships between the forestry and tourism industry.

Respondent B, an accommodation provider in Kaapsche Hoop, a village in Mpumalanga well known for its horses and home to the endangered Blue Swallow, mentioned that

tourism development in the area had resulted in greater awareness and conservation of these endangered species. He further mentioned that tourism had resulted in the conservation and protection of the wild horses that are known to roam the town and which attract thousands of tourists every year.

Respondent C, an accommodation provider mentioned that he had previously worked in the forestry industry and that it was quite common to find people who had previously worked in the forestry industry now running tourism establishments in the area. Such providers have experience and an understanding of both industries. This further emphasizes the importance of partnerships with the local community. Tourism providers who previously worked in the forestry industry could have valuable insight in managing and balancing the two industries to ensure benefits on both sides.

Respondent D, an accommodation and activity provider in Kaapsche Hoop offering quad-tours/trails through forest and woodland areas mentioned that tourists who intended to stay in the area for only one or two nights often extended their stay when they were informed about the quad-trails, hiking trails and horse-riding trails that were available in the area. He emphasized the value of forests and woodland in extending the length of stay of tourists to his business.

5.12 SUMMARY

Chapter 5 presented the results and data analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative components of the part of the study that measured tourism provider's attitudes towards forest and tourism. Supported by the various statistical and qualitative results, it was found that forest and woodlands do play an important role in attracting tourists in both Finland and South Africa to come visit the area.

The present study reveals that even though there were very negative perceptions amongst the South African tourism providers regarding plantations in the region, the business tourists who visited the area in terms of forestry were very important in

increasing occupancy levels in the areas. Furthermore these business tourists took part in a number of recreational and tourist activities.

The results suggest that there is strong agreement that tourism activities have many benefits. However, it has to be asked whether the tourism providers are fully aware of some of the negative impacts that tourism development can have in the region. More research is needed to evaluate the impact of tourism development and recreation in the area.

The results show that both South African and Finnish tourism providers were supportive of the sustainable tourism principles in the destination and generally agree with on priorities in sustainability. However South African tourism providers find the sustainable principles of higher importance than do Finnish tourism providers.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2: TOURIST SURVEY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents a summary of the key quantitative and qualitative results from the visitor survey. The chapter starts with a demographic and behavioural profile of the respondents followed by the reasons and motivation why tourists visit forests and woodlands in the region. The chapter then discusses the distribution of responses towards the environment and forests. Lastly the study assesses and compares the interest that tourists and tourism providers have in sustainable tourism principles.

Table 6-1: Section reference for quantitative and qualitative results

Research method used	Data Analysis performed	Section results are displayed
Quantitative (Likert Scale Instrument): • Demographic profile of respondents • Distribution of responses to environment and forest importance statements	Univariate descriptive statistics Bivariate Statistics	6.3 6.4

6.2 FOREST VISITOR SURVEY

The research sample for the quantitative component of the study comprised of 43 tourists in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa. This part of the study only took place in the Mpumalanga Province and the questionnaire was administered during the months of November 2007, December 2007 and January 2008. Again, in this part of the study, forests were defined in general terms to include all trees and woodlands in the landscape. While the studies main aim was to compare the two countries, it was decided that only South African tourists would be used as respondents for this section of the

study. Finland has extensive statistics and information regarding recreation and tourism activities as well as the type of tourist that undertakes these activities in forests. This is provided by the Forest Statistics Information Service. It was therefore not necessary to conduct a survey amongst Finnish tourists as such information and statistics was readily available. In contrast, there was no information available on the characteristics of tourists and their behaviour in forests in South Africa. Also due to time, logistical and financial constraints, it was not practically feasible for the researcher to send surveys to tourists in Finland for this part of the study.

6.3 GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographic information concerning age, gender, employment status and nationality appears in the figures in this section. The purpose of the demographic profile is to offer further insight into the type of tourist that take part in activities/services offered in forest and woodland areas in Mpumalanga. It has to be noted that the results cannot be generalized to the whole of South Africa, only to the province of Mpumalanga.

Figure 6-1 illustrates the distribution of age groups of the 43 respondents. Most of the respondents fell within the age group 16-24 (n=21), followed by those in the age group 25-34 (n=12). Only nine respondents fell in the age group 35-44 and four in the 45-54 age group. None of the respondents fell into the 55-64 and 65+ age group. A possible reason for the majority of tourists being fairly young could be that the majority of tourism providers from which the tourists were chosen catered to a younger crowd such as back packers or adventure tourists.

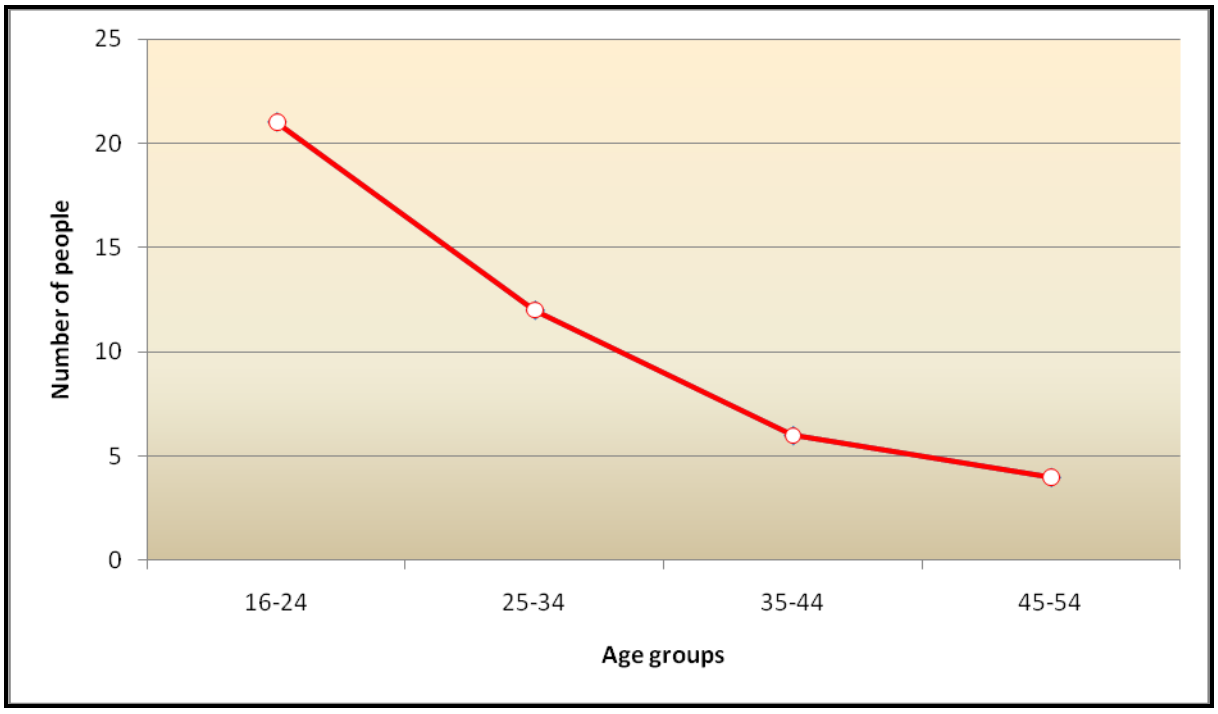

Figure 6-1: The distribution of age groups of the 43 respondents

There were slightly more female than male respondents, with male respondents accounting for 42% of the response and females accounting for 58%. **Figure 6-2** illustrates the distribution of male to female respondents.

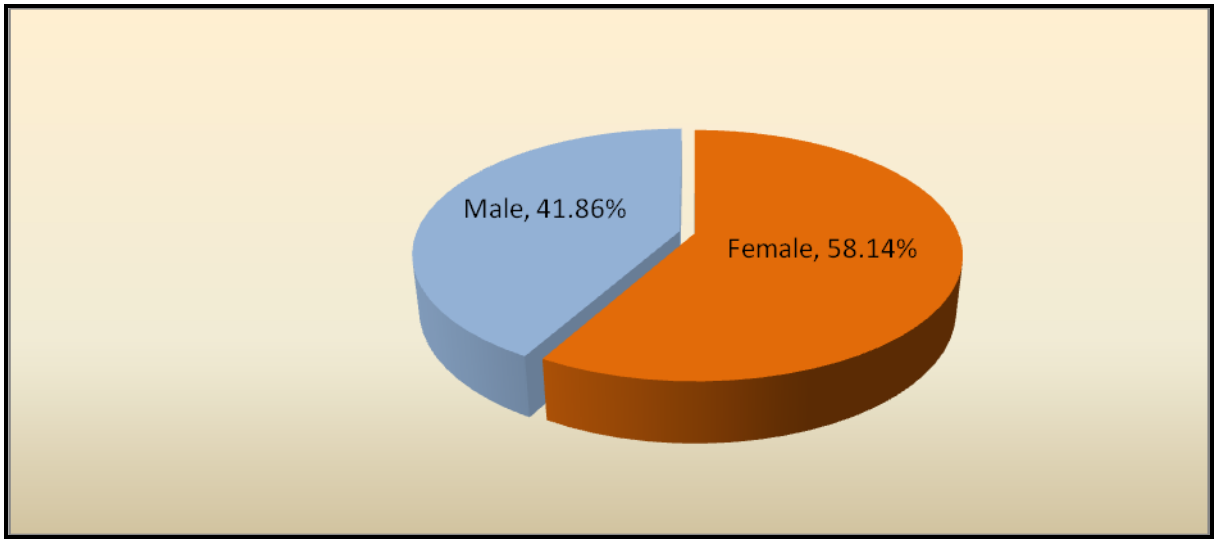

Figure 6-2: Gender profile of respondents

Table 6-2 provides a profile of the respondents in terms of trip behaviour variables. Just over half of the respondents (51%) were on a holiday away from home staying in the area while 29% were on a day out (of more than three hours) from home.

Respondents were further categorized into two groups namely; Leisure day tourists and overnight tourists. These two groups were fairly well represented, with leisure day tourists accounting for 46.34% and overnight tourists accounting for 53.66%. The results in **Table 6-2** indicate that the majority of respondents (61.9%) visited the forests and woodland area as part of a trip combining more than one activity. Only 16.67% of respondents specifically set out to visit the forest and woodland area; and 21.43% did not set out to visit the forest and woodland are but decided to visit the site on passing. The majority of respondents (69.23%) stayed at least two nights in the area. Those in full-time employment were the largest group of respondents, representing 86.05% of the total sample.

Table 6-2: Demographic profile of tourists (n=43)

Travel behaviour variables	n	%
Type of trip:		
On a short trip (of less than 3 hours) from home	7	17.07
On a day out (of more than 3 hours) from home	12	29.27
On holiday away from home staying in the area	21	51.22
On holiday visiting friends and relatives in the area	1	2.44
Total	**41**	**100**
Distinguishing tourists from leisure day visitors:		
Leisure day tourist	19	46.34
Overnight tourists	22	53.66
Total	**41**	**100**
Type of visit:		
Specifically set out to only visit the forest and woodland area	7	16.67
Visit forest and woodland area as part of trip combining more than one activity	26	61.90
Did not set out to visit forest and woodland area but decided to visit site on passing	9	21.43
Total	**42**	**100**

Travel behaviour variables	n	%
Number of people travelled with:		
1 - 5	28	70
6 - 10	4	10
11 - 15	8	20
Total	**40**	**100**
Duration of trip:		
Number of nights staying in the area:		
1	2	7.69
2	18	69.23
3	2	7.69
4	1	3.85
5	3	11.54
Total	**26**	**100**
Number of times the forest and woodland area was visited:		
1	8	36.36
2	13	59.09
3	1	4.55
Total	**22**	**100**
Employment status:		
Working full-time	37	86.04
Working part-time	1	2.33
In full-time higher education	4	9.30
In further education or training	1	2.33
Total	**43**	**100**
Nationality:	**39**	**90.68**
South African (Total)	18	41.86
Gauteng	10	23.25
Mpumalanga	2	4.64
Limpopo	1	2.33
Cape	8	18.6
Other African countries		
Swaziland	1	2.33
Overseas (Total)	**3**	**6.99**
Italy	1	2.33
Moscow	1	2.33
Asia	1	2.33
Total	**43**	**100**

6.3.1 Reasons for choosing the particular forest and woodland area

Respondents were asked, for their current trip, to identify the main reasons why they had chosen to visit the particular forest and woodland area.

Table 6-3 presents the area characteristics/reasons for visiting the area summarized into 15 general response categories. The order in which the reasons are listed are from the most popular reasons for visiting the area to the least popular. The most frequently cited reason for choosing to visit the area was “Beautiful scenery/environment” followed by “Close to home” and “mountain biking”.

Table 6-3: Reasons for choosing the particular forest and woodland area

Reasons given by respondents	n	%
1. Beautiful scenery/environment	10	24.39
2. Close to home	5	12.20
3. Mountain biking	5	12.20
4. Hiking	3	7.32
5. Horse riding	3	7.32
6. En route to our final destination	2	4.88
7. To be in nature	2	4.88
8. Part of the panorama route	2	4.88
9. To get away from the city	2	4.88
10. Bird watching	2	4.88
11. For leisure	1	2.44
12. Swimming	1	2.44
13. Animal viewing	1	2.44
14. Waterfalls	1	2.44
15. Rural	1	2.44
Total	**41**	**100**

Respondents were also asked if their visit to this forest and woodland area was part of a trip combining more than one activity, what other reasons they had for making their current trip. The results in **Table** 6-4 lists the reasons for visiting the forest and woodland area if the visit was part of a trip combining more than one activity.

Table 6-4 shows that more than half of the respondents (63%) visited the forest and woodland area as part of a trip combining more than one activity. The most popular activity was hiking followed by visiting the waterfalls in the area. **Table 6-4** lists the reasons for visiting the forest and woodland area if the visit was part of a trip combining more than one activity.

Table 6-4: Reason for visiting the forest and woodland area if visit was part of a trip combining more than one activity

Reasons given by respondents	n	%
1. Hiking	6	20.69
2. Visiting the waterfalls in the area	5	18.52
3. Seeing the surrounding beauty	3	10.34
4. Visiting nearby towns	3	10.34
5. Mountain biking	3	10.34
6. Viewing game in The Kruger Park	3	10.34
7. Adventure sports	2	6.9
8. Bird watching	2	6.9
9. Horse riding	1	3.45
Total	**27**	**100**

It is clear from the results that forest and woodlands in Mpumalanga are used for a wide variety of activities. They therefore represent an important element to the tourism activities/services that are offered in the area. Considering that a large percentage of respondents were in full-time employment and over half of the respondents were on holiday away from home staying in the area, it can be suggested that the majority of the respondents visited the forest and woodland area as a means of “escape” from their busy lives. The forest and woodland areas in Mpumalanga therefore provide an important environment for people to relax and take part in leisure activities thereby improving their overall well-being and health.

6.4 MEASUREMENT OF VISITOR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

Attitudes are generally considered to be a major motivational factor influencing behaviour (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:117). Therefore a positive attitude towards behaviour will most likely result in the behaviour to be undertaken. For example, when an individual maintains a positive attitude towards recreation in forests it is likely that they will undertake recreational activities. Understanding the factors that motivate this behaviour can provide useful information for those organizations engaged in managing forest-related tourism.

The most common way to measure attitudes is to use psychometric scaling techniques (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:118). In this study measures which allow the individual to evaluate belief statement on an ordinal scale ranging from a strongly positive response to a strongly negative response was used. Respondents were asked to evaluate the extent to which they agreed with a set of belief statements regarding the importance of forests and the environment. The existing “Forest Importance Scale” (FIS) was used to measure attitudes towards forests and recreation. **Figure 6-3** illustrates

results of responses towards the five statements of the Forest Importance Scale.

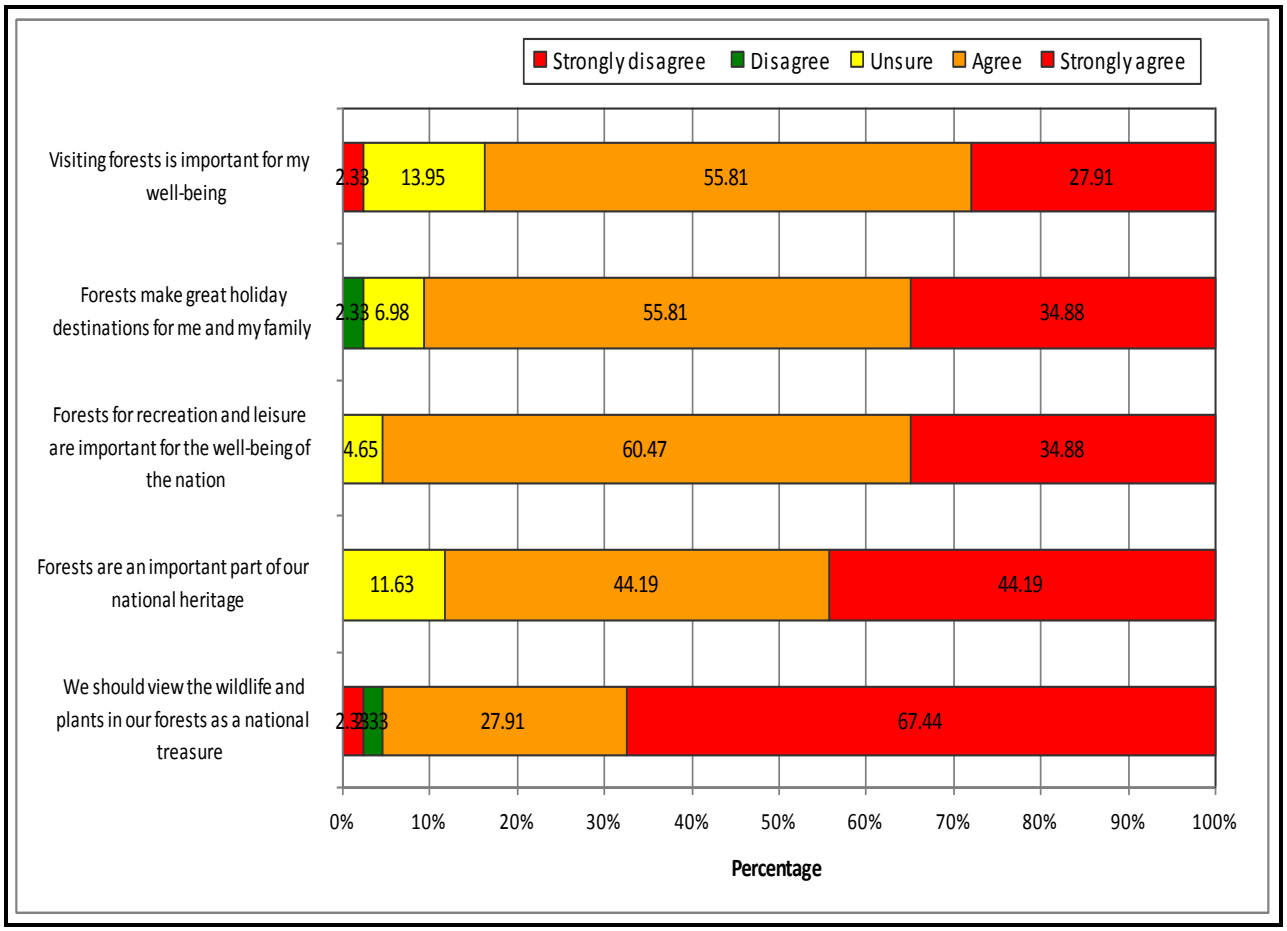

Figure 6-3: The Forest Importance Scale (FIS)

The General Awareness and Consequence environmental attitude scale (GAC) was used to measure general attitudes towards the environment. The scale was used on the premise that environmental values are a contributory factor to general attitudes towards forest use. **Figure 6-4** illustrates the results of the responses towards the six statements of the GAC scale.

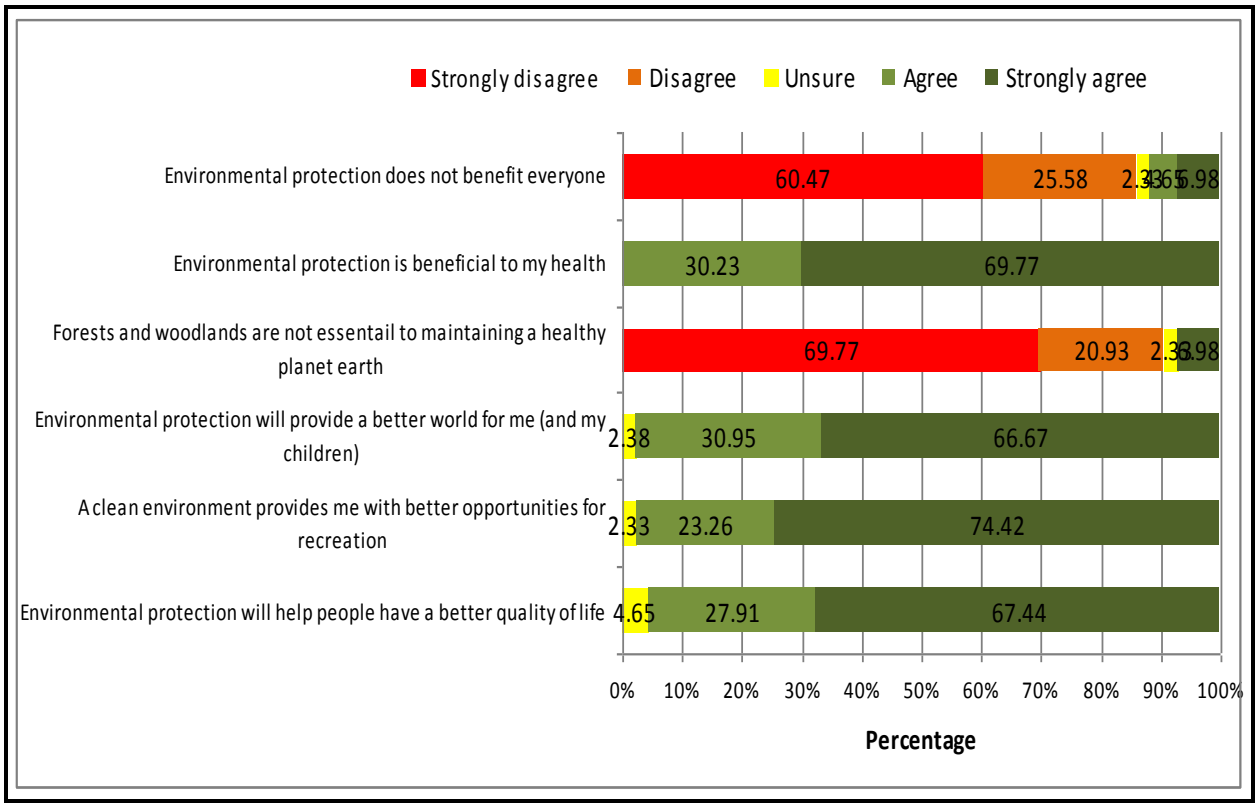

Figure 6-4: The General Awareness and Consequence environmental attitude scale (GAC)

In the context of forest recreation, it may be hypothesized that one of the key contributors to attitudes to the importance of forest is the environmental values of the individual, which essentially measures the relationship of the individual to the natural environment (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:117). Therefore, tourists who place high values on environmental values will also place a high value on the importance of forests and woodlands.

In order to measure the correlation between the FIC and GAC scale, the non-parametric Spearman's rank order correlation was used and the results in **Table 6-5** confirm that there is a positive correlation between the attitudes towards the forest importance scale and general attitudes towards the environment, rs (43) = 0.56, p=<0.0001 which is < than 0.05.

Table 6-5: Spearman's rank order correlation non-parametric test for the FIC and GAC scale

		FIS
GAC	Correlation Coefficient	0.39371
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.009

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

If attitudes to the importance of forests are influencing behaviour it may be expected that individuals with high FIS scores are likely to spend more time in forests and to make more frequent forest visits. **Table 6-6** shows the correlations between attitudes and frequency of forest visits.

Table 6-6: Spearman's rank order correlation non-parametric test for FIS and frequency of trip

		FIS
V5	Correlation Coefficient	0.38691
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.07

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Although not as strong, the results show there is a positive relationship between attitudes towards forests and frequency of trip. Therefore those with a positive attitude towards forests are likely to undertake more frequent trips. The results indicate that attitudes are an important motivational force behind the nature, type and frequency of forest visits. Tests for any significant differences in respondent perceptions using demographic variables of gender, age and trip type are discussed in the sections below.

6.4.1 Gender difference in attitude

There was no significant difference between men and women in the strength of both environmental attitudes and attitudes towards the importance of forests. This does not concur with studies of general attitudinal biases which suggest that women are more environmentally aware than men. One reason for this could be due to the global increase of environmental awareness. Increasing numbers of tourists are becoming convinced of the need to preserve and protect particular environments (Holden, 2000). In terms of the General Awareness and Consequence environmental attitude scale, the only significant result was that females had a stronger disagreement against the statement “Environmental protection does not benefit everyone”.

6.4.2 Effect of age on environmental/forest importance attitudes

The results indicate that there is no significant difference between older and younger people with regards to both the environmental attitudes and the forest importance scale. In other words, older people are equally likely to consider forests important as young people, and the same can be said with the environmental attitudes. This study is supported by previous studies that have also shown that there is no similar significant relationship between age and appraisal of the importance of forests.

However, previous research has indicated that young people tend to be more environmentally aware than older people. One reason could be that there were no respondents over the age of 54 years. Given that there is a strong positive correlation between FIS and GAC (P= 0.09) this brings up the question why older and younger people consider forests equally important. As mentioned before, previous research came across similar results and stated that the probable reason could be that the GAC and FIS scales are measuring different constructs, environmentalism in the case of GAC and importance of leisure, heritage and the countryside aesthetic for the FIS. It can therefore be suggested that while young people rate the importance of forests high at least in part because of the environmental aspects older people are rating it more for its leisure, heritage and aesthetic values (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:124).

6.4.3 Type of trip against environmental and forest attitudes and features of forest visits

Respondents were further grouped into two groups namely: Leisure day trip visitors and overnight tourists. In terms of environmental attitudes the only significant result concerned the statement “Forests and woodlands are not essential to maintaining a healthy planet earth”. In terms of the importance of forest attitudes, there was a significant differences between leisure day trip visitors and overnight tourists concerning the statements “forests are an important part of our national heritage” and “forests make great holiday destinations for me and my family”. Overnight tourists showed a more positive attitude towards the statements than the leisure day trip visitors.

6.5 IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Both samples (tourists and tourism providers) were asked how important they perceived the principles of sustainability were. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of the 12 principles of sustainable tourism, on a five-position scale ranging from 1= “not important” to 5= “essential”, which was then later collapsed into three groups. **Table 6-7** lists the principles used for this study. These principles are grouped into six primary focus groups namely: environmental, environmental and social, economic, local participation, planning and educational.

Table 6-7: Sustainability principles included in the study and their primary focus

Sustainability principle	Primary focus
Sensible use of nature resources	Environmental
Reduction of consumption and waste products	Environmental
Maintain diversity of plants and animals	Environmental
Studies of environmental and social impacts	Environmental and social
Responsible marketing of tourism	Environmental and social
Support of local economy	Economic
Tourism supports improvements in the area	Economic
Cooperation with local residents	Local participation

Sustainability principle	Primary focus
Consultation of interest groups including stakeholders	Local participation
Integration of tourism into local, regional and national planning	Planning
Information and nature interpretation for tourists	Educational
Training of staff	Educational

Both tourists and tourism providers found the principles of sustainable tourism to be either very important or essential. The environmental principles were found to be of the highest importance among both tourists and tourism providers. These included the maintenance of diversity of animals and plant life (63-70%), and sensible use of natural resources (63-68%), reduction of energy and water consumption, garbage, and wastewater production (59-65%).

Although both groups had fairly similar attitudes towards sustainability principles, tourists generally did find the principles more important than the tourism providers. Tourists were significantly more interested than tourism providers in consulting different interest groups in the development of tourism (0.024) of which 53.49% of tourists find essential to only 23.68% of the tourism providers; and cooperation from local residents in the development of tourism (0.0016). The cooperation with local residents in the development of tourism was essential to 58.14% of the tourists and only 35.53% of the tourism providers. No significant differences were found with regards to the other 10 principles.

6.6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

For the purpose and scope of this study, the study could not do a full test of the model however this should be considered for future research. The study used the theory of reasoned action only as the foundation of its conceptual framework and it must be emphasised that this was never intended to be a full test of the model.

This study used the FIS and GAC as a simple measure of attitudes towards forest importance and usage. A positive correlation was found between attitudes towards

forests and general environmental attitudes. The implications of these findings are that respondents' scores on the FIS scale are positively correlated with their scores on the GAC scale and therefore a positive correlation exists between attitudes towards forests and general environmental attitudes. The results also showed that high scores on the forest importance scale indicated that individuals are more likely to be frequent forest visitors. It is important to keep in the mind that the forest importance and environmental scales used in the present study only provides a simple measure of attitudes towards forest importance and therefore forest usage.

The high interest of both tourists and tourism providers towards sustainability principles encourages the tourism industry, destination managers and local planners to take initiatives to increase sustainability and environmental performance destination. Deng, King & Bauer (2002:424) emphasize that sustainable nature-based tourism and ecotourism development can only be achieved when the behaviour of destination managers, stakeholders and tourists are ecologically, economically and ethically responsible. These results reflect a similar study with similar results obtained by Kaaie (2001) where tourists and residents were compared on the importance they shared on sustainability principles and environmental initiatives. The present study however only chose to compare perceived importance on sustainability principles and not environmental initiatives as it was not possible in the context of the study. It would be useful to cover both sustainability and environmental initiatives in future research.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 7 provides an overall review of the research aim, objectives, findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study. Chapter 7 begins with a summary of the background of the research, and the research purpose, methodology and main findings. The chapter further discusses the limitations of the methods and data. The challenge of managing sustainable forest tourism is discussed next followed by suggestions for future research regarding tourism development in forest and woodland areas. This is followed by a conclusion and guidelines, and recommendations for forest tourism management are given. The study concludes with a discussion of the contribution of this study to the discipline of tourism management.

7.2 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

It is important to review the aim and objectives set for the study to ensure that they have been reached. The aim of this study was to do a comparative analysis of the role of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector in selected areas of Finland and South Africa. The study aimed to accomplish this through examining tourism provider's perceptions and attitudes towards forests, tourism and recreation, and sustainability principles. The study also examined from the demand side, tourist's behaviour and attitudes towards the environment, forests and sustainability principles. Finally the results from the study were used to formulate tourism guidelines for organisations involved in managing forest-related tourism. **Table** 7-1 lists the six objectives that were achieved to give effect to the aim of the study

Table 7-1: Review of research aim and objectives of the study

Research objective	Chapter reference
To present a general picture of the differences and similarities between the regions and countries	Chapter 3
To assess the role that forests and woodlands play in tourism and recreation in the study regions.	Chapter 3 and 4
To understand how tourism providers in Finland and South Africa value and use forests and woodlands.	Chapter 5
To measure the attitudes of visitors towards the environment and forests, and to investigate links between visitor attitudes and behaviour.	Chapter 6
To assess to which degree tourists and tourism providers share perceptions of the importance of the fundamental principles of sustainability and sustainable tourism.	Chapter 5 and 6
To provide guidelines and recommendations regarding the future development of forest tourism and recreation in South Africa and Finland.	Chapter 7

7.3 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH AND MAIN FINDINGS

National forests and woodland areas in South Africa and Finland have undoubtedly played a role in attracting tourism in many communities located near them through nature-based tourism and recreation. The study shows that a wide variety of tourism and recreational activities take place in South African and Finnish forest and woodland areas. Furthermore regardless of the size of the forest area, forest and woodland areas are very popular locations for a diverse range of recreational and adventure activities attracting a wide variety of target markets. A wide range of target markets were important to both South African and Finnish tourism providers and for both countries the most popular target markets were international tourists and nature-orientated tourists.

In selecting the most suitable methodology for this study, it was decided to use the methodological triangulation approach, which combines elements of both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Participant observation, a Likert scale questionnaire and semi-structured personal interviews were used to assess respondents attitudes and perceptions towards forests, tourism and sustainability principles. A second Likert scale

questionnaire was used to assess tourists' attitudes towards forests and the environment and to explore the relationship between attitudes and behaviour. The FIS and GAC scales used in the questionnaire administered to tourists provided simple measures of attitudes towards forest importance and forest usage. This scale could also be used in future studies to assess how communities are likely to respond to the creation of a new forest area or the opening of a new forest for recreation (Hill, Courtney, Burton & Potts, 2003:118).

There is an increasing demand for commercial outdoor adventure activities worldwide (Buckley, 2003:2). As a result of the global increase of adventure tourism, the number of adventure activities offered in forest and woodland areas are also increasing. Activities such as four-wheel drives through forests and canopy tours have become very popular and are attracting more and more tourists in South Africa and in Finland activities such as snow-mobile safaris are becoming increasingly popular.

The research shows that forests and woodlands play an important role in the tourism sector as they constitute a vital element to the tourism products offered in these regions. Without forests and woodlands, many of these activities would not take place in the regions. The study further shows that tourism providers are in strong agreement that forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of attracting tourists, extending the length of the tourist season and the time that people stay in local tourism areas and in determining the identity of local tourism destinations. The results emphasize that forests and woodlands are especially important in maintaining and creating the tourism activities in the area.

There was uncertainty and disagreement amongst a large percentage of tourism providers regarding the involvement of the community in decision-making with forest tourism in the region. Findings reveal a need to increase and monitor local community participation in the two case study regions.

Overall both South African and Finnish tourism respondents demonstrated a predominantly positive attitude towards tourism development in the area and the

benefits of tourism development in the regions were seen as especially important. One reason for this is that within the context of economic growth, tourism may have a significant role to play in wealth creation and is often used as a means of generating economic growth in regions (Holden, 2008:107). However one has to question what the costs are that tourism development can have on the environment and what society as a whole views as the acceptable costs of economic growth (Holden, 2008:108). Bori-Sanz & Niskanen (2002) argue that tourism should stimulate measures to protect the environment and conserve nature, or even substantial enhancement of natural areas so that the visitor's satisfaction increases.

Tourism providers mentioned that business tourists from the forestry industry played an important role in increasing occupancy levels at the tourism establishments in the area as they often take part in recreational and tourism activities during and/or after their business trip once again highlighting that forests and woodlands are valuable in extending the time a tourist stays in the area. However, South African tourism providers showed a very negative attitude towards the plantations in the area and expressed the view that the plantations should be replaced by nature parks or hiking areas.

The results indicate that the favoured management approach for both South Africa and Finland is the participatory management approach. However this approach has shown to be less successful in Southern African countries (Grundy & Michell, 2004). Future research should look into the reasons for this.

There was an overall positive attitude towards the increase of recreational value in forest and woodland areas. The majority of tourism providers (South African and Finnish) expected that an increase in the recreational value of forests and woodlands will result in an increase in the number of tourists, the environmental protection and management measures at the business, recreational activities and services offered at the establishment.

The study also investigated individuals' attitudes towards forests for recreation. The study has shown that there is a clear link between individuals' attitudes and their forest

visiting behaviour. The results confirm that there is a positive correlation between the attitudes towards forests and general attitudes towards the environment. Therefore, tourists who place high values on environmental values are most likely to place a high value on the importance of forests and woodlands. The results also show that the majority of tourists visit forest and woodland areas as part of a trip combining more than one activity.

The results of the study further add a consumer and supplier perspective with regard to the importance of sustainable tourism principles. This study documents the fairly high levels of importance tourists and tourism providers place on the importance of sustainability principles. Both South African and Finnish tourism providers as well as the tourists found the principles of sustainable tourism to be of high or some importance. The environmental principles were found to be of the highest importance amongst both the tourists and tourism providers. Positive perceptions towards sustainable tourism principles by both tourists and tourism providers will encourage tourism providers to act sustainably with regards to tourism development and management. Changes in tourism towards more sustainable practices need the support of both the host and visitor and therefore it is important to assess the perceptions of both the visitor and host regarding sustainable tourism principles.

7.4 LIMITATION OF METHODS AND DATA

It is impossible to generalize and make broad conclusions based on just two case study regions. Each site has its particular natural and socio-economic conditions and background, which make it unique and different to other sites (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002). Therefore, only specific conclusions linked to the particular case study areas could be raised.

Comparisons are made in the study between the different countries and regions; however the varying definitions and different data collected make this a difficult task. Standardized definitions and data collected and presented for similar issues would

improve comparisons, resulting in a bigger picture of the real differences between the countries.

Although the sample size was deemed acceptable, a larger sample of both tourists and tourism providers would have resulted in more powerful analysis. Due to time and financial restrictions to undertake this research, no more questionnaires could be implemented.

Non-response bias may be present in this study with regard to the questionnaires administered to tourists in Mpumalanga as it appears that mostly younger and more educated tourists responded. This suggests that our findings may be more representative of this group of tourist. To reduce this problem in further studies, one should seek to increase the response rate among older tourists.

The results of the Cronbach alpha test showed that both the FIS and GAC scales were close but just below the recommended cut-off point of 0.7. Even though it was deemed acceptable for the present study, it is suggested that additional items should be added for future research to the scale to improve its reliability.

The study is a cross-sectional study and therefore only provides a snapshot in a particular moment about the state of forest tourism and recreation in the study areas. A similar study should be repeated after several years to see if the findings are consistent over time and to reveal any trends or evolution of these issues. Future research should include longitudinal studies of the behaviour of tourists in the region in order to identify trends and patterns in the behaviour of tourists.

The study used the theory of reasoned action when measuring tourists' attitudes and behaviour. It is important to point out that the study never intended to do a full test of the model. The study has not included the role of social norms or perceived behavioural control in influencing behaviour and including these items may have provided a more thorough test of the relationship between attitude and behaviour however in the context of the study, this was not possible.

7.5 THE CHALLENGE OF MANAGING SUSTAINABLE FOREST TOURISM AND RECREATION

Godfrey (1998:213) argues that to achieve sustainability, the industry must go much further than the somewhat fashionable 'greening' of tourism products. Godfrey (1998:213) emphasises that partnerships, integration, community involvement, and environmental stewardship are the "new orders of the day". This is particularly relevant to the tourism and forestry industries, especially because of the many different uses and stakeholders who benefit from forest and woodland environments.

Hunter (1997:855), points out that given the likelihood that tourism will become the largest single sector of world trade early in the next century, the potential of tourism to contribute to sustainable development from local to global scales is substantial. The following important issues concerning tourism development need to be considered:

- the tourism industry must become a proactive leader in shaping the debate on sustainability (McKercher, 1993),;
- it is crucial that tourism development decision-making should be both informed and transparent (Hunter, 1997:859)
- Recognition of community property and access rights is an important prerequisite for participation by users in forest management. There is a need to development mechanisms to regulate the use of live wood and other non-timber forest products, which will be sensitive to both user needs and the sustainability of the resource base (Robertson & Lawes, 2005:72)
- The sustainable development of tourism requires harmonious relationships between communities, the industry and tourists (Zhang, Inbakaran & Jackson, 2006:182). However, since South African forests are both relatively rare and species-rich (Midgley, Cowley, Seydack & Van Wyk, 1997:31), clear guidelines are needed to maintain ecosystem sustainability (Lawes, Midgley & Chapman, 2004).

Recent history, such as international efforts working with the Tropical Forestry Action Plan clearly shows both how difficult it is to achieve sustainable forest management in the contemporary world and that many problems remain to be solved in order to realize the potential benefits that forests have to offer (Prasad, 2006:16). Pickering & Weaver (2003:7) argue that given the size, growth rate, ubiquity, diversity and variable impacts of the nature-based tourism sector, the goal of sustainability has become especially vital in the nature-based tourism sector, and also in forestry management.

7.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Together the results from the different parts and countries highlight the important and integral role that forests and woodlands play in the tourism sector. From the literature and research conducted, it was identified that further research needs to be conducted concerning:

- the economic significance of forests and woodlands in relation to the tourism sector specifically in South Africa;
- the value of forests and woodlands to the local community and the need for further research regarding local community involvement;
- the impact of tourism development in the region and the impact of forestry in South Africa;
- the attitudes towards tourism development in the regions;
- the relationship between the forestry and tourism industries; and
- tourism and recreation statistics in forest and woodland areas of South Africa.

The study shows that the forest resources in Finland are well assessed, however not so for South Africa. Little research has been conducted in South Africa concerning how forests and woodlands are used for tourism and recreation. Furthermore, the researcher is not aware of any research that has assessed tourist attitudes towards forests and the environment and their perceptions towards sustainability principles. The present study emphasizes the need for further research concerning the importance of forests for

tourism and recreation in South Africa, as well as the perceptions towards sustainability principles.

Kline (2001:8) reports that increasing recognition of the role of national forests as tourism destinations may imply a need to expand traditional outdoor recreation planning to include inquiry into economic, social, and ecological impacts of tourism. Furthermore evaluating the existing and potential role national forests can play in attracting local and regional tourism likely would aid national forest managers in natural resource planning (Kline, 2001:8). Future studies could address what types and scales of tourism development are appropriate in certain locations from economic, social and ecological perspectives. Also, a more comprehensive comparison could possibly asses the effects of cultural differences between the regions in South Africa and Finland.

7.7 CONCLUSION

The present study emphasized the considerable value and diverse range of services that forests offer for the tourism sector. Forests in Finland and South Africa are crucial elements for tourism and recreation, and nature-based tourism in forest and woodland environments has increased rapidly in both countries. Vast potential still exists for the further development of forests and woodlands as part of tourism resources.

The results suggest that well-managed and organized tourism in forested rural areas can play a significant role in enhancing the economic, environmental and social development in the regions. However, there is a need to integrate the different sectors (tourism and forestry) and to further develop the relationship between the two sectors to ensure that the benefits are delivered more effectively. The study also suggests that there is potential for greater partnership development between the forestry and tourism sector and a need for increased communication between the two sectors, specifically in South Africa.

The forest resources in Finland are well assessed, however not so for South Africa. Furthermore the differences in definitions applied and data collected, the lack of data on

some resources (for example ecosystem values of forest and woodlands and non-timber uses of forests specifically in South Africa), and the complex interactions between the timber and tourism resources provide considerable challenges in improving the understanding of similarities and differences between and within the countries and regions.

The comparison of the two case-study regions reveals the significance of forests in general to both countries. Tourism and recreation in forest and woodland areas are especially important sectors for national economies and general national well-being and the data presented support the conclusion of forests and woodlands as important sectors for tourism and recreation in Finland and South Africa.

7.8 GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGING FOREST TOURISM

The initial conclusions for Finland and South Africa show areas of both similarities and differences. While the multi-functional use of forests in Finland is apparent, there is little information available on the multi-functional use of forests in South Africa. In Finland, METLA (the Finnish Forest Research Institute) conducts annual reports regarding statistics on recreation and multi-use activities in forests areas. South Africa needs to adopt such an approach. There is a need for greater cooperation between the forestry industry, tourism industry and the organisation responsible for collecting statistical data.

Finland evidently has more comprehensive information on forest resources than South Africa, however information basis is still limited for certain issues regarding recreation and nature tourism; and there is a need to strengthen national research in both South Africa and Finland. There is data lacking on many important aspects such as the ecosystem values and non-timber goods and services of forests and woodlands for both countries. A set of forest values should be identified and compiled by the forestry and tourism industries in both regions. Bengsten (1994:527) contends that a better understanding of values associated with forests and forest ecosystems is an essential part of forest ecosystem management and if it is to succeed, ecosystem management

cannot simply be a collection of biological research findings and forest practices. There are several ways that forest managers, planners, policymakers, and scientists involved in developing and implementing ecosystem management approaches can benefit from a better understanding of forest values (Bengston, 1994:528):

- The first benefit is in establishing appropriate goals for ecosystem management. Information about people's values and the relative importance of forest values is essential to helping managers establish and justify appropriate goals and define the broad, strategic guidelines within which ecosystem management is practiced.
- Studies of forest values can help managers determine how people will react to forest practices that are part of ecosystem management.
- Forest value analysis may be helpful in dealing with inevitable conflicts over public forest management.
- An improved understanding of forest values may help illuminate the true nature of environmental conflicts, and help resource managers and policymakers distinguish between fundamental value differences and value disputes for which the prospects of resolution are much brighter.

There is a need to study the economic value of recreation in forest and woodland areas to identify the value of recreation in comparison to forestry and logging. Research has shown in various areas that the economic value of forest recreation is greater than that of logging (Ward, 2003:64). According to The Finnish Forest Research Institute, METLA (2007:9), some of the key research areas are:

- Tools and models to combine timber production and tourism (recreation) in forest planning and management need to be developed
- Social and economic impacts of nature tourism on regional and local economies need to be studied
- The need for developing nature tourism entrepreneurship

There seems to be limited cooperation between the two industries in the Mpumalanga Province, where only a handful of establishments have been given permission to have

agreements with the plantations in the area to use their land for tourism and recreational activities. The findings suggest a need for closer liaison and greater communication between the forestry and tourism industries.

In Finland the participatory management approach has been successful especially in getting all the stakeholders involved in the planning process in order to best reconcile all the different uses of forests. In South Africa the approach has been less successful but is still seen as the way forward. There is a need to identify clearly the challenges and reasons for this and to what extent they can learn from countries such as Finland where the approach has been more successful. Once participatory forest management is entered into with a community it requires environmental education, capacity building, consultation and development of trust between all parties (De Villiers, 2004:691).

Environmental education and interpretation should be emphasized and used in forest and woodland areas to reinforce or enhance visitors' environmental and social concerns. A study done by Tubb (2003) found that environmental education or interpretation can positively influence visitors' environmental attitudes. Thus environmental education or interpretation can motivate people to visit nature-based destinations through their effects on environmental attitudes (Luo & Deng, 2008:400).

One of the key challenges identified by Metla (2007) was a need to develop forestry education to address recreation, tourism and landscape management aspects. There is a need to improve and understand how different parts and uses function together, such as the interaction between recreation ecosystem approach in planning and the production of timber. Finally, it is important that tourism impacts on the local people are analysed and identified. Both hosts and guests need to be sensitive to one another (Fennel, 2008:49).

With the growth in international nature-based tourism and the supply of nature-based tourism services in Northern Finland and South Africa, there will be a need to develop high-quality tourism environments (METLA, 2006:7). The mere existence of forest in the

area is not enough to promote tourism, other activities such as services and infrastructure are also required (Bori-Sanz & Niskanen, 2002:28).

Carrying capacity is an important management tool which is often overlooked. Hunter (1997) suggest that one should not focus on “how much is too much”, rather the focus should be on identifying what kinds of resources and social conditions are appropriate and acceptable in different settings (Kline, 2001:9). Forests and woodlands in South Africa and Finland are increasingly under pressure from many different user groups. Particularly with the increase of adventure tourism, a need has arisen to make use of management tools which would prevent conflicts between different user groups and that would aid in sustaining the environment.

Emphasis should be on the educational element of sustainability principles. Education is especially important in rural areas where poor people do not have the knowledge to understand concepts such as tourism, nature-based tourism, ecotourism and sustainability. It is often stated that an important difference between the new forms of tourism and conventional tourism is found in the element of educational input into the activity (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:103). The goal should be to create a better understanding of how the natural and human environment works. Through education, a greater awareness and appreciation is created towards these environments. This will aid in creating better partnerships and stakeholder relationships amongst the local community, tourists and tourism establishments; and is especially important for countries such as South Africa and Finland where a high percentage of people live in rural areas.

There is a large volume of research and debates regarding the definition of terms such as sustainable tourism and sustainable development, and there is a need to examine the meaning of ecotourism and nature tourism within different world regions and countries (Higgins, 1996:12). The findings also suggest a need for a definition of what constitutes the concept “forest tourism” in South Africa. Furthermore, it is imperative that there is a common understanding of terms such as sustainable tourism, sustainable development and ecotourism amongst the different stakeholders in the region. This will assist in conflict resolution concerning topics of tourism development in the regions.

Together the results from the different parts of the study highlight the integral role that forests and woodlands play in the tourism sector. Forests and woodlands are a very important part of the landscape in both the Mpumalanga and Oulu province, even though the forested area is not so large in South Africa. Many activities are undertaken in these forested areas which is one of the reasons why the studies perceptions emphasise that the role of forests in tourist and recreational activities is vital in the study regions.

Forests are an important element in the landscape of many rural areas in Finland and South Africa. In certain regions of Finland there has been a rapid decline in the importance of agriculture and forestry in rural and peripheral areas. As a result of this, tourism has been considered as an alternative for enhancing economic wealth. If managed and organised sustainably, the recreational and tourist roles of forests can be a significant tool in supplying jobs especially to the poorer regions thereby enhancing the socio-economic development of these rural areas. Eagles, McCool & Haynes (2002) states that when carefully planned and effectively managed, tourism can provide significant benefits to the nearby communities especially to rural communities in developing countries that are strongly dependent on natural resources. However, In both Finland and South Africa there are often conflicting issues involving conservation, tourism and traditional forms of land use as a result of increasing numbers of tourists. The challenge is in resolving these conflicts in order to ensure that the benefits are made available to all stakeholders.

The role of tourism establishments is essential in order to manage tourist activities in forests; and these tourism activities should be managed sustainably. The results show that in certain areas of Mpumalanga it is often the case that the tourism providers had previously worked in the forestry industry. This could potentially be leverage in encouraging a greater partnership between the tourism and forestry industries in South Africa. There is a need for tourism establishments to work together with the forestry industry in order to aid conflicts that might occur between the different stakeholders.

Over the last decade there have been changes in many countries where management for nature and ecological functions of forests as well as the social functions of forests, like recreation and tourism have become important (Pröbstl, 2007). Kline (2001:8) further states that evaluating the existing and potential role national forests can play in attracting local and regional tourism would likely aid national forest managers in natural resource planning. The study suggests that South Africa still has a far way to go regarding information basis for forest-based tourism and recreation.

7.9 SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT

This study has contributed to the discipline of tourism management in generating a new body of knowledge regarding the role of forests and woodlands in South Africa and in profiling what type of tourists visit forest and woodlands areas and their reasons and motivations for visiting these areas.

The present study has taken an international approach by comparing different countries and presenting and comparing their similarities, differences, challenges and opportunities regarding tourism and recreation in forest and woodland areas. The study also sheds light on the current situation between the forestry and tourism sectors in Finland and South Africa highlighting opportunities and constraints.

The study assessed the perceptions and attitudes of both the supply and demand side and has highlighted the vast amount of information that is still lacking and the need for future research concerning a number of issues concerning the tourism sector and forestry sector and their relationship with one another. Only by understanding and raising awareness of the relationships, challenges and constraints of a region can one come up with solutions and initiatives to solve the various issues linked to tourism and recreation in forest and woodland areas. An analysis of the role of forests and woodlands areas in the tourism sector will increase the effectiveness with which forest tourism and products are sustainably developed and managed.

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APPENDIX A: LIKERT SCALE INSTRUMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 1

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

OULUN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY of OULU

University of Pretoria

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOREST TOURISM IN SELECTED AREAS OF FINLAND AND SOUTH AFRICA

Research conducted by:
Ms. N. Lenhard
nlenhard@gmail.com

Dear Respondent,

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Nadine Lenhard, a Masters student from the Department of Tourism Management at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to determine how tourism providers value and understand forest environments in the tourism sector. Along with this letter is a short questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about forests role in the tourism sector. I am asking you to look over the questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete it and send it back to me.

The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and I will provide you with a summary of our findings on request. I wish to assure you that all information I receive will remain confidential and that your participation will remain anonymous. Your contribution to this study is extremely important to ensure the success of the project.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire you may contact me at nlenhard@gmail.com. This project has been approved by the University of Oulu (Finland) and the University of Pretoria (South Africa).

Yours faithfully,

NADINE LENHARD
RESEARCHER

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Resp. no. [ ][ ][ ] V1

SURVEY TO TOURISM PROVIDERS IN FINLAND

Thank you for your willingness to complete the tourism survey. **Please answer <u>all</u> the questions.** There are no right or wrong answers. Before answering the questionnaire please give your informed consent by placing a tick in the box next to the sentence below:

☐ **"I hereby give my informed consent to take part in the research project"**

---

1. How important are the following target markets/segments for your business? ***(Please mark an X in the appropriate box for each row in the 1-5 scale, 1=Not important and 5= Essential)***

		Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Essential	
		1	2	3	4	5	
1.1	Young people (ages 18-35)						V2
1.2	Middle aged tourists (ages 36-59)						V3
1.3	Retired people						V4
1.4	Families						V5
1.5	Day trip visitors						V6
1.6	Adventure tourists						V7
1.7	Nature orientated tourists						V8
1.8	Sport enthusiasts						V9
1.9	Students						V10
1.10	Ecotourists						V11
1.11	Researchers						V12
1.12	International tourists						V13

2. What activities/services are offered at your business? ***(Please mark with an X all the appropriate options)***

Walking/hiking	☐	Hunting	☐	V14-V15
Climbing	☐	Skiing	☐	V16-V17
Biking/Cycling	☐	Fishing	☐	V18-V19
Canoeing	☐	Wildlife observation (bird watching)	☐	V20-V21
Horse-back riding	☐	Cultural or traditional activities	☐	V22-V23
Education, research,	☐	Crafts	☐	V24-V25
Volunteering	☐	Canopy exploration	☐	V26-V27
Accommodation	☐	Mushroom & berry picking	☐	V28-V29
Arctic safaris	☐	Wildlife safaris	☐	V30-V31

Other activities (specify): [ ] V32

3. For each statement please indicate your strength of agreement or disagreement regarding forests and woodlands in the region and their role in the tourism sector? ***(Please mark an X in the appropriate box in each row, 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree)***

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
3.1	Forests and woodlands in the area attract tourists to come visit						V33
3.2	Forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of time people stay in local tourism areas						V34
3.3	Forests and woodlands are valuable in terms of extending the length of the tourist season						V35
3.4	Forests and woodlands play an important role in determining the identity of local tourism destinations						V36
3.5	Forests and woodlands are an important factor in creating and maintaining the tourism activities in the area						V37
3.6	Increased environmental awareness generated by tourism, results in more measures being taken to protect the forests and woodlands in the area						V38
3.7	Involvement of tourism role players in forest management makes it possible to better link facilities and services in forests with surrounding tourism providers						V39
3.8	The community is involved in decision-making with regard to forest tourism						V40
3.9	Partnerships working to integrate different aspects regarding forests and the tourism sector is necessary in delivering sustainable development						V41
3.10	Plantations do more harm to the environment than good						V42
3.11	There is too much deforestation taking place in the area						V43

4. For each statement please indicate your strength of agreement or disagreement about tourism in the municipality in which your business operates? ***(Please mark an X in the appropriate box in each row, 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree)***

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
4.1	Tourism improves forest and landscape management						V44
4.2	Tourism promotes nature conservation						V45
4.3	Tourism providers are aware of environmental issues						V46
4.4	The local community is aware of the impact of tourism in the natural environment						V47
4.5	There is a need to increase local community participation in the area						V48
4.6	Tourism can act as a key driver for the protection and enhancement of the forests in the area						V49
4.7	Further tourism development is beneficial to the community and should be encouraged						V50
4.8	Tourism has contributed to the conservation of the forests in the area						V51
4.9	Tourism creates too much pressure on the environment						V52
4.10	Tourism results in the degradation of forests and woodlands in the region						V53
4.11	Tourism results in the loss of biodiversity (flora and fauna) in the region						V54
4.12	Tourism activities causes pollution in the region						V55
4.13	Tourism activities cause an increase in waste production in the region						V56

5. Please specify how important you rate the following statements with regards to developing sustainable tourism in the area: ***(Please mark an X in the appropriate box for each row in the 1-5 scale, 1=Not important and 5= Essential)***

		Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Essential	
		1	2	3	4	5	
5.1	Maintenance of the diversity of animals and plant life						V57
5.2	Sensible use of natural resources						V58
5.3	Reduction of energy and water consumption, garbage, and wastewater production						V59

		Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Essential	
		1	2	3	4	5	
5.4	Studies of impacts of tourism on environment and local community						V60
5.5	Environmental considerations in marketing of tourism						V61
5.6	Information to tourists about natural and cultural qualities of the area						V62
5.7	Cooperation with local residents in the development of tourism						V63
5.8	Involvement of interest groups in tourism development						V64
5.9	Environmental training of tourism staff						V65
5.10	Tourism can contribute to improvements in the destination						V66
5.11	Tourism supports the local economy						V67
5.12	Tourism is integrated with local, regional, and national planning						V68

6. Do you believe that the increasing recreational value of forests and woodlands will result in the increase of the following at your business ***(Please mark an X in the appropriate box)****?*

	I perceive that the increase in recreational value of forests will result in an increase of:	Yes	No	Unsure	
6.1	The number of visiting tourists at my business				V69
6.2	Environmental degradation in the region of my business				V70
6.3	Environmental protection and management measures at my business				V71
6.4	Recreational activities offered at my business (e.g. mountain-biking, hiking)				V72
6.5	Services available at my business				V73
6.6	Other (please specify):				V74

7. If there is anything else you would like to add about your business, especially concerning the role and value of forests and woodlands in the tourism sector, please write your comments below: V75

_____ V76

_____ V77

_____

_____

_____

8. Please specify the type of business you have: V78

- Tour operator ☐
- Accommodation provider ☐
- Activity provider ☐
- Accommodation and activity provider ☐
- Adventure company ☐
- Safari company ☐
- Other (specify) ☐

9. Please specify what position/role/occupation you hold in the business? V79

- Owner ☐
- Manager ☐
- Assistant manager ☐
- Receptionist ☐
- Other (specify) ☐

10. Please specify in which city/town your business operates: V80

_____

_____

Thank you for completing the survey.
We appreciate your assistance.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

OULUN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY of OULU

University of Pretoria

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Title of study: A comparative study of forest tourism in selected areas of Finland and South Africa

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the study is to assess the role that forests and woodlands play in tourism and recreation.

By signing this document:

1. **I hereby consent to take part in the research study (as mentioned above) by completing a questionnaire.**
2. **I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and on an anonymous basis, and that I understand that I may withdraw at any point in time without any adverse consequences, and should I withdraw, my data would be destroyed immediately.**
3. **I understand that the data gathered would be confidential and that the researchers involved in the project will have access to the data and results thereof.**
4. **I understand that the questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete and that the study would be conducted within the 2007 academic year.**
5. **I understand that I have a right of access to the researcher in order for clarity on any issue, should doubts arise.**

Signature: _____

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Resp. no. ☐☐☐ V1

SURVEY TO TOURISTS IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Thank you for your willingness to complete the tourism survey.
Please answer <u>all</u> the questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Which of these following statements best describes your trip today? V2

- On a short trip (of less than 3 hours) from home ☐ **Go to question 5**
- On a day out (of more than 3 hours) from home ☐ **Go to question 5**
- On holiday away from home staying in the area ☐ **Go to question 2**
- On holiday visiting friends and relatives in the area ☐ **Go to question 2**
- Passing through the area to/from your holiday destination ☐ **Go to question 2**
- Other (Please specify)…….. **Go to question 2 or 3**

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2. How long is the duration of your current trip away from your home? V3
_____nights

3. How many nights will you be staying in the area? _____ nights V4

4. During your trip away from home, how many times will you set out specifically to visit a forest or woodland area? _____times V5

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5. Which of these following statements best describes your visit in the area today? V6

- I/We specifically set out to visit the forest and woodland area today and not to do anything else ☐ **Go to question 7**
- I/We specifically set out to visit the forest and woodland area today but as part of a trip combining more than one activity ☐ **Go to question 6**
- I/We did not set out to visit the forest and woodland area, but decided to visit the site while passing ☐ **Go to question 6**
- Other (Please specify)…… **Go to question 6**

6. If your visit to this forest and woodland area is part of a trip combining more than one activity, what other reasons did you have for making your trip today? V7

V1 V8

V9

7. How many people are in your party? _____ people V10

8. Which of the following activities have you participated in/do you intend to participate in, on your visit to this forest and woodland area today? (Tick any that apply) V11-V12

Walking/stroll	☐	Volunteering	☐ V13-V14
Hunting	☐☐	Taking the children out	☐ V15-V16
Climbing	☐	General recreation	☐ V17-V18
Long walk/rambling/hiking	☐	Viewing scenery	☐ V19-V20
Biking/cycling	☐☐	Watching birds and animals	☐ V21-V22
Canoeing	☐	Looking at trees and flowers	☐ V23-V24
Fishing	☐	Picnicking	☐ V25-V26
Horse riding	☐	Education, research	☐ V27

Other (specify): _____ V28

9. How long do you expect your visit to the forest and woodland area will last today? _____**Hours** _____ **minutes** V29

10. Why did you choose to visit this particular forest and woodland area today? V30

_____ V31

_____

_____

_____

_____ V32

11. Would you visit this site again? Yes / No V33

12. Would you recommend this site to anyone? Yes / No V34

If your answer is no, please specify why:

_____ V35

_____

_____ V36

_____

_____

_____

V10

13. For each statement please indicate your strength of agreement or disagreement? (Mark an X in the appropriate box for each row in the 1-5 scale, 1= Strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree)

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
13.1	Environmental protection will help people have a better quality of life						V37
13.2	A clean environment provides me with better opportunities for recreation						V38
13.3	Environmental protection will provide a better world for me (and my children)						V39
13.4	Forests and woodlands are not essential to maintaining a healthy planet earth						V40
13.5	Environmental protection is beneficial to my health						V41
13.6	Environmental protection does not benefit everyone						V42

14. For each statement please indicate your strength of agreement or disagreement? (Mark an X in the appropriate box for each row in the 1-5 scale, 1= Strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree).

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
14.1	Forests are an important part of our national heritage						V43
14.2	Forests for recreation and leisure are important for the well-being of the nation						V44
14.3	Our landscape would look just as beautiful even if there were no forests						V45
14.4	We should view the wildlife and plants in our forests as a national treasure						V46
14.5	Forests offer me little or no opportunities for leisure and recreation						V47
14.6	Visiting forests is important for my well-being						V48
14.7	I feel perfectly safe when visiting forests						V49
14.8	Forests make great holiday destinations for me and my family						V50

15. Please specify how important you rate the following statements with regard to Developing sustainable tourism in the area (Please mark an X in the appropriate box for each row in the 1-5 scale, 1=Not important and 5= Essential).

		Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Essential	
		1	2	3	4	5	
15.1	Maintenance of the diversity of animals and plant life						V51
15.2	Sensible use of natural resources						V52
15.3	Reduction of energy and water consumption, garbage, and wastewater production						V53
15.4	Studies of impacts of tourism on environment and local community						V54
15.5	Environmental considerations in marketing of tourism						V55
15.6	Information to tourists about natural and cultural qualities of the area						V56
15.7	Cooperation with local residents in the development of tourism						V57
15.8	Involvement of interest groups in tourism development						V58
15.9	Environmental training of tourism staff						V59
15.10	Tourism can contribute to improvements in the destination						V60
15.11	Tourism supports the local economy						V61
15.12	Tourism is integrated with local, regional, and national planning						V62

16. Which age group do you fall into?

16-24	☐		45-54	☐
25-34	☐		55-64	☐
35-44	☐		65+	☐

V63

17. Please indicate your gender.

1	2
Male	Female

V64

18. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

Working full-time	☐	Unemployed	☐
Working part-time	☐	At school	☐
House husband/wife	☐	In full-time higher education	☐
Retired	☐	In further education or training	☐

Other (specify): _____

19. Please indicate your nationality:

South African	1
If South African, please indicate which province you reside in:	2
Other (please specify which nationality)	3

Thank you for completing the survey.
We appreciate your assistance.

APPENDIX C: DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

GLOSSARY

Adventure tourism: a new experience, often involving perceived risk or controlled danger associated with personal challenges, in a natural environment or exotic settings (Morrison & Sung, 2000:11).

Alternative tourism: a flexible generic category that contains a multiplicity of various forms which have one feature in common: they are alternatives to commercial mass tourism. Furthermore, they are forms of tourism which are essentially small-scale, low-density, dispersed in no urban areas, and they cater to special interest groups of people with mainly above average education and with good incomes, although this category also includes the "explorers" and "drifters".

Attitudes: "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour" (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

Biodiversity: refers to the total sum of biotic variation, ranging from the genetic level, through the species level and on to the ecosystem level (Hall, 2006: 211).

Carrying capacity: Fundamental to environmental protection and sustainable development. It refers to maximum use of any site without causing negative effects on the resources, reducing visitor satisfaction, or exerting adverse impact upon the society, economy and culture of the area. Carrying capacity limits can sometimes be difficult to quantify, but they are essential to planning for tourism and recreation (WTO, 1992: 23).

Comparative approach: Social scientific analysis involving more than one social system or in the same social system at more than one point in time (Pearce, 1993:21).

Correlation: The strength of linear association between two variables.

Cross-sectional study: A research study for which data are gathered just once (stretched though it may be over a period of days, weeks or months) to answer the research question (Jennings, 2001:439).

Descriptive statistics: Statistics such as frequencies, the mean and the standard deviation, which provide descriptive information of a set of data (Jennings, 2001:439).

Ecotourism: Ecologically sustainable tourism, with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas in a way that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, education, appreciation and conservation (Ecotourism Association of Australia).

Everyman's right: right of public access that bestows on all people a free right to use land owned by others to travel on foot, skis, bicycle or horseback, provided that they do not cause any damage.

Forest: The term forest is a general term used in the present study to describe all trees and woodlands in the regions referred to in the study.

Forest tourism: refers to tourism, which aims to introduce different ways of using forests for forestry

Likert scale: An interval scale that specifically uses the five anchors of: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree and Strongly Agree (Jennings, 2001:442).

Mass tourism: environmentally and culturally destructive; and is associated with large-scale, high-density accommodations, contrived attractions, seasonal markets, and limited benefits to the local economy with minimal concern for carrying capacity and a lack of local involvement.

Mean: The average of a set of figures.

Methodological triangulation: involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods and data to study the same phenomena within the same study or in different complementary studies.

Mixed methods: mixing of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in varying ways and degrees.

Multiple-use forests: Forest managed for the sustainable supply of timber to the community in conjunction with a range of other values eg biodiversity, cultural heritage, water quality, community uses, research and education, recreation and socio-economic benefits (Forests NSW, 2004).

Nature-based tourism: encompasses all forms of tourism which use natural resources in a wild or undeveloped form - including species, habitat, landscape, scenery and salt and fresh-water features and travel for the purpose of enjoying undeveloped natural areas or wildlife (Goodwin, 1996:287).

Open-ended question: questions that the respondent can answer in a free-flowing format without restricting the range of choices to a set of specific alternatives suggested by the researcher (Jennings, 2001: 443).

Paradigm: The beliefs, assumptions and values that underlie the way that various perspectives interpret reality (Jennings, 2001: 443).

Plantation: Forest comprising exotic or native species that have been artificially established and are intensively managed, usually for timber production (Forests NSW, 2004).

Purposive sampling: A non-probability sampling design in which the required information is gathered from special or specific targets or groups of people on some rational basis (Jennings, 2001: 444).

Recreation: consists of any outdoor or leisure activity area where the participant did not pay a commercial operator for the privilege of partaking in the activity. The activity can be a single or multi day even (Nicolson, 1998: 8).

Sustainable: Sustainable refers to the level or intensity of use of a resource (such as a forest) being such that the activity can be done now without reducing the possibilities for future generations use of the resource. (Forests NSW, 2004)

Sustainable forestry: the Helsinki Resolution H1 defines sustainable forestry as "the stewardship and use of woodlands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems'.

Sustainable forest management: maintaining or enhancing the contribution of forests to human well-being, both of present and future generations, without compromising their ecosystem integrity, i.e. their resilience, function and biological diversity.

Sustainable tourism: sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments.

Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability (WTO, 2004).

Sustainable development: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987).

Tourism: comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Tourism service provider: any individual or organisation that supplies services to tourists, such as food, accommodation, transport, travel and leisure facilities (Douglas, Douglas & Derret, 2001: 460).

t-test: A statistical test that establishes a significant mean difference in a variable between two groups (Jennings, 2001: 446).

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USED FOR THE INTERVIEW AT METSÄHALLITUS

INTERVIEW AT METSÄHALLITUS

2.1 MULTIPLE USES OF FORESTS

1. How are the recreational and tourism uses of forests valued against wood production in Finland?

2. What do you forecast in the next 5 years will happen with regard to how recreation and tourism is valued when compared to the value of wood production in Finland?

2.2 MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

1. What forest management approach is currently being used?

2. Described the current management structure

3. How long has the current management program been in use?

4. Is there a regional forest programme?

5. Do tourism establishments collect statistics and information on the number and behaviour of tourists visiting their establishment?

2.3 ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

1. Does the forestry company evaluate the impact of tourism and recreation in forests?

2. Does the concept of carrying capacity, as a management instrument, play an important role in determining environmental impacts and maximum stress levels on the natural environment?

2.4 RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

1. Do Finnish forest owners/tourism providers have easy access to information and support relating to the management of their forests? If yes, where do they access this information?

2. What are some of the current challenges and opportunities concerning the multi-functional use of forests in Finland?