

CHAPTER 6

FORMULATING A TOURISM MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

6.1 MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

In this chapter only the framework is suggested as a template and helicopter's view to guide the formulation of an integrated tourism management framework. The findings of the literature study and surveys are used to kick-start the development of possible indicators or thresholds of potential concerns (TPCs) to measure tourism performance and impacts on the environment. Aspects such as a management philosophy, tourism-recreation values, hospitality standards to measure product and service quality, grading of the tourism facility, human resource planning, financial management, business planning and marketing are discussed as essential elements of a tourism management framework. The expected outcome is a generic framework that will evolve in time through adaptive management into a fully integrated tourism management framework.

6.2 LEGAL BASIS

The past decade has seen a major process of environmental law reform that has repealed environmental legislation passed during the apartheid era and replaced it with legislation that reflects the policies and approaches of the post-1994 government. To this effect two Bills have been formulated to give detail to the legal framework governing biodiversity planning and protected area management. The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Bill, 2003, deals with the establishment of a biodiversity planning system that will provide the basis for the identification of biological life forms to be placed under formal protection in either a provincial or national park/nature reserve context. The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003, provides for the identification of a management authority for each protected area that must manage it according to a management plan that meets agreed-upon national standards. The implementation of these Bills will mean that norms and standards for the achievement of key policy objectives will be set and regular reporting will occur to enable regular evaluation of the management effectiveness of the protected areas at site or system levels⁴¹.

⁴¹ Workshop held at Skukuza on 16-17th July 2003

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003, will govern the management of all protected areas in South Africa (see 2.8). According to this Bill the purpose for creating a national park should be to

- protect
 - the area if it is of national or international biodiversity importance or is or contains a viable, representative sample of South Africa's natural systems, scenic areas or cultural heritage site, or
 - the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems in the area;
- prevent exploitation or occupation inconsistent with the protection of the ecological integrity of the area;
- provide spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and tourism opportunities which are environmentally compatible; and
- contribute to economic development (DEAT, 2003).

6.3 PREPARATION OF A MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

6.3.1 The process

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003, requires that a management plan be prepared for each national park. A management plan is a strategic policy document that outlines how a park or nature reserve will be managed in years ahead. It is not a static piece of paper but rather a dynamic technical document that has to be improved at regular intervals as circumstances change. Planning in general should not be done in isolation by an individual (expert) but should rather involve internal as well as external stakeholders.

Cohen & Eimicke (1995:196) define a strategy as “*the basic pattern of current and planned resource deployments and environmental interaction that indicates how an organization will achieve its objectives*”. According to the authors, **strategy** formulation involves the following steps:

- defining objectives – what are the desired outcomes?
- identifying potential activities – what means can be devised to accomplish the objectives?

- describing actual and potential organizational capabilities – what activities can be implemented by the organization?
- projecting the expected results of specific activities – to what degree *will* these activities result in the accomplishment of specific objectives?
- assessing the impact of specific activities – to what degree *did* these activities result in the accomplishment of specific objectives? and
- correcting midcourse – what changes are needed in activities, resource allocation or objectives?

In its simplistic understanding a **management** plan involves the following activities:

- defining tasks and responsibilities;
- setting time lines for achieving goals;
- benchmarking (indicators) against which progress can be measured; and
- determining resource needs.

A **business** plan will focus on the identification of resource needs and is intended to give a clear picture of the following:

- financial needs that must be met in order to implement the proposed management framework, and
- potential revenue sources to help meet the needs.

A full discussion of the business plan is beyond the scope of this research project, although aspects of it will be discussed at the end of this chapter (see 6.14).

The proposed KNP tourism management framework should ultimately become a strategy based on the above steps to achieve the specific objectives of ensuring the protection, conservation and management of the KNP in a manner that is consistent with the primary goals of its establishment as enshrined in its founding legislation. The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003, prescribes the procedures for the adoption of a management plan as follows:

- management conducts a situation analysis and prepares a draft plan as an initial discussion document;

- the draft plan is put up for public comment for a prescribed period ranging between one and six months (or more depending on the size of the park, stage of development and range of values to be protected);
- public comments are received and the plan is referred to the SANParks Board of Trustees for consideration;
- the SANParks Board may endorse the plan after considering the recommendations of management and the public or may refer the plan back to management for further investigation or improvement;
- once the plan has been adopted by the Board, it will be referred to the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism for final approval; and
- the entire process of developing a management plan may take anything between 12 and 24 months depending on the complexity of issues involved⁴².

After Ministerial approval has been obtained, no operation may be undertaken within the national park unless it is in accordance with the plan. A **management** plan must contain

- policies, planning measures, controls and performance criteria as may be prescribed;
- an implementation programme and associated costing; and
- performance indicators to assess performance.

The Minister has powers to set performance indicators against which a national park's performance may be measured and to appoint an independent assessor to carry out such an audit in a legally binding exercise to enforce compliance with the overall objectives of a management plan and the Act (DEAT, 2003).

6.3.2 Definition guidelines

For purposes of preparing a management plan, the Workshop delegates⁴³ adopted the IUCN Guidelines for Protected Area Management which defines a protected area as "*a natural area of land/or sea, designated to*

- (a) *protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations;*

⁴² The researcher convened a workshop on the 16-17th July 2003, attended by KNP and Head Office managers and practitioners for presentation of the research results and to make contributions to the management framework formulation process (see 6.4)

⁴³ Workshop held at Skukuza on 16-17th July 2003.

- (b) *exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area; and*
- (c) *provide a foundation for the spiritual, educational, recreational and tourist opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible” (IUCN, 1994).*

Tourism and recreation services in the KNP offer tourists a range of activities and experiences to enjoy. The emphasis in tourism and recreation provision is on encouraging learning, understanding and enjoyment of the natural and cultural environment. The KNP offers 7 325 beds per night inclusive of camping and chalet accommodation. In addition, tourists can enjoy day walks from camps, night and day drive safaris, film shows, bush braais or a round of golf and wind down the day with a meal at any of the Park’s restaurants. All these services and facilities should be provided under the following policy guidelines suggested at the Workshop held at Skukuza on 16-17th July 2003:

- facilities for tourism and recreational use will be provided consistent with the conservation ethic of the KNP;
- interpretive and educational information will be provided at facilities to promote understanding and enjoyment of natural and cultural features;
- the attitudes and preferences of Park tourists and in particular special interest groups such as the elderly, disabled and school children will be considered in the management of tourism and recreational use;
- the impact of tourist use will be monitored and protective measures undertaken as necessary, consistent with the objectives of this management framework;
- it is usually inappropriate to create artificial features that are inconsistent with the purpose of providing ecotourism and recreation opportunities and care will be taken not to debase the wilderness qualities of the Park when providing infrastructure;
- commercial trade opportunities will be supported where they contribute to an increase in the range of recreation opportunities available and are consistent with the objectives of the management framework;
- the development of facilities for tourism and recreation will be encouraged, provided they are compatible with long-term planning and management of the Park;
- concession holders of all types will be required to undertake operations in accordance with approved and specified schedules. No activities that restrict the activities of other Park users will be permitted; and
- interpretation and environmental education programmes will seek to assist guests to understand, appreciate and enjoy the Park as a natural heritage.

In general, research will be encouraged in the assessment of the impact of tourists and tourist facilities on natural ecosystem.

6.4 CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOPS

On completion of the surveys (see 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 5.1), the researcher convened two consultative workshops to share with KNP managers and key tourism operational staff the findings of the surveys. It was mentioned in 2.9. that a management plan must reflect the needs and priorities of those who will implement it. It should be a product of a constructive partnership with all relevant stakeholders. The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003, insists on a consultative process that should involve both internal and external stakeholders (Cowan *et al.*, 2003).

The first workshop referred to above, was held on 16-17th July 2003 at Skukuza and attended by tourism managers, scientists, game rangers, administration officers, human resources practitioners, finance staff and representatives of organized labour. The researcher presented his findings while senior researchers and managers also participated by presenting papers to provide the current status of the situation in KNP with regard to tourism and conservation management. The meeting jointly deliberated format on the proposed mission statement for tourism in group-dynamics. The four groups worked on four themes, as follows:

- balance between tourism and conservation of biophysical properties;
- tourism opportunities arising from the ROZ Plan;
- tourism programme designed to meet tourist expectations; and
- underlying support that influences tourism (environmental law reform, human resources (HR) and finance, and infrastructure development and maintenance).

The working groups generated notes on flip charts that were later interpreted and collated by the researcher into synthesized themes. From the notes, the Workshop was guided by the researcher in formulating and generating the mission statement, specific objectives, secondary objectives and tourism policy guidelines to underpin the proposed management framework (see Annexure 14). Working groups were formed across disciplinary divides (encouraging an integrated approach) to suggest critical environmental indicators or criteria against which tourism performance will be measured. This will be an ongoing process led mainly by the Conservation Services Division in collaboration with both the Tourism and Finance Divisions.

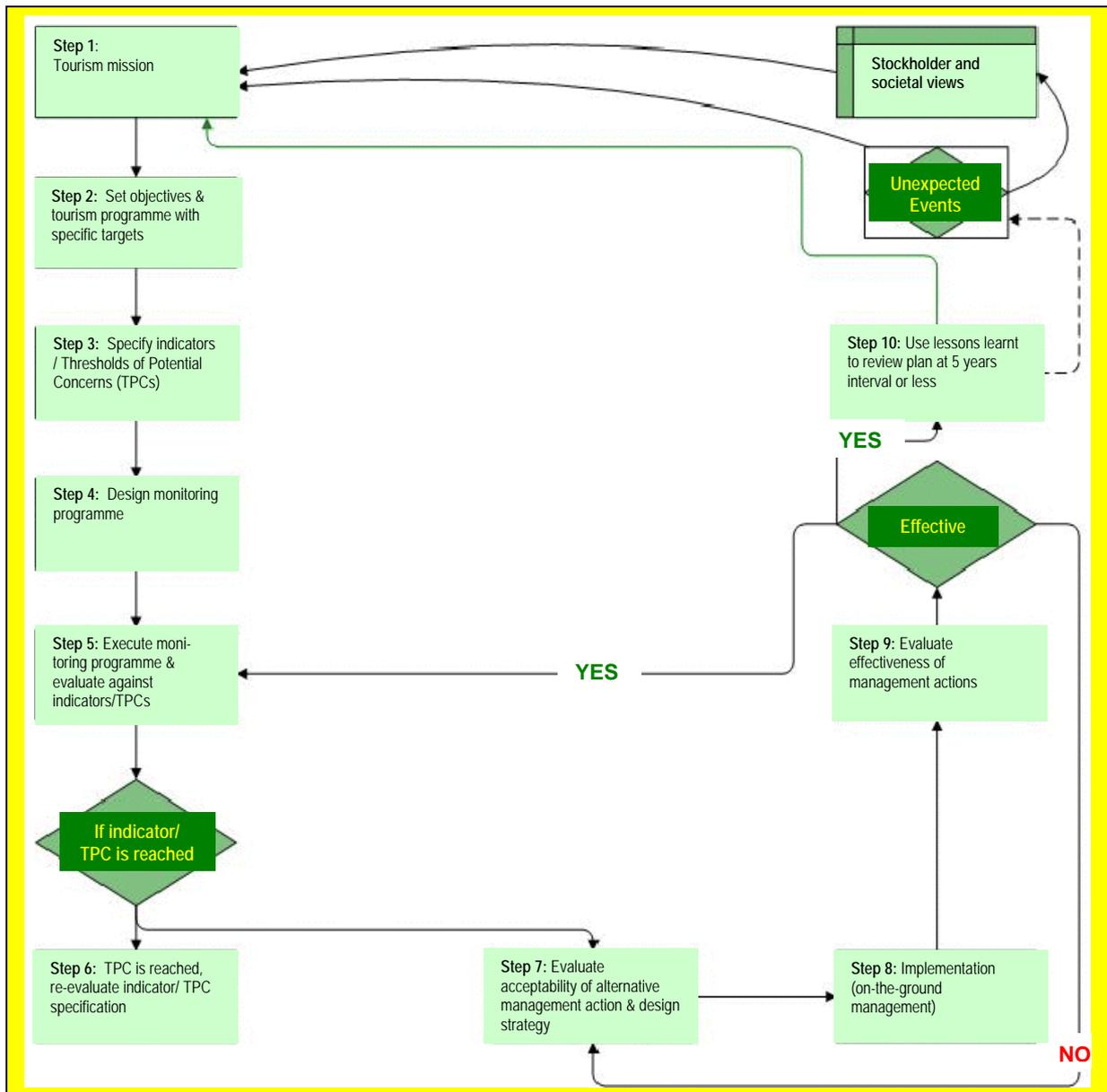
The second workshop was held on 19 and 20 August 2003 at Skukuza to deliberate on the process that will formulate detailed hospitality standards to measure service quality in the KNP. Among others, duty managers, hospitality service managers, regional managers, Head Office tourism directorate, tour operators and an external facilitator attended the workshop. The workshop's brief included the development of a standardised reporting and presentation format, an implementation plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan. A working group with specific time frames was formed to drive the process. Initial ideas were brainstormed and these are presented in 6.6 of this research thesis.

6.5 MANAGEMENT PARADIGM

For purposes of developing the new tourism management framework the adaptive management paradigm was adopted (see 2.4). It is based on the premise that tourism operates in fast changing (internal and external) environments. Such environments are complex, unpredictable and operate on rarely complete information or certainties. The ability of a tourism establishment to adapt swiftly to sudden changes and customer needs constitutes its strength or resilience and facilitates survival in turbulent market conditions. Strong goal-setting and establishment of indicators or thresholds of potential concerns (TPCs) to manage performance are the keys to survival of a tourism business (Biggs & Rodgers, 2003). The management plan should have monitoring and evaluation plans to assess progress, derive lessons and iterate (use results to adapt and learn). Adaptive management is fundamentally a framework of systematic analysis and learning.

Figure 6.1 represents the adaptive tourism management process (customized from the initial adaptive management cycle depicted in Figure 2.1 (2.4.2)) to be followed in the formulation and the review of this management framework after its first five-year cycle. However, it will not be possible to cover all the stages in this framework because the proposed framework is at its initial stage of development. Steps 1 to 4 of the adaptive tourism management process were discussed extensively at the two workshops and consensus was reached on the tourism mission, objectives, tourism and recreational values and what would constitute initial indicators to measure service quality and environmental impacts of tourism. The three stages of development are described in a logical sequence below. Steps 5-10 will be reached once the management framework is operational and the desired indicator/TPC has been reached. This phase is discussed in 6.6.2.2 (Tourism and Recreational Values).

FIGURE 6.1: Adaptive tourism management process



6.6 ADAPTIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT PROCESS

6.6.1 Step 1 (Tourism mission)

“To develop, manage and enhance a range of sustainable tourism products, in synergy with the KNP conservation ethic⁴⁴. This will be done by satisfying evolving market needs, through predictable service excellence⁴⁵, high quality standards and infrastructure. Sound business principles will be used to generate revenue from the tourism initiative to support the SANParks conservation mandate”.

⁴⁴ Conservation ethic: A set of integrated environmental management principles that protect the park’s wilderness qualities (Venter, 2001).

⁴⁵ Predictable service excellence: Service that matches customer expectations by offering guaranteed, high quality, consistent and reliable service to avoid a mismatch of end-user expectations and vendor sales pitch (Deierlein, 1991; Bierce, 2001).

6.6.2 Step 2 (Set objectives and tourism programme with specific targets)

6.6.2.1 Main objectives

1. Develop an integrated socio-ecological plan to act as a basis for development of sustainable tourism. This plan must embrace social values, be compliant with all reasonable biodiversity conservation needs, embrace principles of resilience and sustainability and the KNP conservation ethic, be financially viable and contain practical tools and indicators.
2. Investigate and enhance all underlying enabling factors that promote the success of sustainable tourism.
3. Study, analyse and respond to current and future market needs in the nature tourism sector and develop an appropriate range of products in accordance with the integrated socio-ecological plan.
4. Implement a service-delivery programme for tourism products and services within a total quality management (TQM) framework. This should be achieved through the provisioning of a continuum of products/services along the full chain of tourist access, travel, entry, accommodation, interpretation, wilderness qualities, effective marketing and appreciation of community cultures.
5. Generate sufficient revenue to allow funding of conservation initiatives, maintenance of infrastructure and contribution to community programmes, and
6. Create mechanisms to establish a sense of partnership between the KNP and its neighbours in a manner that contributes to social upliftment, good neighbourliness and advancement of conservation goals⁴⁶.

The main objectives are subdivided into secondary objectives and specific areas that the process of developing the management plan should follow (see Annexure 14: Mission Statement and Objectives). The implementation of these objectives will lead to a better understanding of the tourism and recreational value system that the KNP offers to tourists.

6.6.2.2 Tourism and recreation values

National Parks are created and managed to conserve, protect and preserve places which have significant natural, cultural and recreational values. Conservation is undertaken on the

⁴⁶ Workshop held in Skukuza on 16-17th July 2003

principle that there is fundamental value in ensuring the survival of natural systems, the presence of landscapes and the recognition of cultural connection on behalf of current and future generations (Weaver, 2001). It is also recognised that people, culture and the environment are inseparable. It is due to this connection with people that the National Parks system in South Africa is created to provide appropriate and sustainable opportunities for people to enjoy, appreciate and learn about their natural and cultural values. The public use component is provided by means of careful management of tourism and recreational values of a park system. This is done through the development of appropriate facilities in an ecologically sustainable manner at levels that are consistent with each park's category of classification, values of individual parks and visitor and stakeholder expectations (New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2004).

Tourism and recreational values form part of Step 2 of the adaptive tourism management process. The surveys discussed in Chapter 4 revealed that tourism and recreation values in the KNP have not been adequately identified or addressed in previous management planning initiatives. Tourism and recreation values are important considerations for a management plan formulation process to reflect global trends for a more sustainable, responsible and well-managed tourism business (WTO, 1999; De Lacey *et al.*, 2002). In addition, the role of protected areas as important tourism and recreation destinations, has become increasingly understood in the last 20 years since the first management plans appeared on the scene (Weaver & Opperman, 2000; Weaver, 2001). Conservation agencies need to administer tourism and recreation professionally and to actively manage these values. This is one area where not much progress has been achieved by conservationists (see 2.6 and the whole of Chapter 4). The tourism industry, governments, communities and tourism destination managers have recognized the need for environmental-friendly, economically and socially sustainable tourism and recreation (WTTC, 1996; Newsome *et al.*, 2002). Conservation legislation in South Africa is currently in the process of being amended to reflect these changes.

The formulation of any tourism management plan in South Africa should recognise the guidelines of the White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism. The White Paper assesses the conditions under which tourism as an industry is managed in South Africa and identifies constraints and opportunities. Among others it identifies the KNP as a key icon and an internationally renowned attraction. The White Paper concludes that it is not the stock of natural resources that will determine South Africa's competitiveness as a tourism destination but rather how well these resources are managed and to what extent they are complemented

with relevant innovations (DEAT, 1996). The tourism and recreational values of the KNP underpin its attractiveness and competitiveness among other tourism destinations in the world.

Clarke & Stankey (1979) describe tourism and recreation values as the combination of physical (such as scenery), biological (native plants and animals), social (family, friends and/or other tourists) and managerial (facilities and regulations imposed at a recreation setting) conditions that give value to a place. Simply put, a tourism and recreation value should be understood as the function of the perceived ability of that opportunity (setting) to provide certain activities and experiences.

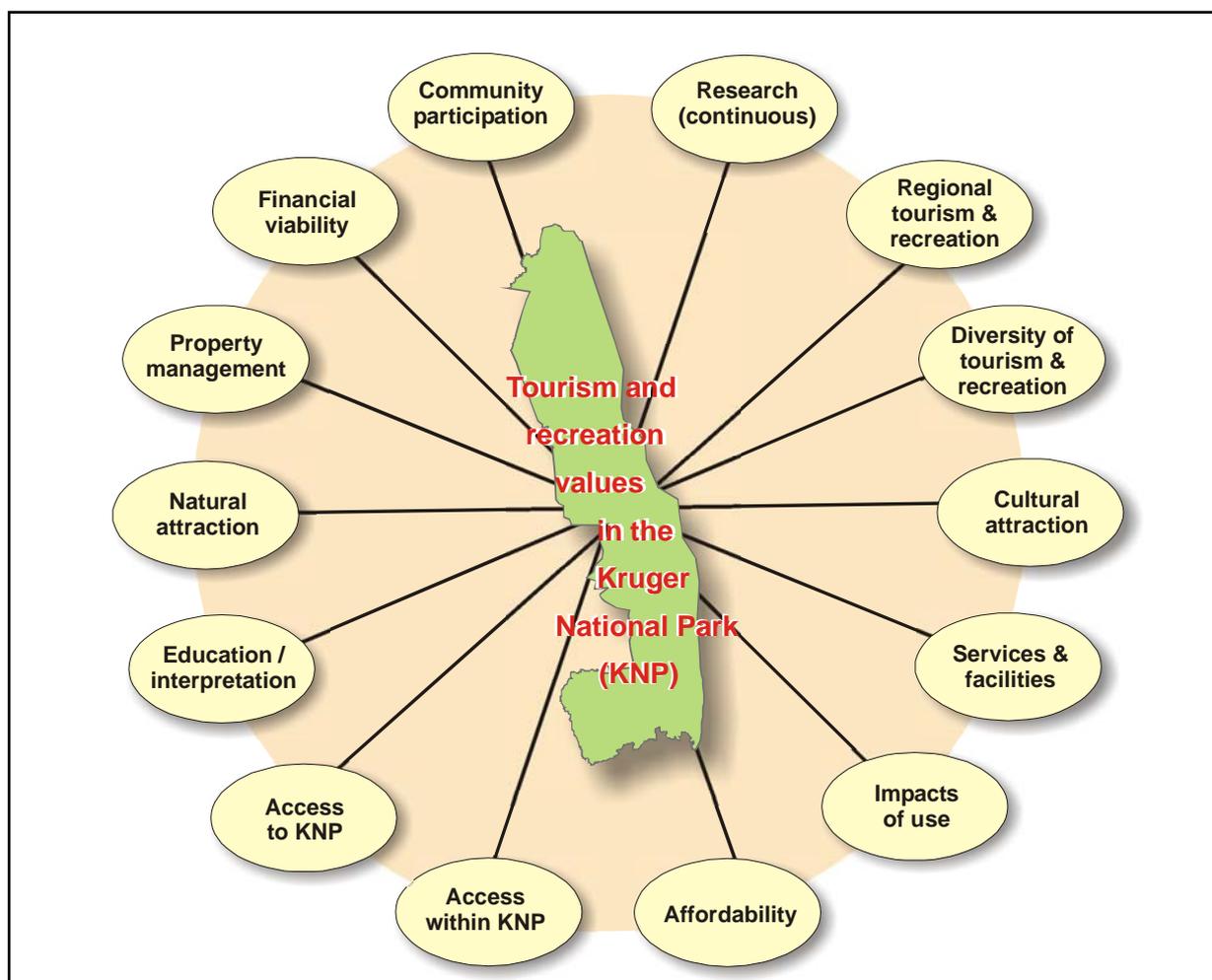
Typically, a range of tourism and recreation **values** underpins a visit to the KNP. As a natural area it has spiritual, cultural and biophysical values used by consumers of its services to describe its tourism and recreation opportunity. Tourism and recreation **opportunities** are a means by which a tourist acquires experiences and fulfils aspirations. Some of the aspirations revealed in the Value-laddering hierarchical value maps in 4.3 include the escape motivation, relaxation and play, strengthening family bonds, prestige, social interaction, educational opportunity, self-fulfilment, wish-fulfilment and shopping for park-specific products. Motivation to travel as revealed in the surveys result from the set of needs and attitudes that predispose individuals to act in a specific goal oriented manner. Motivation is therefore an inner state that directs behaviour to achieve specific goals. Natural areas such as the KNP play an important role in both tourist and excursionist satisfaction by providing areas that can potentially offer experiences of challenge, escape, relaxation, self-discovery and spiritual awareness.

The surveys have revealed that tourism and recreational values in the KNP are underpinned by a number of **attributes** that help to make up a recreation opportunity setting and the recreation value of that setting. Attributes are influenced by geographical, social, managerial and intrinsic **factors** such as proximity to markets, accessibility to markets, cultural links, availability of services, affordability, peace and stability, positive market image, pro-tourism policies and availability of attractions. The adequate and effective management of **attributes** will be a major contribution to the total management of the tourism and recreation values of the Park.

In this thesis, each of the tourism and recreational values, is assessed relative to the dependence of its attributes on the Park, the condition of the attributes, the trend in its condition, pressures on the attribute, knowledge gaps and opportunities. It is an exercise that assesses the overall condition of tourism and recreation values for the Park and the trend in condition or TPC. Based on this assessment the tourism and recreational values become the

basis for the formulation of performance and monitoring indicators. Figure 6.2 present these tourism and recreational values which were generated from the surveys discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

FIGURE 6.2: Tourism and recreational values in the KNP



The identified tourism and recreational values (with their attributes) are further discussed and listed in 6.4 and Annexure 14 as a Monitoring and Evaluating Plan.

6.6.2.3 Thresholds of Potential Concerns (TPCs)

According to Biggs & Rodgers (2003) TPCs⁴⁷ are a set of operational goals that together define the spatio-temporal heterogeneity condition for which the KNP ecosystem is managed. TPCs are upper and lower levels along a continuum of change in selected environmental

⁴⁷ The concept of TPC is used as a synonym for indicators and limits of acceptable change in this study. The nuances of a TPC are those of being a worry level, a hypothesis to examine or an area of change in an achievable environmental goal (Biggs & Rodgers, 2003).

indicators. When this level is reached or when modelling predicts it will be reached (Steps 5-10), it prompts an assessment of the causes of the extent of change. The assessment provides the basis for deciding whether management action is needed to moderate the change or recalibrate the TPC. TPCs form the basis of an inductive approach to adaptive management as they are invariably hypotheses of limits of acceptable change in ecosystem structure, function and composition. As such, their validity and appropriateness are always open to challenge and they must be adaptively modified as understanding and experience of the system being managed increases. Protected area tourism occurs within the same ecosystem and manifests similar spatio-temporal heterogeneity characteristics as explained in 2.4. The recent strategic review by McKinsey (2002) proposed this adaptive management approach for wider use within SANParks. The identified tourism and recreational values can be converted into TPCs or indicators to measure the limits of acceptable change of the KNP's tourism system.

For example, in the southern KNP there is a clear indication of severe tourist congestion that threatens the quality of game viewing and tranquillity. Public concerns continue to be raised regarding overcrowding on the roads, in public facilities and at animal sightings. This is an indication that a TPC has been reached and prompts management to intervene to improve the situation. The approach calls for further modelling with other tourism and recreational values to determine their current and future conditions. These attributes will be explained in detail in 6.12 and Table 6.2.

6.7 STEP 3 (SPECIFY INDICATORS)

6.7.1 Reasons for hospitality standards (indicators)

In the field of hospitality management the concept of TPCs is synonymous with standards⁴⁸. Prompted by the survey's findings of lack of emphasis on quality assurance and service consistency, a second workshop was convened on 19 and 20 August 2003 to discuss the matter and suggest key areas on which to base the KNP's hospitality standards (indicators or TPCs) for products and services offered. Currently there are no formal measurable standards set to monitor the quality of the hospitality service and products. Implementation of tourism programmes is influenced by what each hospitality manager has experienced in his/her previous workplace. According to the researcher the Park's rest camp accommodation is not graded like hotel and guesthouse establishments to determine the level of service and

⁴⁸ A measure serving as a basis or example or principle to which others conform or should conform or by which accuracy or quality of others is judged (Fowler & Fowler, 1991).

standards to be maintained. In order to deliver predictable service of high quality, the Park's accommodation will have to be graded and standards set. There are many reasons why standards are essential in the KNP:

- standards are a reflection of shared values in the hospitality industry;
- they (standards) are a logical and critical intervention to improve product quality to meet customer expectations;
- they assist in meeting personal values and aspirations of each guest;
- they play a critical role in performance management;
- they can be used to create an organizational culture during the induction process;
- they improve competitiveness and market share;
- they can improve tourist safety, security and health; and
- staff understand what is expected of them and act accordingly⁴⁹.

The lack of hospitality standards seriously militates against the attractiveness of the KNP as a holiday destination when compared to lodges on its borders and the private nature reserves. The process of formulating standards that are specific, measurable, attainable, reliable and time-framed (SMART) can be lengthy and tedious (between 6-12 months). It was decided that a standards formulation committee be set up to drive the process that will lead to the finalization of this requirement.

6.7.2 Grading by the Tourism Grading Council

The first step towards establishing measurable standards for the KNP's tourism and hospitality facilities should commence with a formal grading exercise by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, better known as the Grading Council. The Grading Councils lays down minimum standards and criteria for allocating star ratings for serviced accommodation (hotels, lodges, guesthouses and bed and breakfast establishments) and caravan and camping facilities. The KNP facilities and service would fall within both categories (serviced accommodation and caravan and camping facilities). The wildlife product would be excluded from this grading exercise.

⁴⁹ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003

Minimum general standards for serviced accommodation establishments and caravan parks include the following:

- maintenance of a high degree of general safety and security;
- a high standard of cleanliness and comfort fit for the purpose intended;
- compliance with relevant statutory requirements such as business license, registration, public liability insurance, health and safety certificates, safe buildings, etc.;
- accessibility throughout the year except during renovations;
- offering high standards of courtesy to tourists and dealing with complaints promptly; and
- friendly and efficient service, marketing, reservations and pricing approach appropriate to the style of the establishment (Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, 2002).

The elements for **hotel accommodation**, as defined by the Grading Council, is based on guests' expectations and covers the following areas:

- physical structures (exterior of the buildings);
- bedrooms;
- bathrooms;
- public areas;
- dining facilities;
- food and beverage;
- services and service; and
- housekeeping.

The Grading Council defines the elements for **caravan and camping facilities** to include the following:

- exterior of buildings and grounds;
- sites;
- ablutions / bathrooms;
- scullery;
- laundry;

- communal / public areas;
- housekeeping; and
- general conditions of the hotel environment (Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, 2002).

The process of grading all tourism and recreation facilities in the KNP may take approximately six months or more to go through every tourism and recreation value item. Once the camps have been graded and star-rated, the process of determining standards based on guest expectations in accordance with the grading, can commence. A pilot study was fast-tracked for Skukuza rest camp to test the idea⁵⁰.

6.7.3 Formulating hospitality standards

6.7.3.1 Process

Formulating standards for a tourism establishment like a hotel and restaurant involves observations and research that happens over an extended period of time. It is even more difficult in the case of the KNP where tourism imperatives would have to be balanced with the KNP conservation ethic. The exercise of standards formulation in itself will be a long process rather than an event. The following steps are critical and involve the following processes:

- establish a KNP Standards Steering Committee;
- form Standards Generating Forums in the regions of the KNP to feed suggestions to the Standards Steering Committee;
- link with external Standards Generating Bodies via the Tourism Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA);
- grading process facilitated by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa, (discussed in 6.7.2).
- external assistance with the development of templates, writing text, presentation and facilitation;
- effective communication and staff training for delivery; and

⁵⁰ Skukuza Camp was graded as a pilot study from July to November 2003. The stars rating ranged from two stars for camping sites, three stars for ordinary budget huts and four stars for both guesthouses and river view semi-luxury huts. Additional recommendations were made to improve privacy of the 4-star graded units.

- effective quality assurance and evaluation systems⁵¹.

The functions of the KNP Standards Steering Committee are to coordinate various structures, regions, concession partners, tour operators and the Tourism Department at Head Office during the formulation process. It will also seek to establish a reliable feedback system into the entire process of developing a tourism management plan. The detailed process of standards formulation will be based on specific areas and items of the KNP's tourism system.

6.7.4 Potential areas for hospitality standards

There are many areas that require standards setting and implementation⁵² in the life of a tourism establishment like the KNP. It is beyond the scope of this research study to explain in detail how each standard will be developed and maintained. However, it is within the project's scope to identify some of the areas that deserve attention. Such standards will ensure that, from the initial stage of booking a holiday until checking out, tourists receive value for their money and enjoy an unforgettable experience. Several such areas are stated below:

6.7.4.1 Reservation systems

Telephone etiquette	Walk-ins
Telephonic/facsimile bookings	Internet bookings
Wild Card loyalty programme	Conference/group bookings
Cancellation procedures	Handling of payments/refunds
Booking confirmation	Complimentary bookings (official)
Pensioners' bookings	Last-minute bookings

6.7.4.2 Front office

Entrance gates	- arrival, departure and security checks
Wild Card fast access	- swiping gate to be constructed at all entrances
Telephone etiquette at reception	
Check-in and check-out at reception	- how long should a tourist stand in a queue
Control procedure	
Tourist information service	- rules and regulations for tourist safety

⁵¹ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003.

⁵² The potential areas for standardization were identified by the working groups of the Workshop of 19-20th August 2003 and were improved and arranged by the researcher.

Grounds and gardening
Filling stations - fuel
Procurement

6.7.4.6 Accommodation

Unit grading - stars rating
Refurbishing and upgrading - category and types;
Aesthetic aspects
Facilities for people with disabilities - access
Occupational health and safety - especially at public swimming pools
Information pack in rooms
Guest questionnaires - "Did we meet your expectations?"
Maps
Directory of services
Marketing information
Camping
Signage specification
Control of people and staff movement

6.7.4.7 Maintenance of camp wilderness qualities

Control of vehicle movement - in the camp with late permits
Staff movement - between the workplace and residential compounds
Noise control - late-night partying (tourists) and early morning staff shifts
Control of problem animals - in the camps

6.7.4.8 Educational interpretation service

Tourist information sessions - videos, lectures and film shows
Day walks
Day and night safari game drives
Trails
4x4 trails
Information centres

Environmental education school groups

Science tourism special groups

The development and maintenance of best practice norms and standards on the listed items or activities will enable management to manage possible impacts or pressures that might bear on the facilities and services which are discussed below. Currently these are managed on *ad hoc* and inconsistent manner.

6.8 PRESSURE ON SERVICES AND FACILITIES

6.8.1 Infrastructure maintenance

The existing facilities were developed over a period of approximately 75 years and are not necessarily compatible with modern design, safety and maintenance standards. They may be having an unacceptable environmental impact and/or are inadequate to satisfy existing or projected tourism demand and use patterns. A major review of existing facilities is required and clearer priorities for maintenance and upgrading of facilities or removal need to be developed to ensure that conservation and recreation objectives can both be met in a management environment of limited resources. Some facilities may need to be temporarily or permanently closed or maintained to a reduced standard⁵³.

In this proposed management plan the KNP will undertake a systematic review of all tourism and recreational facilities in the Park to determine their environmental impact, maintenance requirements and costs, any hazards to public safety and the current and projected demand for those facilities. The review will be used in the management plan that will be finally submitted to the Minister (in accordance with The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Bill, 2003 referred to in 2.8.2) to develop priorities for maintenance or upgrading and the basis for allocation of the capital and maintenance budgets.

Closely related to the issue of pressure on facilities and services is the problem associated with the lack of programmes to monitor tourist use. If management is not aware of what tourists are doing in different parts of the Park and also what the impact on such activities is, it will be difficult to anticipate challenges and mitigate their impact on facilities and experiences.

⁵³ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003

6.8.2 Tourist-use monitoring programmes

Tourist-use monitoring programmes are widely used in North America, Australasia and South East Asia. They are essentially established and maintained, in cooperation with relevant interest groups, with the following objectives to:

- determine the pattern of recreation use including locations, types of use, number of tourists and seasonal distribution of use;
- identify tourist needs;
- identify and, where possible, quantify tourist impacts on the Park's natural and cultural features; and
- provide a more objective basis for future management of tourism and recreation in the Park.

The KNP will progressively research, implement and promote similar tourist use monitoring programmes but customized for its own tourist health and safety through:

- regular inspection and assessment of tourist facilities;
- identification and adoption of appropriate tourist facility standards;
- incident analysis and assessment of groups at risk; and
- targeting of tourist safety information programmes to groups at risk⁵⁴.

There are no known examples of tourist-use management programmes in South Africa or elsewhere in Africa, except for rules regulating tourist behaviour in national or provincial parks. Some of the well-known tourist-use management programmes identified by Eagles *et al.* (2002) and widely used in the USA, Canada and Australia include the following (see also 2.6.2):

- **Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC):** the process of identifying appropriate and acceptable resource and social conditions and the actions needed to protect or achieve those desired conditions. It involves the following nine action steps:
 - identify areas of concerns and issues;
 - define and describe opportunity classes (based on the concept of the ROZ Plan);

⁵⁴ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003

- select indicators of resources and social conditions;
 - draw an inventory of existing resources and social conditions;
 - specify standards for resource and social indicators for each opportunity class;
 - identify alternative opportunity-class allocations;
 - identify management actions for each alternative;
 - evaluate and select preferred alternatives; and
 - implement actions and monitor conditions (Eagles *et al.*, 2002).
- **Visitor Impact Management (VIM):** a process that addresses three basic issues relating to impact: problem conditions, potential causal factors and potential management strategies. It was developed and researched for the USA National Park Service, USA Wildlife & Fish Service and USA Forestry Department. It involves the following eight action steps:
 - conduct pre-assessment database review;
 - review management objectives;
 - select key indicators;
 - select standards for key impact indicators;
 - compare standards and existing conditions;
 - identify probable causes of impacts;
 - identify management strategies; and
 - implement (Eagles *et al.*, 2002).
- **Visitor Experience Resource Protection (VERP):** a new model dealing with carrying capacity in terms of the quality of resources and the quality of tourist experience (refer to 2.6.2.2). It contains a prescription for desired future resource and social conditions, defining what levels of use are appropriate, where, when and why. This programme was developed by the USA National Park Service for use in its national parks with high tourist numbers like Yellowstone and Yosemite. It involves the following steps:
 - assemble a multidisciplinary project team;
 - develop a public involvement strategy;
 - develop statements of park purpose, significance and primary interpretive themes; identify planning mandates and constraints;
 - analyse park resources and existing tourist use;
 - describe a potential of tourist experiences and resource conditions (potential prescriptive zones);

- allocate the potential zones to specific locations within the park (prescriptive management zones);
 - select indicators and specify standards for each zone; develop a monitoring plan;
 - monitor resource and social indicators; and
 - take management actions (Giongo *et al.*, 1994, Eagles *et al.*, 2002).
- **Visitor Activity Management Planning (VAMP):** a model developed by Parks Canada to provide guidance for planning and management of new parks, developing parks and established parks. The process uses a model based on a hierarchy of decisions within the management framework. Management plan decisions relate to the selection and creation of opportunities for tourists to experience the Park's heritage settings through appropriate educational and recreational activities. It involves the following action steps:
 - develop terms of reference for the project;
 - confirm existing park purpose and objectives statement;
 - organize a database describing park ecosystems and settings, potential tourist educational and recreational opportunities, existing tourist activities and services and the regional context;
 - produce alternative tourist activity concepts for these settings, experiences to be supported, tourist market segments, levels of service guidelines and roles of the region and the tourism industry;
 - create a park management plan, including the park's purpose and role, management objectives and guidelines, regional relationships and the role of the tourism industry; and
 - implement – set priorities for park conservation and park-service planning (Giongo *et al.*, 1994; Holden, 2000, Eagles *et al.*, 2002).
 - **The last of these models is the ROZ Plan**, which was discussed in Chapter 3. It means the division of a park into a hierarchy of management areas or zones based on the pristine state and potential use to control the impact of human use.

There are both advantages and disadvantages for each of the above tourist-use management programmes and their application to individual protected areas will depend on the suitability of the option in addressing the Park's regional and national challenges. It will also depend on the availability of resources to scientifically carry out such programmes. The KNP has made

extensive investments in the ROZ Plan option and initial efforts should be focused on implementing what is already known about the ROZ Plan before attempting other options that are equally necessary to manage the increasing number of tourists to the Park. For example, the full potential of tourism and recreational opportunities of wilderness areas in the KNP have not been comprehensively utilized. There is room to introduce more wilderness trails and low-impact ecotourism products with minimal cost.

The KNP's roads network constitutes an important attribute and provides access from outside and within the KNP. This aspect also warrants some guidelines when a tourism management framework is developed.

6.8.3 Carrying capacity of roads

Roads within the Park will be maintained at a standard consistent with their relative high-volume use and their relative importance in providing access to Park features of significant tourism and recreation value. The following actions are needed:

- review the use of public roads in the KNP by heavy vehicles such as busses and trucks, because of their impact on the roads' surface and the increase of traffic within the Park;
- regular review of public roads to ensure that they are managed within acceptable environmental and financial limits, that user conflicts are minimized and appropriate levels of public safety are provided;
- close public roads which are no longer required or which cannot be maintained within acceptable environmental and financial limits, after consultation with relevant interest groups; and
- consultation with the Traffic Departments, local government and tourism organizations leading to the dissemination of appropriate information to Park tourists on public access roads and warning signs to be erected where necessary to promote tourist safety (e.g. the re-routing of traffic on the R40 White River-Hazyview road instead of the Legogote-Numbi R40 to avoid increased crime incidents involving tourists en route to the KNP)⁵⁵.

6.8.4 Day visitors

Day visitors constitute the bulk of tourists to the KNP and the lack of adequate facilities dedicated to day visitors is leading to conflict between day visitors and overnight visitors.

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Since the introduction of the Wild Card loyalty programme, public ablutions have been unable to cope with huge numbers of day visitors during peak holiday and weekend periods. There is an urgent need to establish day-visitor facilities similar to the Skukuza Day Centre (outside the main rest camp) in all the regions. This will alleviate the congestion and overcrowding inside rest camps. Pressure is unbearable at the shops, cafeterias, tearooms and picnic-spots due to this sudden surge of tourists to the Park.

In the final management framework a detailed schedule of the assessed tourism and recreation needs should be included to address the above concerns strategically. Once all the elements of the Park's tourism and recreational values are understood and defined, it is possible to draw a list of SMART standards as part of the tourism management framework. The success of any management plan depends on the availability of a suitable and capable human capital.

6.9 HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Human resources are considered the most valuable asset for any organization or company today. A company's edge is no longer found in its products only but in its people as well. The KNP needs a human resource (HR) plan that will generate motivation, performance and good customer relations (Lado & Wilson, 1994). Several aspects of an HR plan should be given priority.

6.9.1 Aims of a Human Resource Plan

These include:

- integrating HR needs into the tourism management plan;
- making front-line staff (e.g. receptionists, rangers, housekeepers, interpretation and educational officers in tourist centres) a visible public expression of the management philosophy of the KNP;
- inculcating a positive relationship between tourists and the park staff; and
- recruiting and employing competent staff that will be better placed to protect the environment, involve local communities and share a positive conservation message with tourists.

To achieve the above aims, a thorough understanding of staff's abilities to deliver on the job is achieved through a job analysis.

6.9.2 Job analysis

A job analysis exercise should be conducted on all tourism-related positions and a specific and detailed job description attached to each job. Job analysis is a systematic process of determining the nature or content of a work assignment through collection of relevant information (see Table 6.1).

TABLE 6.1: Job analysis process

Planning and staffing	Employee development	Employee maintenance
Current and future staffing needs	Inform employee about performance standards	Determine compensation
Recruiting information	Training	Health and safety
Selection criteria	Performance appraisal	Labour relations to bargain over job responsibilities
Performance results	Career planning	Promotion opportunities

Some aspects of the job analysis process are explained below:

- At the beginning of a work assignment employees should be orientated on work expectations and performance standards to dispel false expectations and avoid later disenchantment.
- Training seminars will help to enhance an employee's performance in specialized areas such as customer service or equipment handling.
- Employees often seek advancement through promotions, thus by clearly communicating job specifications and desirable work outcomes for each job they will be in a better position to measure their own success and growth.
- A job analysis process can provide the criteria for the content and qualifications required for each job on which decisions for compensation can be based:
 - it can safeguard equity by standardizing pay structures;
 - it can be used to identify potential job hazards such as exposure or vulnerability to wildlife contact and help management to minimize risk (e.g. field rangers and guides are always exposed to animal attacks and malaria), and
- With a job analysis discussions with labour unions can be facilitated in times of bargaining for improvement of working conditions (McKenzie & Matthew, 1998).

Once the job analysis process is over, the needs for training and development become apparent and enables management to plan for human resources development.

6.9.3 Human resource development

Training and development is a vital investment in staff and should be strategically planned and focused on the development of employee's fundamental competencies to perform their jobs to the highest standards (Lado & Wilson, 1994). From the survey findings discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, it is recommended that training be provided to KNP tourism staff in the following areas:

- customer service;
- tourist and community relations;
- financial planning and business skills;
- environmental education and interpretation;
- conflict resolution skills;
- ecological research and monitoring;
- public relations and communication; and
- the conservation ethic of the KNP⁵⁶.

Equally important to human resource development is the encouragement of team effort among employees.

6.9.4 Organizational development

Organizational development is concerned with an improvement of the energy generated when employees work together. Such programmes contribute to improving the quality of life at work, team building and loyalty (Garavan, 1991). It helps employees to be able to deal with difficult tourists to the Park.

- Career development is focused on helping individual employees to prepare for future upward mobility (promotion) in the organization.
- The benefits for preparing employees include job satisfaction, motivation and a desire to contribute and perform with direction and purpose (Roth *et al.*, 1991).

To achieve this, the KNP will have to enter into partnerships with higher education and training institutions to design certification programmes, educational diplomas or degrees, and apprenticeships/learnerships for continuing professional development.

⁵⁶ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003

With all the necessary skills and capabilities available, it becomes possible for managers to assess the performance of their staff and their organization.

6.9.5 Performance evaluation

Performance evaluation will enable managers to communicate to staff how well they are doing and, if necessary, provide reasons why changes should be made:

- information will be gained through a continuous collection, analysis and evaluation of data on individual employees;
- an effective evaluation system will determine if human resource management is helping to achieve the conservation tourism objectives of the Park; and
- performance evaluation tied to remuneration levels is one way to encourage performance of employees (Khumalo, 2001).

Once the HR and other component plans are in place, it becomes imperative to match the plans to available financial resources. It was alluded earlier in the study that the financial viability of both KNP and SANParks is circumstantial (see 3.13).

6.10 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financing mechanisms for protected areas rely on a market-based approach of valuating and marketing goods and services (Visser & Erasmus, 2002). This approach is an innovative departure from heavy reliance on ever diminishing state subsidy grants. However, it should be viewed as a complementary alternative to government appropriations and not a substitute (Harvard Business Essentials, 2002). An integrated tourism management plan should have a sound financial plan as its strategic component. The financial plan should have components that will support tourism management. The elements in 6.10.1 to 6.10.5 should constitute such a financial plan.

6.10.1 Management of revenue sources (cash management)

The management of all relevant processes and procedures applicable to revenue collection is imperative to achieve the following benefits for the KNP:

- improved revenue flow (cash flow);
- improved cash management and more accurate cash-forecasting ability;
- greater interest earning on investments;

- greater budgetary control and the ability to complete projects timeously;
- improved credit worthiness and reduction in borrowing costs; and
- cash-in exceeding cash-out (Harvard Business Essentials, 2002).

The KNP's revenue generation streams that need closer management are entrance fees, the daily conservation fees (per diem), adventure activities (day walks, night drives, wilderness trails, etc.), accommodation, concession contracts, debtors, interests on investments, rentals for services, donations, fundraising and the government subsidies. This function is strictly regulated by Section 7 of the PFMA (Responsibility for Cash Management and Banking) and it should be emphasized when drawing up a management plan in conjunction with budgeting (South Africa, 1999).

6.10.2 Budgeting

The budgeting process can be incremental, programme-based or zero-based and it must remain an instrument by which expenditures are linked to revenue and park objectives. The budget should reflect the following needs:

- policy objectives;
- financial implications associated with the objectives;
- realistic estimates that allow orderly financial management of activities;
- performance plans; and
- intended outcomes (Whiteley, 2004).

The budget should have the following components:

- Operating budget:
 - compiled for a short-term and normally for a period of one year. It deals with revenue and expenditure on daily activities;
 - consists of operating costs (stock, human resources, technology, telephone, service supplies); and
 - maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- Capital budget, providing for:
 - replacement of assets;
 - expansion of the organization;
 - product diversification; and
 - research into new technological advancements (Whiteley, 2004).

The next step is for managers and their staff to know how to manage financial resources in a manner that optimizes revenue-earning opportunities and prevents wasteful and fruitless expenditure in compliance to the PFMA (South Africa, 1999).

6.10.3 Financial management system

Establish a financial management system for the entire Park and specifically the tourism function:

- as a management information system;
- to provide managers and all staff with rationalized budget information;
- to meet all requirements for recording all accounting transactions;
- to provide an efficient financial control system so that possible areas of over-spending and under-spending may be determined timeously;
- to provide a basis for revenue and cost calculation;
- to provide any additional financial and statistical information;
- to establish standard procedures; and
- to allocate codes to spending objectives to the level of each respective functional unit so that each transaction can be processed according to the relevant responsibility to keep track of the flow of funds and overall expenditure versus the budget (Gitman, 2003).

Linked to the Financial Management System are issues of asset and risk management discussed in 6.10.4.

6.10.4 Other important financial management aspects

- *Asset management* – ensure proper control of assets and keeping of an asset register to be used as part of the for the organization.
- *Risk management* – identify the potential for unwanted and negative consequences and the probability and severity of such adverse effects (e.g. what would happen to the KNP if there would be a terrorist attack on foreign tourists?).
- *Financial and performance reporting* – using the following performance indicators:
 - effectiveness = doing the right things;
 - efficiency = doing things the right way;
 - economy = doing things cheap;

- equity = doing right (as being fair) (Whiteley, 2004).

Unfortunately, many of the current tourism staff have no financial management training to contribute effectively in managing the Park's financial resources and budget programmes. It is imperative for these members of staff to receive on-the-job training on financial management.

6.10.5 Financial management training

A programme for the training of non-financial managers for all tourism managers (and managing staff from the natural science departments) should be designed to enable staff to

- understand the contents of financial statements (short term and annual reports);
- appreciate the role of financial reporting and its contribution towards investment decision-making and performance measurement;
- use financial information to comment on the financial position and financial performance of the KNP for the period under review;
- forecast the financial needs of the KNP based on its future operational plans;
- understand the importance of the budgeting process as a means of achieving both a productive work force and financial targets; and
- appreciate the importance of the cost of capital in the value creation process (Gitman, 2003).

It is also imperative for the KNP to grow its business by broadening its market share. This can only happen with the help of an integrated marketing plan.

6.11 MARKETING PLAN

Both marketing and sales are necessary if a business hopes to effectively compete in today's globalized marketplace (Mellot, 1993). Marketing is the foundation upon which sales are done. Marketing seeks out demand, identifies products and services that will satisfy demands, and then employs strategic sales and advertising techniques to reach customers (Van der Walt *et al.*, 1998).

Figure 6.3 presents the basic steps that should be followed in the development of a marketing plan for the KNP.

FIGURE 6.3: Marketing plan cycle



The plan should help to achieve the following objectives:

- instituting a highly focused national and international marketing initiative for the KNP as a holiday destination to increase market share;
- segmentation of the market with specific market segments profiled to match specific guest facilities and activities;
- development of the KNP brand and brand image as a focused component of marketing activities;
- development of relationships with the travel trade through data base (Internet) marketing, trade visits and trade shows;
- enhancing and expanding relationships with the media whereby a proactive interaction is developed; and
- initiating a suitable and sustainable advertising campaign supported by editorial exposure to increase market awareness, and organizational image⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ Workshop held at Skukuza on 19-20th August 2003 (It was decided that a fully integrated marketing plan will use Figure 6.3 as a foundation and will be developed by the Directorate Tourism and Marketing in collaboration with the KNP tourism division; marketing is a corporate-driven function at SANParks)

A well-constructed marketing plan is a blueprint for guiding the sales effort. These self-explanatory six steps, once they have been transformed into an integrated marketing framework, will provide an effective sequence that minimizes wasteful efforts and ensures a systematic approach for increasing sales and market share. The full development of an integrated marketing framework falls outside the scope of this study. After developing most of the components of the tourism plan, it is important to formulate indicators or criteria that will be used in the monitoring and evaluation phase of the management framework. This exercise follows in 6.12.

6.12 EXAMPLE OF AN INTEGRATED MATRIX OF TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES

In 6.6.2.2 of this chapter certain attributes that constitute the tourism experience in the KNP were identified from the results of the surveys. These attributes subsequently contribute to the creation of tourism and recreational values. In Table 6.2 the attributes are converted into performance and monitoring indicators or TPCs for tourism performance by illustrating how they are interlocked as a system, highlighting existing pressures, knowledge gaps and suggesting opportunities for improvement.

6.13 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

6.13.1 Implementation plan schedule

The implementation of a management plan is a legal requirement in terms of The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Bill, 2003. Relative priorities and the process of implementation are set out in Table 6.3. These priorities will be determined in the context of the SANParks Directorate and the KNP strategic plans and will be subject to the availability of staff and funds.

6.13.2 Implementation strategies

- Undertake an annual review of progress in implementing the completed management plan.
- Undertake after five years an assessment of the effectiveness of managing the park in accordance with the approved management plan and of the degree of success in achieving the plan's objectives and desired outcomes. Base evaluation on the monitoring and evaluation plan guidelines following below.

Every management plan needs a business plan to facilitate implementation.

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental attributes

ATTRIBUTE	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Central reservations	Vital link between tourists and the Park.	Partial dependence on the reservation office in Skukuza. Large volumes are booked centrally in Pretoria.	Manual system, no internet bookings. Clients hold on too long on the phone. Disparity between booked and available accommodation.	Increasing frustrations from clients. Loss of business to competitors.	Operators do not know the product and are unable to refer clients to camps offering similar alternative products. Most staff are casual and lack commitment.	Introduction of new reservation system, RoomSeeker, might improve current situation. Investigate insourcing / outsourcing options.
Natural attraction	Extraordinary aesthetic scenic beauty and fauna & flora. KNP size, diversity and natural heritage status is nationally and internationally important.	No other national park in the country offers same diversity of species and wilderness qualities.	Tourism has visible effects e.g. road kills, overcrowding, traffic congestion. Trampling of picnic and camping areas. Erosion of trails. Feeding animals. Poaching. Invasives – plants & animals).	Unlimited development for commercial purposes. Increased tourist numbers. Disease outbreaks like Bovine TB, anthrax, foot & mouth, Invasives – plants & animals. Poaching. Poor water quality	Need for scientific knowledge on relationship between tourism and conservation of biodiversity. Lack of monitoring evaluation.	Research to establish baseline levels on environmental-tourism management interaction. Need to establish monitoring systems.
Cultural attraction	Rich and diverse cultural setting of local communities, prehistoric African Kingdoms e.g. Thulamela, Masorini, Alabassini, Bushman rock art, Cultural heritage nationally important.	Intrinsic and historic cultural heritage values are completely reliant on Park setting and importance.	Conditions of Thulamela, Masorini and Albassini are generally good. Need to map Bushman rock art and other cultural sites of the indigenous homes of evicted communities. Interpretation of cultural sites is poor and needs upgrading.	Issues associated with access, use, maintenance and interpretation. Direct pressure from communities who demand formal recognition. Land claims by the Baphalaborwa, Ntimane, Tenbosch possible threat. KNP might become a series of conservancies managed by communities.	Knowledge is needed about the cultural history of the Park, including detailed local history along with understanding of the Park's relevance to local communities.	Further recognition and appreciation of local history and cultures through the development of cultural tourism. Improve interpretation services with information outlets. Providing alternative compensation to successful claimants to retain a contiguous KNP.

... continues

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental attributes (continued)

ATTRIBUTE	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Access to destination	Park is accessible by road through 9 entrance gates connecting to major roads. Majority of tourists come by cars, some by coaches and small percentage by air.. Hoedspruit, Kruger Mpumalanga Int and Phalaborwa airports. Access roads are in good condition.	Access and availability of public transport are not dependant on the Park. Good communication lines should be kept open with provincial governments and National Roads Agency.	Recent road improvements improved travel safety. The distance from the KMIA and Hoedspruit airports are a drawback to tourists travelling by air. Air fares extremely high e.g. R2300 return KMIA-JHB. Absence of public bus service curtails individual backpackers.	High maintenance costs for access roads to the Park. Expensive toll gates on both the N1 and N4 discourage motorists from visiting the Park. Traffic congestion during peak holiday seasons especially in the southern region. Effects of crime on travelers e.g. hijackings.	Carrying capacity of key access roads is unknown. The life expectancy of access depends on current conditions and alternative access opportunities e.g. public transport including train services up to Hazzyview station.	Co-operation with tiers of government at provincial and local levels to improve roads and transportation systems. Co-operation with the police and community forums to improve tourist safety from crime.
Access within destination	Within the Park there is a major high quality south-north bitumen-sealed road. There's a road network that provides ready access to a wide range of recreation opportunities. Access decisions determine the diversity of recreational opportunities for tourists.	Access system within the Park is dependent on the Park's available resources e.g. roads grant.	Many of the Park's roads infrastructure valued at R1 billion are approaching the end of their life-cycle. Road maintenance has lagged behind and closing poor quality roads to tourists limits their opportunity to experience the Park's diversity.	High maintenance costs for the Parks' roads and trails infrastructure reduces the quality of tourist experience. The visiting public risks accidents and serious injuries, which might lead to liquidations.	Lack of knowledge of tourist use profiles for the different forms of access provided for the Park; cost-benefit analyses of investments in the provisioning and maintenance of access for tourism and recreation and environmental effects of the provision of access.	Improvements in transport efficiencies from gateway towns such as White River, Nelspruit, Komatipoort, Giyani, Hoedspruit, Phalaborwa, Musina and others. Limiting of heavy vehicles (coaches and trucks) on Park roads, and others.

... continues

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental attributes (continued)

ATTRIBUTE	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Services and facilities	Rest camps, picnic spots, camping, day walks, wilderness trails, game drives, golf, conferencing, food and beverage outlets, signage are important aspects of tourist attraction.	The facilities and services are dependent on the Park's budget and ability to raise sufficient revenue.	High diversity of recreation facilities. Incremental increases of tourist sites is a potential management problem.	Overuse and unsustainable use of facilities; high cost of maintenance; poor quality maintenance and inconsistent design of facilities; pressure from tourist demands.	Lack of tourist feedback on existing services and facilities; tourist movements in the region and Park.	<p>Introduce framework for sustainable management and tourist use limits.</p> <p>Design facilities to meet tourist expectations.</p> <p>Conduct multi-purpose surveys.</p> <p>Set gate quotas.</p> <p>Possible reservation system for day visitors.</p>
Diversity of tourism and recreation facilities	From wilderness trails to the "urban" settings of Skukuza and similar camps, The KNP offers wide range of products from the quiet atmosphere, scenic qualities and the charismatic African mammals.	Totally dependent on the Park's management interventions.	There is no active management planning guidance and policy controls to control the nature of facilities provided at particular settings. There is strong probability of incremental hardening of sites in the absence of such guidance. Complaints of overcrowding are increasing.	Environmental and perceptual impacts are exerting pressure. These are associated with increasing tourist numbers and new activities. More vehicles on the road are a visible impact. Potential for conflict between tourist groups and within groups. Heavy congestion during weekends and holidays.	<p>Absence of a recreation opportunity setting management model for tourism and recreation.</p> <p>Lack of information about activities and tourist use including trends.</p>	<p>Establishment of competency and capacity to manage for recreation opportunities and supply and demand.</p> <p>Establish programmes that will foster appreciation and enjoyment of natural and cultural heritage.</p> <p>Involve local tourism authorities and tour operators.</p>

... continues

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental attributes (continued)

ATTRIBUTE	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Education and Interpretation	KNP provides rich opportunities for informal experiential learning and for education through formal classes, study groups and major conferences. Aspects of the Park's heritage are part of the national education curriculum. Interpretation is the key to convey education.	Park plays essential role in setting the scene for educational and interpretation opportunities. Many aspects of the educational experience are park dependent.	Whilst there is a range of environmental educational programmes linked to the Park, there could be far more. Poor link between the Park and learning groups. No formal links with local education departments. Lack of tourist centres for educational and learning purposes.	Poor knowledge on the intrinsic values of the Park including cultural heritage values. Too few opportunities for the growing number of tourists. Lack of diversity in the educational experience (natural science only). No system of establishing minimum standards of Interpreters/educators in the Park.	More knowledge is needed on the educational use of the Park. Market research should be conducted to identify opportunities for educational use and the type of education experiences that attracts tourists.	Facilitating the potential for educational /interpretation use of the Park. This could involve the provision of a range of educational activities, including activities prior to arrival at the destination. Collaboration with tour operators to assist with educational experience.
Impact of use	Impacts of use need to be managed to retain the tourism and recreation values of the Park. Tourism and recreation needs to be sustainable and based on environmental management performance that meets agreed performance targets. Quantifiable environmental management performance outcomes are possible under a benchmarking system.	Dependent on the Park and the cooperation of the tourism industry, government and local communities.	The global environmental criteria identified by Agenda 21 for the travel and tourism industry give criteria for managing impacts. This document helped to underpin a global environmental certification scheme for travel and tourism called Green Globe 21. It recognizes 10 key performance areas for environmental and social management performance by the tourism industry.	Lack of active management of tourism and recreation and limits of tourist use. Absence of monitoring of tourist use. Lack of monitoring of the environmental performance management of tourism and recreation. Lack of active and applied tourism and recreation research programme and the adaptive use of its findings; poor management of services and facilities and overcrowding, including supply and demand.	Need for quantified environmental performance baseline levels for key criteria specific to the KNP and for supplementary indicators for monitoring.	Opportunity to introduce a tourism performance evaluation system through - adaptive research, - continuous improvement in environmental performance, - limits of use for destinations and active, - continuous and professional management of tourism and - recreation in the Park. <i>... continues</i>

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental indicators (continued)

INDICATOR	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Financial viability	Without adequate financing the Park cannot deliver on its mission and mandate. Government is directing public resources to more pressing socio-economic causes as a result of Apartheid imbalances. The Park should use its resources optimally without sacrificing ecological integrity.	Dependent on the Park's innovative use of its natural assets.	Poor financial performance. Inability of the system to optimally collect payable fees. Massive fraudulent activities at receptions. Lack of training in business / commercial operations.	Difficulties in financing capital and maintenance projects. Inability to meet competitive packages to attract best qualified staff. Lack of funds to finance programmes such as marketing and community development funds.	Financial and business management skills. Lack of knowledge in international fundraising (Foundations, World Bank, Global Environmental Fund, GTZ).	<p>Improve revenue collection system and plug leakages.</p> <p>Provide training in the business and financial field.</p> <p>Create new revenue generating options other than entrance fees.</p> <p>Raise loan/grant funding with IDC/DBSA and others for product development.</p>
Affordability	Affordability and diversity of costs of recreational and tourism opportunities are imperative at local, regional and international level. Multi-tiered systems can meet the various needs of markets and local people.	Affordability is influenced by a range of costs associated with providing services, market trends and economic climate.	Park offers different packages to different market segments. Differential pricing has been introduced for admission. Prices are affordable although recent price hikes have been met with opposition mainly by tour operators.	Adjacent communities demand "flat rates". Tour operators are unhappy with the conservation fee paid by overseas tourists per day in addition to their accommodation and subsistence costs. Increases are caused by high costs of maintenance, shrinking allocations for government subsidies and other causes.	Lack of detailed information on the actual cost of providing services and facilities for tourism and recreation opportunities. Lack of state funding formula for environmental management.	<p>Recognition of the actual costs borne in the provision of tourism and recreation opportunities provided by the KNP.</p> <p>Explanation to the public how revenue collected is spent in improvement of facilities for public enjoyment.</p> <p>Provide the state with actual funding needs for conservation based on real costs of environmental management.</p>

... continues

TABLE 6.2: Matrix of tourism and environmental attributes (continued)

ATTRIBUTE	IMPORTANCE	DEPENDENCE ON THE PARK	TRENDS AND CONDITIONS	PRESSURES	KNOWLEDGE GAPS	OPPORTUNITIES
Community participation	Community involvement in the Park's activities is crucial for the Park's future survival. It is a universal call of the Conference of Parties 7, of the CBD, to involve communities in protected areas management.	Dependent on both the Park's sincerity and the community's preparedness to accept responsibilities.	There exist a few programmes but more could be done.	Communities demand tangible benefits rather than just jobs. The new legislation will make it obligatory for the Park to formally involve communities in policy-making and benefit sharing schemes.	Lack of social research on awareness levels, opportunities for community development and facilitation.	<p>Fast-track projects like Mariyeta, Mhinga and Mdluli contractual Parks to enable communities with land to participate in ecotourism development.</p> <p>Encourage partnerships on community development schemes.</p> <p>Contribute a financial portion of the tourism business to worthy community projects.</p> <p>Identify new contractual parties on communal lands e.g. Bushbuckridge and the Rooibos bushveld in the KNP.</p>
Regional tourism and recreation opportunities	Regional tourism complements the Park. The region is of national significance as a tourism destination.	The region complements the Park and there is interdependency.	To facilitate cooperative management and redirect tourism demand to equally attractive destinations. Integrated approach to tourism management brings massive improvements.	Demands for more facilities in the KNP exert more pressure on the Park. Changes in land use in adjacent areas to the Park e.g. Malelane, Komatipoort-Marloth Park, Hazyview, Phalaborwa, and others. Increased demand for more commercial opportunities in the Park.	Lack of information about the diversity of recreation opportunities and tourist activities across the region and how the KNP contributes to these.	<p>Coordination and integration between KNP, provincial tourism should be harnessed to develop a clear regional tourism strategy.</p> <p>The diversity of tourism opportunities in the region should be encouraged to promote the region as a distinct destination.</p>

TABLE 6.3: Implementation plan schedule

Activity	Participants	Priority	Target date
Tourism Mission.	All tourism and conservation staff from KNP and Head Office.	High	30 November 2003
Objectives and goals.	All tourism and conservation staff from KNP and Head Office.	High	30 November 2003
Financial management plan.	KNP Finance and tourism staff.	Ongoing	31 December 2003
Review of existing tourism infrastructure to determine priorities for maintenance and upgrading.	KNP Hospitality, Technical Services and Tourism Managers.	High	31 March 2004
Business Plan.	Finance, Tourism and Fundraising managers.	Ongoing	1 April 2004
Drawing of a socio-ecological plan to balance tourism and recreation values with conservation and social imperatives.	KNP scientists, ecologists, Tourism managers and social ecologists.	High	30 June 2004
Human resource plan with job analysis, performance management systems, training.	Tourism staff and HR department.	Medium	30 June 2004
Development of a marketing plan.	KNP & Head Office staff.	High	30 June 2004
Grading of the tourism facilities and services.	Tourism Grading Council in consultation with KNP tourism staff.	High	31 July 2004
Formulation of hospitality standards or indicators to guide and measure service and product quality.	KNP tourism staff, THETA, Tourism Grading Council.	High	31 October 2004
Formulation of environmental indicators/ standards to guide and measure tourist experience.	KNP ecologists, scientists, game rangers and tourism staff.	High	31 October 2004
Tourist management programmes.	Tourism and conservation staff.	Ongoing	31 December 2004 (two six months interval surveys must have been carried out)
Research to help understand natural, cultural and tourism resources for effective management.	Natural and Social researchers.	Ongoing	Need for base-line tourism research by 31 December 2004
Finalization of tourism management plan.	All staff in tourism, approval by the SANParks Directorate, Board and the Minister.	Medium	31 March 2005
Plan review.	All KNP and Head Office tourism and conservation staff.	Low	31 March 2009

KEY to priorities:	
High	urgent and/or very important actions already underway or planned for immediate implementation
Medium	actions which are important but not urgent
Low	actions which may be deferred in favour of other priorities
Ongoing	current actions already underway

6.14 DEVELOPMENT OF A BUSINESS PLAN

6.14.1 Why a business management approach?

The idea behind a “business approach” to park management is to encourage protected area managers to view their job, in part, as running a business. However, in this case, unlike in the

private sector, the objective of the business is not to make profit but to improve the management of the protected area and make it financially as well as ecologically and socially sustainable. In terms of the Public Finance Management Act of 1999, section 53(3) ... *a public entity (listed in Schedule 3) may not budget for a deficit and may not accumulate surpluses unless the prior written approval of the National Treasury has been obtained* (South Africa, 1999). The KNP is thus a non-profit organ of state. However, it must ensure that it operates on a clean and efficient financial management system and controls.

6.14.2 Development process

In order to pursue new sources of funding a solid business plan should be developed. The basic steps of this process include:

- Defining the activities to be implemented (the socio-ecological and tourism plans);
- Quantifying the financial needs according to the planned activities;
- Identifying existing and new potential funding sources and funding gaps; and
- Developing a fundraising strategy (Havard Business Essentials, 2002).

From the researcher's experience in doing business plans (as Director KNP for the past six years and currently as Chief Executive Officer of SANParks), a business plan should naturally flow from the comprehensive management plan of the protected area. However, the opposite is also true: that it is best if the business plan is developed in concert with the management plan so that they may influence each other. For example, if planned management activities in the short term are financially unrealistic, this will emerge during the business planning process and the management plan can be adjusted accordingly. But it should be understood that, by and large, the business plan is a means of achieving the management plan, not the other way around. Ultimately, the financial details and funding sources identified in the business plan will be incorporated into the management plan. Khumalo (2001), concurs with the two way approach of doing business plans explained above.

A business plan will also contain the key performance areas (KPAs) for the management of the protected area with set targets. This exercise may become too detailed and Park-specific and does not form part of the current exercise in this study.

6.15 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

6.15.1 Why monitoring and evaluation?

In Chapter 2 (2.9.1) the need for developing a monitoring and evaluation tool or plan for a protected area was alluded to. The IUCN has developed a framework that can be adapted to suit the objectives and prevalent conditions in a specific park. It is imperative to develop clear criteria for assessments, trends, outcomes and outputs. Monitoring is a systematic and periodic measurement of key indicators of biophysical and social conditions. Systematic implies that there should be an explicit plan with set indicators and predetermined stages of monitoring. Monitoring requires ample funding, trained personnel, access to data and sufficient time to implement the monitoring programme. At the workshop of 16-17th July 2003 participants agreed that the monitoring of tourism in the KNP should be on:

- **monitoring tourist impacts:** Tourists to the Park bring both environmental and social impacts. Measurable indicators must be developed to allow periodic assessments of such impacts and to determine corrective action; and
- **monitoring service quality:** This will involve collecting, analysing and evaluating information about the fulfilment of tourist needs and expectations.

6.15.2 Who should monitor?

Staff should be appropriately trained to perform audits, but the help of the following people can also be enlisted:

- field staff and rangers;
- the local community;
- tourists;
- tour operators; and
- researchers from institutions of higher learning or research bodies.

6.15.3 Steps to develop and implement a monitoring plan

6.15.3.1 *Planning for monitoring*

- form a steering committee; and
- hold a meeting with role-players and agree on terms of reference.

6.15.3.2 *Developing a monitoring plan*

- identify impacts and indicators to be monitored;
- select methods of measurement;
- identify limits of acceptable change; and
- develop an operational monitoring plan.

6.15.3.3 *Conducting monitoring and applying results*

- train staff, managers and other role-players;
- carry out monitoring and examine data; and
- present monitoring results.

6.15.3.4 *Evaluation*

- evaluate the effectiveness, reliability and validity of the monitoring programme; and
- reiterate results and apply lessons learned to improve the situation to achieve desirable results.

6.15.3.5 *Monitoring instruments*

The researcher recommends the following instruments to monitor service quality:

- interviews and personal visits to guests;
- comment book;
- suggestion box;
- mystery customers⁵⁸;
- unannounced visits by management; and
- tourist questionnaire.

Measuring i.e. monitoring environmental and social impacts will take time to accomplish but the researcher suggests an evaluation technique based on the identified tourism and recreational values (see 6.6.2.2). The instrument will need to be standardized until it can lead to repeatable results from which reliable evaluation conclusions can be drawn. A lot of piloting

⁵⁸ This is a methodology used in the tourism industry to ascertain the performance and levels of service delivery of a tourism establishment through the eyes of the customer.

and statistical adjustments would have to take place before this instrument can be adopted. An example of a single item (Table 6.4) is included below and the rest of the items appear in Annexure 15.

Concepts such as “condition” and “trend in condition” can mean many things and apply to attributes in many ways. For the purposes of this monitoring and evaluation exercise and the workshop activities from which this table was derived, these terms have been generally used to refer to the principal components of the attributes determined as being significant (e.g. natural value of the KNP) and an interpretation of the condition status of those attributes. The trend in condition simply refers to whether the attribute’s condition is static, improving or declining in its condition.

TABLE 6.4: Natural attraction value

ATTRIBUTES	CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT	EVALUATION					MONITORING					
		Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very poor	Improving generally	Improving slightly	No visible/net change	Declining in some areas	Widespread	
NATURAL SCENERY	Undisturbed, no human structures											
WILDLIFE	Presence of various species of animals and plants											
WILDERNESS QUALITIES	Atmosphere of peace and tranquility											
SOILS	Non-eroded, non-compacted trails, campsites, picnic spots, etc.											
WATER QUALITY	Unpolluted rivers/streams											
STATUS OF AIR QUALITY	Unpolluted air, greenhouse gas emissions minimized											
NATURAL NOISE LEVEL	No artificial noise											
LIGHT IMPACTS	Electric light system promotes opportunity to experience night life and the stars without light pollution											
OVERCROWDING	Noise control in camps											
BUILDINGS	Appearance of buildings blends with environment											

Each of the attributes can be rated on a 1-5 Likert Scale to assess its condition. The rated score can be balanced by marking with X the trend of each criteria assessed. Where appropriate qualitative remarks can be added to substantiate or add perspective on the indicators that are being measured. To improve monitoring and evaluation tools continuous research must be encouraged in the field of tourism management.

6.16 TOURISM RESEARCH

The need for continuous research in the field of tourism was identified as one of the attributes that can add value to tourism and recreation. The primary function of research is to assist in the understanding of the KNP's natural and cultural resources and use and to provide information that will contribute to effective management. There is an urgent need to conduct more surveys and research on aspects such as market segmentation, tourist profiles, seasonality, customer satisfaction, service quality, tourist needs, tourism impacts on biodiversity and the Park's resources, infrastructure and suitability of facilities, opportunities for additional tourism and recreational experiences, levels of community participation and many other areas of the subject. Such research should provide an adequate basis for improved park management and effectiveness.

6.17 CONCLUSION

The objective of this chapter was to suggest a framework or helicopter's view of guidelines that can be used to develop an integrated tourism management framework for the KNP. It charts the process to be followed by KNP managers and stakeholders when developing an integrated tourism management plan. In terms of the current conservation law reform process in South Africa (driven by DEAT) the task of developing a management plan is no longer an exclusive preserve of the "expert" alone but a collaborative process that involves various stakeholders from within and outside the KNP. An "expert" such as the researcher can only suggest a guide, framework or roadmap to be followed. The development of a management plan is a public participatory process that must be underpinned by the principles of transparency, consultation and honesty. However, KNP managers have an inalienable primary obligation of developing a business plan that will be based on the management plan. The new protected area law reform process compels protected areas to produce benefits beyond their boundaries for the socio-economic benefit of communities that live around the Park and the intention to this effect should be reflected in the development of a management plan.

Furthermore, this chapter suggests the adoption of the IUCN definition (see Table 1.1) of a national park and the IUCN evaluation framework on management effectiveness to guide the process of developing a tourism management plan. The researcher noted with concern that DEAT did not follow the IUCN classification in the drafting of the The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Bill, 2003, currently being tabled in parliament. This move might become problematic for South African conservation agencies when participating at international platforms where protected area classification is involved.

Integration means the comprehensive coverage of biodiversity conservation, recreational activities, financial imperatives, social needs, business and governance practices to ensure the Park's survival and self-reliance. In this chapter the conservation ethic and policy guidelines were identified within which tourism facilities and services should be provided for both the enjoyment of the public and protection of the Park's ecological integrity. The mission, objectives and goals of providing tourism and recreational services were developed within the context of the adaptive management philosophy that accepts the view that the successful delivery of tourism services and products depends on the continuous adaptation and improvements of quality, strategy and techniques. To develop service quality and standards the KNP's facilities must be graded in accordance with the requirements of the Tourism Grading Council. Tourism does not exist in a vacuum but in a complex and often unpredictable environment that continuously reinvents itself. The preferences of tourism consumers change frequently and an adaptive tourism system is more likely to continue to meet the needs of its clients than a static and inflexible system would.

In this chapter, fourteen (14) tourism and recreational values that underpin tourism service-delivery in the KNP were identified. They have been evaluated and found to be in varied conditions, subject to various pressures. These tourism and recreational values represent attributes that attract tourists to the KNP and should be used as indicators for measuring management effectiveness and customer satisfaction levels. The success of the KNP's tourism product and services will depend heavily on the active and competent management of the identified tourism and recreational values. This can be achieved through an adaptive management approach that focuses on:

- sustainable use of resources;
- limits of tourist use management;
- environmental performance audit (with attributes);
- sound financial, human resources, marketing and corporate governance practices;
- proper grading of products and services;

- setting of hospitality and quality assurance standards;
- applying business management principles to conservation;
- designing practical monitoring and evaluation plans to assess tourism performance;
- active involvement of communities in protected area management; and
- continuous tourism-research activities.

There is an urgent need for the professional management of tourism in the KNP through a balanced and integrated tourism management framework as suggested in this study. Such a move will contribute to the effective management of the Park by generating sufficient revenue to implement all activities associated with its mandate. In an almost infinitely diverse world there can never be just one standard methodology or type of management plan. The challenge is to develop a scientifically researched “toolbox” of approaches that are derived from a single broad conceptual framework over an extended period of time. This study alone is but a small step towards the establishment of a solid research baseline on which to base the development of the KNP’s tourism management plan. An integrated approach that goes beyond the traditional focus on biodiversity conservation, as suggested in this framework, is but one of the many potential solutions to the lack of effective management of the tourism function in protected areas.

In the last chapter of this study the overall and specific findings, recommendations and shortcomings are presented in conclusion to the research project.