

**Conserving southern Africa's threatened species through the
adoption of meaningful stakeholder engagement performance
metrics**

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ABSTRACT

The research explores stakeholder engagement performance evaluation, as opposed to conservation outcomes, within threatened species conservation in southern Africa's protected areas. Research into the evaluation of stakeholder engagement in nature conservation has not been widely conducted due to difficulties associated with assessment and the subjectivity surrounding assessment. Additionally, limited research is available on measuring effective stakeholder engagement in nature conservation (with specific reference to threatened species), and was therefore highlighted as a potential research opportunity in the currently available literature.

Stakeholder management and engagement is regarded as a key facet of conservation management, particularly threatened species management, and has an undisputed role to play in how threatened species are conserved. Given this, improving our evaluation techniques thereof is worthwhile.

The aim of the research was to gain a deeper insight into stakeholder engagement in conservation of threatened species. Specifically, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of stakeholder engagement through performance measurement in the conservation of threatened species within protected areas.

In this qualitative study, 12 stakeholder engagement professionals including four experts were interviewed to give insights into performance measurement in stakeholder engagement.

The study found that performance measurement of stakeholder engagements should be undertaken in conservation programmes. Furthermore, participants indicated that some of the benefits of measuring stakeholder engagement could lead to continuous improvement. Additionally, they indicated it may indicate future success of conservation efforts, provide time and cost savings, identify when deliverables are met, make stakeholders accountable and lead to a better understanding of stakeholders and the engagement process.

The research identified 13 areas that should be performance-measured within stakeholder engagements and provided associated metrics that could be considered in designing the performance management system. These measurement areas included: participation of stakeholders, strong, open and trusting relationships, communication, attitudes and behaviours, time allocated for engagements, understanding, number of stakeholders and multiple beneficiaries, stakeholder buy-in, skills of stakeholders, legacy issues, sustainable operations, achievement of deliverables and conflict levels between stakeholders.

The potential literary contributions included contextual findings on legacy issues, the need for sustainable operations, maintaining healthy levels of conflict amongst stakeholders, ensuring various stakeholders initiate dialogue and ensuring engagement processes are long term are potential unique findings for meaningful stakeholder engagements occurring within threatened species conservation in southern Africa.

KEYWORDS

Stakeholder engagement, performance measurement, stakeholder theory, threatened species, principles of stakeholder management

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Dated 11 November 2019

Steven Richard Verwey

ABBREVIATIONS

Table 1 is a list of abbreviations used in this document. Each of the words listed in the right column were written out in full once with the abbreviation used thereafter.

Table 1 - List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full word (s)
EPM	Environmental Performance Measures
EPS	Earnings Per Share
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GP	Gross Profit
GP%	Gross Profit Percent
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KNP	Kruger National Park
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisation
P1	Participant 1
P2	Participant 2
P3	Participant 3
P4	Participant 4
P5	Participant 5
P6	Participant 6
P7	Participant 7
P8	Participant 8
P9	Participant 9
P10	Participant 10
P11	Participant 11
P12	Participant 12
ROI	Return on Investment
RQ1	Research Question 1
RQ2	Research Question 2
RQ3	Research Question 3
RQ4	Research Question 4

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Research title

Conserving southern Africa's threatened species through the adoption of meaningful stakeholder engagement performance metrics.

1.2 Background to the research problem

Conservation management, especially in the South African context, enables the South African economy to leverage tourism as a contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Tourism, as a significantly large industry, contributes to the South African GDP (approximately 2.9% of GDP). The employment benefits of tourism deliver approximately 687 000 jobs to the economy (Stats SA, 2016). To put this into perspective, the tourism industry contributes more to the GDP than the agricultural industry and employs more people than the mining industry.

At a community level across southern Africa, loss of biodiversity has been seen to impact the tens of millions of people that have relied on these ecosystems for their livelihood and even their direct food security. Valuation techniques have emerged, which have enabled ecosystems to be valued in monetary terms and compared for each stakeholder. In southern Africa, competition among different stakeholders for natural resources has been seen as profuse, as subsistence living, agribusiness, and ecotourism have all competed for these limited resources. (Wisely, Alexander, Mahlaba, & Cassidy, 2018)

When conservation management fails, this translates into lost value for the economy together with an increased risk of extinction of threatened species. In 2017, the value lost in the South African economy alone as a result of rhino poaching was estimated at ZAR1.1 Billion, which is a considerable loss applicable to two main sectors of the economy, namely, agriculture and tourism (Saayman & Saayman, 2017). This highlights the economic value of threatened species to southern Africa.

While the economic gain to countries or local communities matters, the biodiversity loss was seen as equally noteworthy. For instance, the 2016 statistics on rhino poaching in South Africa indicated that 1,054 rhinoceros were poached, while the year before had 1,175 killings (Molewa, 2017). Habitat loss, habitat fragmentation and loss of biodiversity as a result of climate change have been impacting our threatened species, over and above the onslaught of poaching and harmful human-wildlife interactions (Joppa, Loarie, & Pimm, 2008; Palomo et al., 2014). Within southern Africa, some of the most iconic species including pangolin, wild dogs and cheetah are critically endangered and at a high risk of extinction (IUCN, 2019).

Given the above, and the importance of conservation for so many groups, Berkes (2007) indicated conservation solutions could be framed as sustainability issues. These were found to take into account considerations of both global and local trends and biological conservation objectives together with local livelihood needs (Berkes, 2007).

The impact of stakeholders on conservation outcomes is an area that is of key focus to conservationists in southern Africa, and highlights why a significant amount of time and other resources are committed to this activity. Often though, engagements fail which negatively impacts a species. Understanding stakeholder engagements better in this context is critical for positive conservation outcomes and therefore for conservationists (USAID, 2016). This research therefore aims to practically understand stakeholder engagements better in southern Africa.

1.3 The research problem

1.3.1 The importance of evaluating threatened species stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement in nature conservation has become a focus in recent years (Brooks, Waylen, & Mulder, 2013; Reed, 2008). Stakeholders can play a vital role not only in business, but in nature conservation too (Reed, 2008). The assessment of stakeholder engagement in nature conservation has not been widely studied due to difficulties associated with assessment and the subjectivity surrounding assessment (Sterling et al., 2017).

Performance measurement, as part of business management and theory, has gained significant acceptance as organisations seek the benefits that performance measurement can bring to their specific organisation (Harbour, 2009). If large corporate organisations have experienced benefits by measuring their performance, the question arises whether benefits of performance measurement can then be realised by conservationists. Particularly, whether measuring performance of stakeholder management would lead to improved conservation outcomes.

Identifying ways to measure and gauge the effectiveness of stakeholder engagements was noted as a worthwhile area of research, particularly because the case for stakeholder engagement in the conservation of threatened species has been made and accepted (Mease et al., 2018; Sterling et al., 2017). Both authors advocated for further research linking the principles of stakeholder engagement with performance metrics and evaluation (discussed in further detail in chapter 2 of this research report).

Lucianetti, Battista and Koufteros (2019) indicated that performance measurement systems that have been well designed impacted the organisation's effectiveness more than those that were poorly designed (Lucianetti, Battista, & Koufteros, 2019). Harbour (2009) also indicated that improvement within an organisation cannot happen without measuring performance through performance measurement indicators (Harbour, 2009).

Measuring the performance of stakeholders has occurred within large corporates as part of their Environmental Performance Measures (EPM) for a number of years (Bhattacharyya & Cummings, 2015). The over-flow effects of engaging with stakeholders creates environmental awareness, which in turn, improves the local environment. This therefore suggests that stakeholder measurement would have similar implications within nature conservation as well (Bhattacharyya & Cummings, 2015).

Performance measurement, in the context of this research, was not concerned with typical financial and business performance metrics discussed by Bhattacharyya and Cummings (2015), but focused more on principles of evaluation, metrics and understanding of what works and what does not in the context of threatened species

management. Whilst modern day business metrics of Return on Investment (ROI), Earnings per Share (EPS), and Gross Profit % (GP%) exist and are widely accepted, the metrics or indicators have yet to be developed to gauge stakeholder engagement in conservation (P. Kumar, 2017).

Today, stakeholder management and engagement is regarded as a key facet of conservation management, particularly threatened species management, and has an undisputed role to play in how we manage threatened species (Reed et al., 2018; Sterling et al., 2017; Talley, Schneider, & Lindquist, 2016). Even though stakeholder engagement goes hand in hand with threatened species management, there is, however, limited evidence on assessment of stakeholder engagement in nature conservation due to the subjectivity of assessment and difficulty thereof, resulting in the need for further research.

Again, as limited research is available on measuring effective stakeholder engagement in nature conservation (with specific reference to threatened species), it was highlighted as an important gap in the currently available literature, refer to chapter two of this research report (Mease, Erickson, & Hicks, 2018; Sterling et al., 2017).

Threatened species conservation management is a time-bound process, therefore the importance of stakeholder management and engagement in conservation is clear, however, improving the effectiveness thereof has become of utmost importance (Sterling et al., 2017). This subject-area, and therefore this research, concerned itself with gaining a deeper insight into meaningful stakeholder engagement through performance measurement (due to the limited research available), in order to attempt to make stakeholder management more effective. The research, as discussed in section 2.2, was focussed particularly in the field of threatened species.

1.4 Scope of the research

The scope of the research is to explore stakeholder engagement, as opposed to conservation outcomes, within threatened species conservation in southern Africa's protected areas.

1.4.1 Threatened species

Conservation encompasses a variety of different areas, however, for this project specifically, focus was on threatened species (refer to section 2.2 for a detailed explanation of this) due to the impact it has on the tourism industry of southern Africa (refer to section 1.3) (Strategy Insight and Analytics, 2018).

1.4.2 Geographically focused in Protected Areas of southern Africa

To grasp the importance of protected areas to the tourism industry and South Africa's economy, and the importance of sound conservation management policies, one can simply appreciate the numbers of tourists visiting the Kruger National Park (KNP) each year. In 2018, approximately 1.65 million visitors visited the KNP, South Africa's largest national park, compared to a total of 7.4 million tourists who visited the whole of South Africa in the same year (Strategy Insight and Analytics, 2018). Responsible tourism has therefore become a topic of interest in recent years where the KNP has been the focus of such developments in tourism (Pope, Wessels, Douglas, Hughes, & Morrison-Saunders, 2019).

In 2003, the South African parliament proclaimed the Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003, which provides for:

“the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes; for the establishment of a national register of all national, provincial and local protected areas; for the management of those areas in accordance with national norms and standards; for intergovernmental co-operation and public consultation in matters concerning protected areas; for the continued existence, governance and functions of South African National Parks; and for matters in connection therewith” (Sections & Act, 2009, p.1).

This framed the research to include conservation activities that occurred in those areas that were regarded as protected areas as indicated in the Act, and mandated by the Act, as this serves as the backbone of conservation in southern Africa.

1.4.3 Explores stakeholder engagement

Performance measurement, in the context of this research, was not concerned with typical financial and business performance metrics discussed by Bhattacharyya and Cummings (2015), but more the principals of evaluation, metrics and understanding of what works and what does not in the context of threatened species stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, the research did not attempt to examine conservation outcomes, but principles of evaluating stakeholder engagements within the conservation of threatened species.

1.5 Purpose and aims of the research

The researcher conducted this study to gain a deeper insight into stakeholder engagement in conservation of threatened species. Specifically, the aim was to gain a better understanding of stakeholder engagement, and evaluation thereof, through performance measurement in the conservation of threatened species within protected areas.

1.5.1 The main research question

The main research question was to identify principles of evaluating or measuring stakeholder engagement within threatened species conservation in southern Africa and to validate the importance thereof.

1.5.2 The intended contribution to literature

The researchers intended contribution to literature was to potentially provide further research to Mease et al (2017), which was to link principles of engagement with measurement thereof. Furthermore, the researcher sought to potentially identify any unique principles or differences of evaluation of stakeholder engagement within the context of threatened species conservation in southern Africa.

1.6 Conclusion

Stakeholder engagement can play a vital role in outcomes of nature conservation, which will forever be a time-bound process. More detailed research is needed when it comes to stakeholder engagement and performance measurement, specifically looking at threatened species in nature conservation.

1.6.1 Structure of the research study

This research study consists of seven chapters. The seven chapters are followed by the references and appendices. Below is a brief explanation of what is covered in each chapter.

Chapter 1: *Background and aims* – provides a background to the study where the importance of the study together with the research question and aims of the study have been discussed. The importance of threatened species and stakeholder engagement is discussed in section 1.3.1, this leads to the purpose and aims of the study which are discussed in section 1.5 above.

Chapter 2: *Literature review* – this provides a review and analysis of currently available literature leading to gaps found in the literature and thus creating scope for this study. Section 2.2 defines the conservation of threatened species in protected areas and section 2.4 discusses the importance of stakeholders in threatened species. Section 2.4 discusses performance measurement of stakeholders. Section 2.5 looks at stakeholder engagement through the stakeholder theory. Principles of stakeholder engagement are discussed in detail in section 2.6 and the relationships of stakeholder engagement discussed in section 2.5.1 The intersecting literature which includes responsible leadership and nature conservation is discussed in section 2.7.

Chapter 3: *Research questions* – shows the four research questions which were developed to address the aims of the research and answer the research problem. The research questions, in chapter 3, were developed based on the problem areas identified in the literature review (in chapter 2).

Chapter 4: *Research methodology* – discusses how the study was conducted. The choice of methodology as highlighted in section 4.2 and the population including unit of analysis can be found in section 4.3 and 4.4. Sampling methods and the interview protocol can be found in sections 4.5 and 4.6 indicates the measurement instrument. Section 4.7 highlights the data gathering process followed by the role of the researcher in section 4.8. Data analysis, coding of the data and quality controls are discussed in sections 4.9 and 4.10. The ethical considerations and limitations of the study are highlighted in sections 4.11 and 4.12 respectively.

Chapter 5: *Results* – outlines the participants and their responses and themes that arose from the interviews. The results are recorded per research question (RQ).

Chapter 6: *Discussion of results* – discusses the results in the context of currently available literature. The results are discussed here per individual RQ.

Chapter 7: *Conclusion* – ties all information together and highlights the main findings of this study. The principal findings for the research are included in section 7.2, followed by the research contribution in 7.3. Section 7.4 contains the implications for management and the limitations are discussed in section 7.5. Section 7.6 contains the researchers recommendations for future researcher and 7.7 contains a quote pertinent to the research and future research..

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Figure 1 shows a 'map' of the literature review linking the conservation of threatened species to the stakeholder theory leading to performance measurement

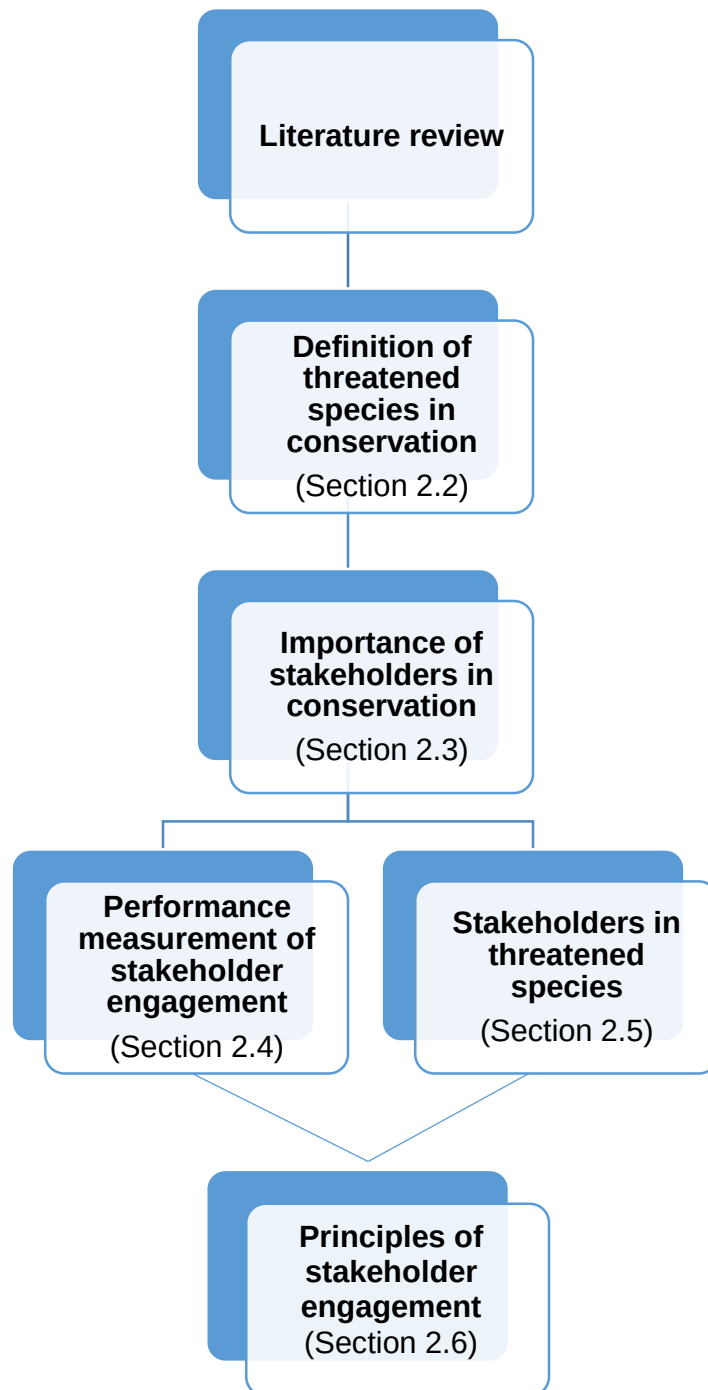


Figure 1 - Overview of literature review

Creating a sound definition and concept of conservation, specifically of threatened species, was critical to the research. Section 2.2 of the literature review defined conservation with specific reference to threatened species.

The impact and importance of stakeholder engagement was identified in the context of conservation to justify the field of study as appropriate in section 2.3. Section 2.4 provides a background to performance measurement and also links performance measurement's ability to measure stakeholder engagement as well. Lessons learnt in business can also be found in section 2.4.

Research in conservation intersects a number of academic fields, given the impact of conservation on society and business. The primary field of research was stakeholder theory (Fassin, 2009; Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmer, & de Colle, 2010). Stakeholder's have become of such importance in the world we live in that this subject now intercepts numerous fields including business ethics, strategy, and corporate governance (S. Miles, 2017). A review of literature dealing with the stakeholder theory subject was introduced in section 2.5. Relationships key to the stakeholder theory have been discussed in this section. The principles of stakeholder management are discussed in section 2.6.

Primarily this research draws from stakeholder theory, however, responsible leadership and ethics are key aspects that may be useful when trying to understand stakeholder theory (Voegtlin, Frisch, Walther, & Schwab, 2019). Therefore, section 2.7 of the literature review seeks to tie these subjects together. Section 2.8 ends off with the conclusion which ties together all information discussed in sections 2.2 to 2.7.

2.2 Defining conservation of threatened species within protected areas

Conservation is a broad subject that includes a number of different disciplines such as zoo-keeping, farming, hunting, breeding and biodiversity protection (Sandbrook, 2015). One of the definitions that highlighted the broadness of the subject was the definition by Sandbrook (2015), in which conservation was defined as a set of actions that sought to establish, improve or maintain our relations with nature. There were

two key areas that stood out about this definition which included that it required 1) action and that 2) conservation has been seen to be a fundamental aspect of our relationship with nature. Relationships were seen as a key aspect here (discussed further in 2.5.1).

The definition of conservation above was viewed as broad because of its intended word selection of 'nature'. Nature can mean anything around us that is not man-made as defined below:

"the phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations". (Murray, 1884)

Another definition by Braverman (2014) discussed nature conservation in the context of in situ as 'wildlife' (national parks and protected wildlife) and ex situ as 'any other conservation that is not in a natural habitat' which included any animals in captivity (animals that are kept in zoos, farmed or kept for hunting purposes). The definition by Sandbrook (2015) was similar to this definition by Braverman (2014).

The Sandbrook (2015) definition, when compared with the Braverman (2014) definition, framed with the common understanding of nature, therefore, defined conservation as a set of actions that seek to improve or maintain our relations with the physical world.

According to Liberati, Rittenhouse and Vokoun (2016), the actions that could be used to establish, improve or maintain our relations included the following actions: protect, connect, restore, manage, partner, and inform. This differed from what Sandbrook (2015) indicated above which included 'establish, improve and maintain'.

Threatened species are those that were listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable, as classified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and included vertebrates, invertebrates, plants, fungi and protists. The 'Red List' issued by the IUCN detailed these species and classified each species according to its risk of extinction, with those classified as critically endangered at most risk of extinction (IUCN, 2019; Mace et al., 2008).

Therefore, the researcher's simplified definition of conservation of threatened species in protected areas included the actions as stated above: protecting, connecting, restoring, managing, partnering and informing that may improve or maintain relations with critically endangered or vulnerable species within protected areas as defined by the Protected Areas Act.

2.2.1 Sub-conclusion

The Protected Areas Act definition above included matters which may have been considered matters of a controversial nature such as breeding, hunting, farming, and wildlife trade (Bulte & Damania, 2005). The intention of the research by Bulte and Damania (2005) appeared to provide arguments for and against a variety of conservation methods, but for the purpose of this study, the focus was only focussed on the conservation of threatened species in Protected Areas.

2.3 Importance of stakeholder engagement for threatened species

Liberati et al. (2016) identified stakeholder participation as:

“an integral part of structured decision making because it increases transparency, acceptance, and understanding of planning outcomes and results in better implementation and progress towards conservation goals” (p. 37).

There have been examples globally that provided evidence of how nature conservation was primarily achieved through stakeholder engagements, relationships and partnerships (Garvare & Johansson, 2010; Mannetti, Göttert, Zeller, & Esler, 2019; Price, 2010; Sawchuk, Beaudreau, Tonnes, & Fluharty, 2015; Scheele et al., 2018). One specific example relating to endangered species in conservation included the importance of stakeholders with regards to providing “understanding, support and participation” (Sawchuk et al., 2015). Research conducted to identify why many conservation efforts fail in protecting threatened species found that there were six main reasons that needed improvement, one being stakeholder engagement (Scheele et al., 2018). There has been a widely held view

among conservation researchers that a wide range of decision makers and stakeholders are required for threatened species conservation. Dialogue and communication has aimed to build strong relationships whilst also increasing understanding of conservation issues. It is also evident that the value local communities placed on conservation has an effect on the resources that flow into that particular conservation area (Scheele et al., 2018).

Another example of the importance of stakeholders in conservation was seen with the 'Responsible Soy Project', which aimed at forming collaborations between nature conservation NGOs and large corporates. These partnerships were formed in order to preserve the Amazonian forest, which reduced deforestation on properties enrolled in the project (Jung & Polasky, 2018).

The cost of conservation is exorbitant and often this burden is not financially viable for the government. Partnerships are required to help bridge the numerous funding shortfalls to adequately protect the environment. These sources of funding were often provided by NGO's, political parties, international corporations and private citizens who often demand a say as to the use of the funds (Andrade & Rhodes, 2012; Macgregor, 1989).

One of the tension points in threatened species conservation has been the balance between different stakeholders (Samson, Foley, Gan, & Gloet, 2018). On the one hand, one has government and conservationists positioning themselves as pro-environmentalists, whilst on the other hand, you have local communities whose livelihoods may depend on the subsistence use of grazing lands or on the meat from indigenous antelopes. Research done into the illicit trade in the wildlife industry showed, even after incentivising conservation for local communities, a number of key stakeholders were involved in achieving successful outcomes. However, community-based approaches have not been likely to singularly be responsible for long term conservation success given that commodity prices attract a variety of criminal elements (Cooney et al., 2017).

Nature conservation has not only been seen to protect the natural wonders of the world, but has also been found to provide subsistence and revenue to local communities. One of the many stakeholders involved in conservation of threatened

species has been found to be the local community that surrounds the protected area. Local community participation drives local tourism, thereby increasing the local economy and living standards of those in close proximity to the protected area. (Mayaka, Croy, & Wolfram Cox, 2019).

Even in instances of community-based wildlife efforts, these have been likely to fail due to a lack of stakeholder engagements at all levels. It has been shown, after 15 years of research, that outcomes are still affected by quality of government, fit between context and project design, the level of integration across the system, and strength of learning networks across all levels of stakeholders. Once again, a broad range of stakeholders are evidenced as being required as findings indicated that local control without coordination across large scales leads to fragmented and discontinuous ecosystem management (Balint, 2007).

Andrade and Rhodes (2012), in their research, conducted 55 case studies within protected areas, found that the long term successes have been attributable to financial and political will. However, further to this they also found that over and above the traditional stakeholders of government, conservationists or tourists, the local community when participating in the decision-making and management of the protected area increased chances of success.

The relationship between the benefits for nature and the benefits for communities are often linked and are symbiotic in their relationship. The stakeholders that impact the success of the conservation projects are likely to also impact the financial well-being of local communities (Naidoo et al., 2011).

Furthermore, even when analysing the quality of decisions on environmental matters when stakeholders were consulted, new ideas, resources, technical abilities and analyses came to the fore and this resulted in better quality decisions being made. The study of 239 case studies found that the quality of decisions, which consisted of political, technical and financial metrics, were improved and therefore appropriate for stakeholder engagement with respect to decision-making (Beierle, 2002).

There was also a negative impact on projects where stakeholder engagement was ineffective or poorly implemented, leading to disillusionment in the project phases.

Furthermore, stakeholder engagement was often needed to bridge the socio-economic barriers between various stakeholders in conservation. Particularly, when addressing wicked problems, such as conservation of threatened species, whose social-ills, particularly in South Africa, stem from colonial or apartheid times, therefore, engagement has been required to address the root causes of disagreement. (Mease et al., 2018; Snyman, 2014)

2.3.1 Sub-conclusion

The chances of long-term success in nature conservation was possible only when there was widespread stakeholder engagement that sought to align the divergent needs of each of the stakeholders, specifically as many environmental challenges will require a balance in societal values and norms. Stakeholder engagement has often been characterised by tensions and therefore deserve focused attention.

The literature above indicated that stakeholder engagements impacts conservation either positively or negatively depending on its implementation. Cooney et al. (2017) found that engagement with only one primary stakeholder is not enough and therefore supports the views of Beierle (2002) and Balint (2007) that a number of stakeholders should be considered and engaged.

2.4 Performance Measurement

2.4.1 Performance measurement of stakeholder engagement in the conservation of threatened species

Performance measurement of stakeholder management and engagement has also become an important topic in recent years (Reed, 2008). Performance measurement has become important to many organisations, where the stakeholder approach has been adopted (Cooper, 2017; Freeman, 1984). This means that stakeholders have become an important aspect of the company's vision.

Mease et al. (2018) indicated that more thorough and easy to use indicators are required to understand meaningful engagement. Furthermore, they noted the consequences of failure to measure this engagement, which will leave managers

unable to ascertain whether they are meeting their goals effectively. Finally, they advocated providing research that will lead to improvements within environmental management for the:

“thoughtful linkage of stakeholder engagement principles to the practice and evaluation (metrics) of outreach strategies (stakeholder engagement)” (p. 257).

Kumar (2017) also indicated that updated metrics were needed in order to ensure that sustainable development and progress could be made in order to strive towards a “green economy” (P. Kumar, 2017). In terms of measuring stakeholder engagement and the subsequent outcomes, it has been challenging to assess as many of the measurement outcomes may be subjective, such as attitude or behaviour, and a ‘good’ attitude for one person may differ from the next person (Sterling et al., 2017). Even though these subjective outcomes have been difficult to assess, they still play an important role in the measurement of stakeholder engagement (Brooks et al., 2013). This provided a gap in the literature and reasoning for this to be included as exploratory research questions: Research Question 3 (RQ3) and Research Question 4 (RQ4).

Finally, literature by Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freunde and Schaltegger (2019) indicated three steps for successful stakeholder management which included; firstly, providing a governing philosophy that included stakeholder management, secondly, creating stakeholder inclusive value statements and thirdly, implementing a stakeholder performance measurement system. Measurement and therefore targets, provided a clear sound method to achieve specific results (Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund, & Schaltegger, 2019).

Based on the above, this research therefore sought to determine the following within threatened species conservation:

1. Investigation into the principles of meaningful stakeholder engagement: Research Question 1 (RQ1) and Research Question 2 (RQ2).
2. Developing performance metrics for stakeholder engagements: Research Questions 3 (RQ3) and Research Question 4 (RQ4).

2.4.2 Lessons from business in performance measurement

Whilst the above highlighted the importance of evaluating stakeholder engagements as well as areas this research focussed on, the researcher felt that a review of performance measurement and its contribution to business provided insights needed when analysing results relating to research in performance measurement and therefore the following background on performance measurement theory was included.

Performance measurement has been required by organisations to communicate their performance to stakeholders of the organisation. Performance measurement as a discipline sought to link planning, executing and measuring of results and has often been linked to tangible physical characteristics of the business. The benefits to firms of performance measurement included formulation, implementation and review of organisational strategy. Secondly, it aided the communication of results to stakeholders and strengthened the reputation and brand value. Additionally, it fostered motivation, a performance-improvement culture, and organisational learning. According to Micheli and Mari (2014), ultimately, the benefits of a performance measurement system informed decision making and cannot be used as a perfect measure of performance (Micheli & Mari, 2014).

As stated by Bourne, Melnyk and Bititci (2018), performance measures have been shown to be 'top down' approaches that aligned the business with strategic direction, or 'bottom up' approaches as found in lean organisations. Furthermore, they have included the measurement of dynamics and teams, interactions between departments, relationships between parent and subsidiary organisations as well as performance measurement of the supply chain (Bourne, Melnyk, & Bititci, 2018). Therefore, as all the above in some way represent stakeholder measurement, they can benefit from performance measurement of stakeholders too.

EPM in large organisations has been measured over a long time period through the performance of stakeholders (Bhattacharyya & Cummings, 2015). The over-flow effects of engaging with stakeholders created environmental awareness, which in turn improved the local environment. Performance measurement, therefore, may

show that stakeholder measurement would have similar implications within nature conservation as well.

The findings from Lucianetti, Battista and Koufteros (2019) indicated performance measurement systems that are well designed impacted the organisations effectiveness. If performance measurement systems are in place, positive outcomes will ultimately be the result thereof.

In the past ten years, businesses have embarked upon a shift in their performance measurements to include environmental and sustainable metrics too (Chenhall & Langfield-Smith, 2007). This approach aimed to create shared value for organisations and unlock new opportunities. One of the reasons companies have adopted this measurement was to communicate with their stakeholders about their businesses; therefore measurement particularly in conservation bodies may be important for their stakeholder engagements. (Porter, Hills, Pfitzer, Patscheke, Hawkins, Hills., 2011)

2.4.3 Sub-conclusion

In the context of this research, performance measurement aligned itself with measurement metrics rather than financial performance, and should not be confused. Freudenreich et al. (2019) identified how organisations should measure across a number of different elements especially since the advent of triple bottom line reporting. However, the authors indicated how meaningful measurement contributes to improved successes in a specific field (Freudenreich et al., 2019). This is true for stakeholder engagement as well, and hence the case for development of stakeholder engagement metrics (P. Kumar, 2017). Due to the limited evidence available in the measurement of performance metrics in stakeholder engagement in nature conservation, the principles of stakeholder engagement were focussed on and discussed in section 2.6. This formed the basis of RQ3 and RQ4.

2.5 Stakeholder's in the conservation of threatened species

The first resemblance of stakeholder theory occurred in the 1960's, when the idea that the only relevant parties that management (within organisations) needed to account to were the shareholders, was challenged (Freeman et al., 2010).

The father of stakeholder theory was credited to R. Edward Freeman due to his seminal work in the 1980's and 1990's surrounding the topic. His work developed the theory that a balance between stakeholder interests needed to be met by an organisation and these stakeholders included customers, suppliers, employees, financiers, communities and the managers of the company (Freeman, 1984).

The original definition of a stakeholder by Freeman (1984) indicated that a stakeholder was anyone that could affect or be affected by the organisation's pursuit of its objectives. This definition, in its most simple form, holds true and provided a definition relevant to this study.

The importance of stakeholder theory could be seen in its roots in strategy, and therefore has played an active role in determining strategy of the organisation. In particular, this has become known as 'stakeholder strategy', and was underpinned by the reality of what multiple stakeholders in organisations have been seen to face in reality rather than the theoretical aspects of strategic management (Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2018). Figure 2 shows Freeman's original stakeholder model where the 'firm' is shown in the centre with its many influencing stakeholders around it.

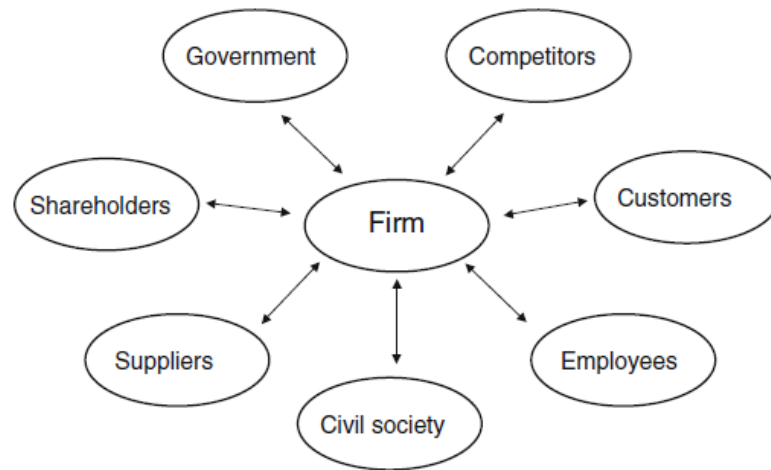


Figure 2 - Freeman's original Stakeholder Model (Freeman, 1984)

Additionally, the importance of stakeholder theory for organisations was evident in stakeholder theory having evolved to incorporate how decisions are made, (See Figure 3) given that decisions of managers needed to be aligned for the organisation and its stakeholders rather than for personal gain. This seemed only to be achievable when the interests of stakeholders were placed above individual interests, and the implication was that stakeholder management must be at the forefront of managers' minds (Samson et al., 2018).

Stakeholder theory is a subject extensively studied, as evidenced by the approximately 885 different definitions of stakeholder theory, and therefore stakeholder theory as a subject has been likely to be optimised in this context rather than fundamentally changed (S. Miles, 2017). The research relied on stakeholder theory as depicted by the early definitions by Freeman. However, the following updated model of stakeholders (Figure 3) expanded the original definition (Figure 2) by Freeman (1984) by showing the increased complexity and increased number of stakeholders that exist (Fassin, 2009). Figure 2 is a basic illustration of the stakeholder model, whereas Figure 3 looks at how factors are inter-linked and multiple factors on varying levels have been noted to affect stakeholder management.

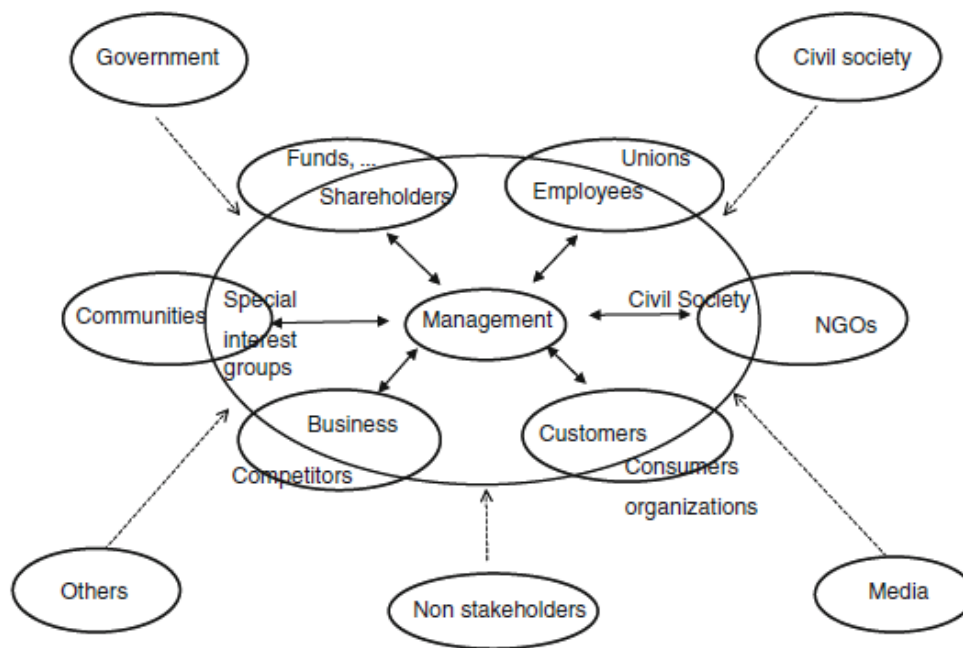


Figure 3 - The Stakeholder Model of the firm (Fassin, 2009)

It has been noted by Freeman et al. (2010), however, that one still needs to define stakeholders in the context of operation so that the interests can be identified and how these relationships should be regulated by managers in practice (Freeman et al., 2010; S. Miles, 2017). The particular stakeholders in conservation of threatened species within protected areas therefore needed to be correctly identified and subsequently addressed. However, the starting point included clearly identifying who the 'firm' was.

One of the essential features of viability of stakeholder theory was that the 'firm', as depicted in the centre of Figure 2, remains viable (Jones & Wicks, 1999). In business, this usually means the firm must remain profitable. In the context of this research, 'viable' was a useful term to consider.

In the context of this study, the researcher proposed 'viable' as 'viability of the threatened species'. In this case, the stakeholder environment of threatened species in protected areas would see the 'firm' become a 'threatened species' and 'management' become the 'conservation of a threatened species'. Figure 2 and Figure 3 have been adapted by the researcher as below for Freeman (1984) and Fassin (2009) which can be seen in Figure 4 and Figure 5. When reading organisation / firm

/ management, consider threatened species or conservation of threatened species within the stakeholder theory context.

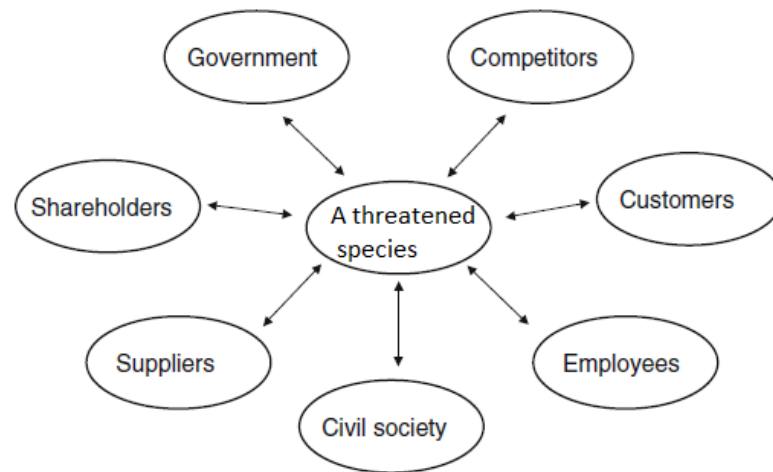


Figure 4 - Researcher's adaption of the Stakeholder Model by Freeman (1984)

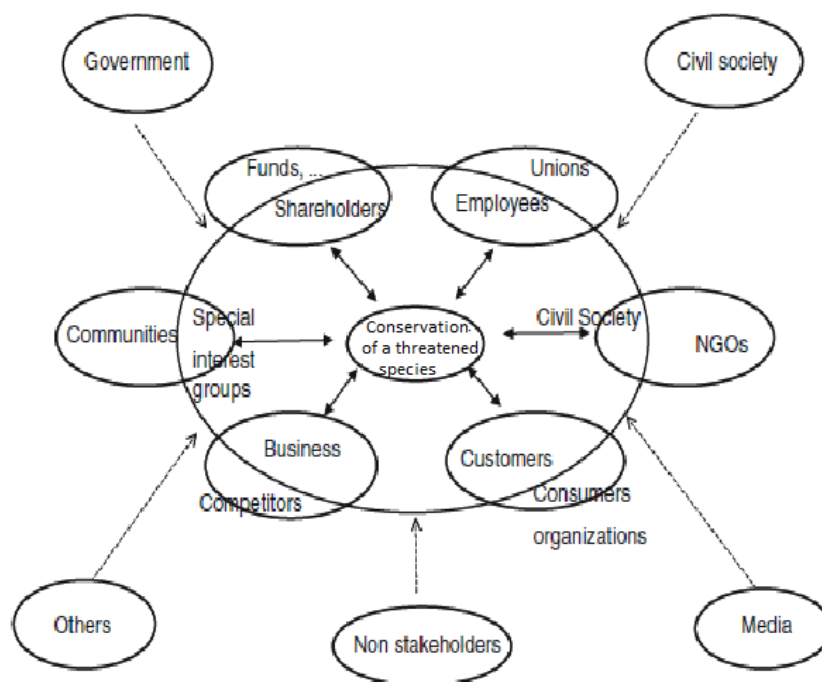


Figure 5 - Researcher's adaption of the Stakeholder Model by Fassin (2009)

Figure 4 and Figure 5 show how stakeholders can influence the conservation of threatened species. This being said, the relationships between the various

influencers / stakeholders was also an important point to consider, which is discussed in section 2.5.1 below.

2.5.1 Relationships are key to stakeholder theory

An additional view on stakeholder theory as discussed by Miles (2017) has sought to understand and incorporate the relationships of stakeholders and identified how this could be used to create value for the organisation (S. Miles, 2017). By understanding these relationships more clearly, value could be created for all stakeholders, especially for the firm, or as illustrated above, the threatened species (Freudenreich et al., 2019; Phillipson, Lowe, Proctor, & Ruto, 2012).

The underlying belief in stakeholder theory is that by managing the relationships of the different stakeholders, one can create more value for the organisation and that the unit of analysis that is most beneficial to organisations is the stakeholder relationship (Freeman et al., 2018).

2.5.2 Sub-conclusion

The concept of the 'firm' or 'management' being at the centre of the stakeholder maps, have been exchanged with 'threatened species' and 'conservation of threatened species' respectively on the Freeman or Fassin models which became the important for stakeholder engagements in this research report as it provided a link between stakeholder engagement and the threatened species itself or the firm conducting conservation efforts.

Stakeholder theory identified the different stakeholders being able to impact or be impacted by the firm. Stakeholder theory had its roots in strategy formulation and thereafter emerged as stakeholder strategy. This implied that as the focal point becomes the threatened species, for instance rhinoceros, the strategies that emerge must be specific for dealing with stakeholders in that specific sphere. Furthermore, by analysing the stakeholder map this way, it became clear as to who was ultimately affected most by the decisions of the stakeholders – in this study particularly, nature conservation or the species itself.

2.6 Principles / features of stakeholder management in nature conservation

As discussed above, performance measurement has been a challenge; however, principles of stakeholder engagement have been developed and include eight principles. Table 2 looks at the principles of stakeholder engagement and the theory of stakeholder management which is known as the 'Clarkson Principles'.

Table 2 - Principles of stakeholder engagement and the theory on stakeholder management as discussed in the context of this study

Principle number	Principles of stakeholder engagement (Mease et al., 2018)	Clarkson Principles (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)	Application to this study
1	Build relationships with various stakeholders to increase trust, empathy and understanding between conservation managers and stakeholders. Strong relationships create social resilience when managers make decisions.	All legitimate stakeholders should be acknowledged and monitored.	It is important that all the stakeholders, particularly relating to threatened species and nature conservation are engaged where relationships (which are key) are built based on trust.
2	Transparency around decision-making processes creates trust and identifies the engagement process to communities. Transparency will ensure that stakeholders can see how their perspectives were taken into account in the decision-making process.	Managers should openly listen to and communicate with stakeholders.	In the context of threatened species and nature conservation, transparency was a key aspect to ensure stakeholders and managers in these fields are part of all the decision-making processes.
3	Engagement with stakeholders should be as early as possible to allow managers to understand stakeholder preferences. Early engagement can reduce delays to the	Managers should adopt processes that are aligned with	Nature conservation, specifically of threatened species, has always been time-bound, where the sooner stakeholders are addressed, the lower the

Principle number	Principles of stakeholder engagement (Mease et al., 2018)	Clarkson Principles (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)	Application to this study
	approval process as well as nurtures trust, communication and efficiency.	stakeholder's capabilities.	risk of these species becoming extinct making early engagement a necessity.
4	Ensure inclusion of various stakeholders to allow for diverse perspectives of multiple viewpoints to be heard. Inclusion of the minorities can dramatically include effectiveness of decision making.	Benefits and burdens should be distributed equally among stakeholders.	Stakeholders in different fields of threatened species conservation (e.g. stakeholders involved in rhinoceros protection versus cheetah conservation may have differing viewpoints) should be included so to ensure a broad range of viewpoints are included.
5	Stakeholder engagement should make management actions visible as this leads to managers consulting, informing and involving stakeholders more effectively.	Cooperation between managers and stakeholders is valued.	Managers should be at the forefront of engaging stakeholders to prevent animosity amongst the stakeholders. In this case managers (the researcher) should engage with stakeholders to determine their views in a way that the stakeholders see value in their inputs.
6	Expectation management is critical as meeting expectations of all stakeholders is highly improbable as stakeholders often	Activities that disregard human rights should be avoided completely.	It is important that stakeholders are treated with respect and the expectations of the stakeholders should be discussed from the beginning.

Principle number	Principles of stakeholder engagement (Mease et al., 2018)	Clarkson Principles (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)	Application to this study
	have conflicting views. Stakeholder's expectations often need to be managed and negotiated during the engagement process.		Conflicting views may arise, particularly when it comes to nature conservation and management of threatened species, therefore stakeholders should be handled in a way that prevents conflicts from arising.
7	Set goals so that managers and stakeholders are both working toward common objectives. Goals must be clear as this improves the quality of decision making.	Conflicting commitments to organisations and legal and moral responsibilities towards stakeholders must be acknowledged to limit this bias.	Goal setting is imperative and common goals should be set out at the beginning where nature conservation and the management of threatened species as a whole are the focus and not specifically on just one stakeholders goals / objectives.
8	Timeliness of implementation of stakeholder engagement strategy should be understood within the specific context and give stakeholders sufficient time for engagement.	<i>No principle 8.</i>	It is important that stakeholders are given sufficient time to engage, however, as mentioned in Principle 3, nature conservation, specifically looking at threatened species, is time-bound therefore realistic time frames should be set up at the beginning of the process.

These principles were aligned in a number of ways with the following features of stakeholder engagement. These features aimed to provide guidance for future stakeholder engagement in natural resource management (Talley et al., 2016).

Feature 1: Setting of clear objectives regardless of context, as this demonstrates thoughtfulness of the stakeholder engagement process as well as allows managers to plan ahead with other stakeholder engagement strategies (Talley et al., 2016). Objectives that are not visible or defined correctly create confusion and complicate engagement processes. Goal setting should be done in conjunction with stakeholders to ensure alignment and manage expectations. For the purpose of this study, due to nature conservation being a broad topic of discussion, clear goals should be set out to include the goals of all stakeholders in relation to threatened species as a whole.

Feature 2: Systematically represent stakeholders in a manner that fosters broad inclusion of stakeholders that are relevant to the objectives and participatory approach, as this improves the effectiveness and the efficiency of the engagement processes (Talley et al., 2016). Where broad inclusion is not possible, these need to be articulated and transparent. As discussed in Feature 1, goals should encompass all stakeholders involved in nature conservation to get broader viewpoints which also aligns with Principle 4.

Feature 3: Use relevant methodologies when engaging stakeholders so that they are aligned to the capabilities of the organisation as well as to the context of the stakeholder engagement (Talley et al., 2016). In the context of this study, it was important that stakeholders were engaged in the correct manner, especially because even though nature conservation is broad, identifying and engaging with the relevant stakeholders is important to success.

Feature 4: Where possible, create co-ownership structures that create buy-in for key stakeholders and ensure that local knowledge has been utilised in the best way. Increased knowledge has been found to increase understanding (Gray, Chan, Clark, & Jordan, 2012; Talley et al., 2016). By engaging local stakeholders, as opposed to international stakeholders, buy-in may be more evident as local stakeholders dealing

specifically in nature conservation may provide more valuable insights as opposed to foreign stakeholders.

Feature 5: Reflect on the outcomes of the stakeholder engagement process together with stakeholders (Talley et al., 2016). A shortfall in this area has been noted to exist due to a lack of analysis, which in turns means that stakeholder engagement organisers or managers are not aware which features of engagement they are missing. In the case of this study, stakeholders in nature conservation should all be engaged together, where inputs and shortfalls are discussed openly to ensure that the stakeholders understand where improvements can be made.

Recently, research into developing a theory of participation of stakeholders in environmental management identified a number of key elements and recommendations that need to be considered in stakeholder engagement (Reed et al., 2018). These recommendations included:

Recommendation 1: Determine the type of engagement approach after understanding the context (Reed et al., 2018). This aligned with Feature 3 which included choosing the appropriate methodologies to use when engaging stakeholders. The approach used for engaging stakeholders in threatened species may differ to approaches used to engage stakeholders in other nature conservation types such as hunting or zoo-keeping.

Recommendation 2: Ensure all affected stakeholders have engaged in dialogue as soon as possible (Reed et al., 2018). Principle 3 discussed early engagement, especially when looking at the context of this study where threatened species are the focus.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that every stakeholder's contribution has been valued and all stakeholders have an equal opportunity to contribute (Reed et al., 2018). This is aligned with Principle 4 and Feature 2.

Recommendation 4: Match engagement durations with the goals of the process (Reed et al., 2018). Principle 7 and Feature 1 align with this recommendation where goals are set out from the beginning.

Recommendation 5: Match the power and interests of stakeholders to the spatial scale of issues being tackled (Reed et al., 2018). This is aligned with Principle 3 where the capabilities of the stakeholders are matched to the relevant processes.

Another important factor as found in the literature included stakeholders being actively involved in the process as opposed to only sitting on the side-line and observing from a distance (Decker, Riley, & Siemer, 2012; Sterling et al., 2017). Active stakeholders include those who make decisions in the stakeholder engagement process as opposed to observing actions and decisions being made with minimal or no input (Mannetti et al., 2019). Stakeholders who are passionate about a particular subject matter are more inclined to be active participators in the stakeholder engagement process (Decker et al., 2012).

The principles of stakeholder engagement and management known as the 'Clarkson Principles' found in Table 2 were aligned to the above features and recommendations in a number of areas (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009).

Particular points of unison occur to allow for a condensed and amalgamated list of what principles should be adhered to in terms of sound stakeholder engagement. Table 3 indicates the various elements that are therefore important.

Table 3 - Adapted elements of Stakeholder Engagement aligned with multiple sources

Element: feature / principle / recommendation	Description	Multiple authors in Agreement
The need for strong relationships	Strong relationships exhibit trust, empathy, cooperation and understanding. Stakeholders feel valued	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018)
Transparency, trust and fairness	This in turn creates strong relationships. Management actions should be visible and all stakeholders are valued.	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018)

Element: feature / principle / recommendation	Description	Multiple authors in Agreement
Timing of engagements	Engagements should be as early as possible and practicable, and allow for sufficient time for engagement.	(Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018)
Inclusion of a variety of stakeholders	A number of stakeholders are important and contribute to successful conservation. They offer diverse views and should be monitored during the engagement processes.	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016)
Set clear and common objectives and goals	All stakeholders understand the final outcomes and goals, which improves quality of decisions. Goals are aligned to durations.	(Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016)
Use relevant stakeholder engagement methodology	Ensure that methodology is aligned to organisational competency.	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016)
Communication	Communication is key to ensure success of stakeholder engagement projects	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018)

The following items, which may in turn be worthwhile, were not evident across the different sources of literature. Single authors indicated the importance of the principle / feature / recommendation in Table 4.

Table 4 - Elements of Stakeholder Engagement not aligned among multiple sources

Element: feature / principle / recommendation	Description	Single Author Agreement
Benefits and burdens should be distributed equally among stakeholders	Equality among stakeholders	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)
Activities that disregard human rights should be avoided completely	Human rights are paramount in all decisions	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)
Conflicting commitments to organisations and legal and moral responsibilities towards stakeholders must be acknowledged to limit this bias	Acknowledge conflicts and bias	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009)
Match the power and interests of stakeholders to the spatial scale of issues being tackled	Power and interest of stakeholders to be acknowledged and matched	(Reed et al., 2018)
Reflect on outcomes of stakeholder engagements	Ensure success and shortcomings are documented	(Talley et al., 2016)

2.6.1 Sub-conclusion

Buchholtz and Carroll (2018), Reed et al. (2018), Talley et al. (2016) and Mease et al. (2018) contribute significantly to the theory of how stakeholder engagement should be conducted in the context of conservation management, and by extension as relevant to this study, conservation of threatened species.

Whilst the agreement of the authors was clear and highlighted a number of areas to focus on, in terms of this research, it would be worthwhile to note particularly the view

of Talley et al. (2016), that reflection on the outcomes and the documented successes and shortcomings will likely aid stakeholder engagement in the future. This became an integral part of this study and formed part of RQ2.

2.7 Intersecting literature fields

2.7.1 Responsible leadership and nature conservation

Stakeholder theory sought to address the ethical gap between capitalism and stakeholder interests in a responsible manner (Freeman, 1984). This has been found to be more relevant today than at any time in the past. In the context of responsible leadership, leaders have been required to understand and address the needs of primary and secondary stakeholders. In approaching primary stakeholders, responsible leaders should have set goals to achieve financial performance. However, in terms of secondary stakeholders, responsible leaders also needed to create long term value for society, and in doing so, leaders must consider the consequences of their behaviour on society and the environment, of which nature conservation is included (Voegtlin et al., 2019).

Furthermore, secondary stakeholders sometimes view responsible leaders as role models and therefore, it is also imperative that these responsible managers understand their interactions with secondary stakeholders (Voegtlin et al., 2019). Research also has linked servant leadership as having a positive relationship with managing the interests of the organisation's stakeholders and society and therefore, this characteristic would benefit organisations specifically evolved in society benefits (Neubert, Hunter, & Tolentino, 2016). Given that the Clarkson principles advocated for skilled persons to conduct engagements, the skills should therefore to include characteristics of responsible and servant leadership in those facilitators.

2.7.2 Legacy and nature conservation

There is no doubt that stakeholder engagement, responsible leadership and nature conservation go hand in hand, however, challenges have been found to arise (refer to Figure 6) in terms of legacy and nature conservation (Waylen, Blackstock, & Holstead, 2015).

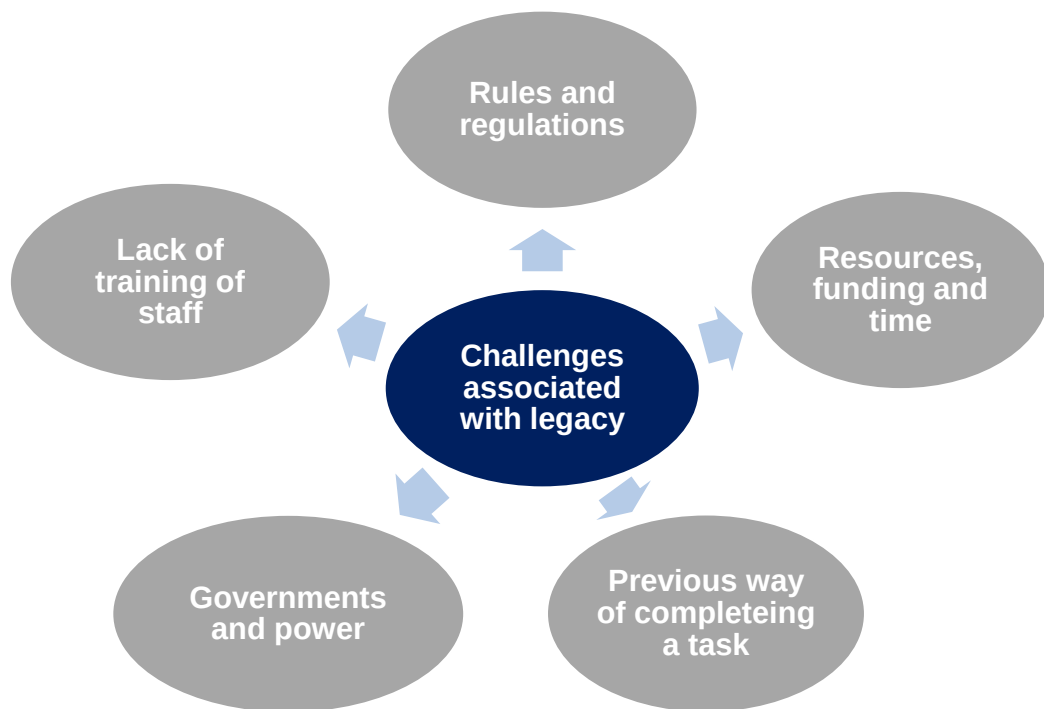


Figure 6 - Challenges associated with legacy from article by Waylen, Blackstock and Holstead (2015) developed into a diagram by the researcher

As discussed in the article by Waylen, Blackstock and Holstead (2015), challenges included a large amount of legislation and rigid pre-existing rules and regulations with regards to environmental management, which made it difficult to link pre-existing information together as well as make the necessary changes over time as new information surfaced (Waylen et al., 2015). This in relation to threatened species has been of particular importance as these legal issues could be the cause not only of a failed project, but extinction of the threatened species too.

Time constraints linked with funding constraints were also viewed as a challenge, where time was viewed as more valuable than money (Waylen et al., 2015). This was a challenge where funding was only supplied for a limited time only, whilst the project required additional time to be completed successfully. This in threatened species became a significant cause for concern, as the process is time-bound in itself, and so to avoid species extinction timing presented an additional challenge.

The need for sufficient time allocation was seen as a necessity (Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018).

Cognitive challenges included previous ways of completing tasks coupled with a poor understanding in describing specific concepts relating to the ecosystem (Waylen et al., 2015). If knowledge has not been present over the course of projects, problems will arise as the basics have been lacking and no basis of understanding can be formed from pre-existing knowledge. Lack of training of staff goes hand in hand with staff not being able to complete tasks or describe concepts in order to implement the relevant skills required for working within the ecosystem (Waylen et al., 2015).

There were also challenges that arose from the abuse of power, particularly when it came to public-led projects (Waylen et al., 2015). Interests of groups seemed to outweigh doing the right thing, which then posed a challenge. This goes hand in hand with responsible leadership as discussed in section 2.7.1 above (Voegtlin et al., 2019).

2.7.3 Sub-conclusion

From the above literature, it was imperative that responsible leadership and nature conservation work hand in hand where goals needed to be set in such a way to address the ethical gap between financial gain and interests of stakeholders. Challenges linked to legacy and conservation management should also be addressed to prevent past mistakes from occurring again in the future.

2.8 Conclusion

Although there are still many areas of stakeholder engagement that remain misunderstood, research overwhelmingly supports stakeholder engagement as fundamental in conservation. This is because stakeholder engagement in nature conservation has always been complex and multi-dimensional and often seen to have occurred across multi-cultural spheres (Sterling et al., 2017).

The importance of stakeholder engagement as well as the principles that guide stakeholder management have been clearly dealt with via case studies and thorough

literature research reviews. However, Mease et al. (2018) and Sterling et al. (2017) identified this as an area worth doing further research into, namely linking principles of engagement with performance metrics and evaluation.

Sterling et al. (2017) indicated that further research is needed to understand the outcomes of conservation. Furthermore, they assert that better documentation of the successes and failures in engaging stakeholders will lead to a greater understanding of this complex topic. One of the ways that we can better understand the outcomes is through placing a greater emphasis on stakeholder performance. The principles of stakeholder engagement are a guide that ensure stakeholders are engaged effectively, and which may then provide a basis for the development of performance metrics.

The research component, therefore sought to close this gap between the theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder engagement and nature conservation and practical performance measurement.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

The study of the literature highlighted gaps within the research resulting in the formulation of the following research questions. The four research questions are discussed in detail below.

3.2 Research Question 1

RQ1: What does meaningful stakeholder engagement encompass in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ1 was to determine what meaningful stakeholder engagement encompassed in relation to threatened species. How the stakeholders are engaged as well as the outcomes and causes of meaningful stakeholder engagement were therefore important outcomes in this regard.

3.3 Research Question 2

RQ2: What are the antecedents of stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ2 was to determine the antecedents associated with achieving meaningful stakeholder engagement. These causes and challenges could then be used to eliminate the same problems from occurring in the future and provide insight into what leads to meaningful engagements.

3.4 Research Question 3

RQ3: What are the indicators of meaningful stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ3 was to explore the currently used indicators for meaningful stakeholder engagement and to determine if they were effective in stakeholder engagement.

3.5 Research Question 4

RQ4: How should stakeholder engagement be evaluated in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ4 was to determine what the evaluation` of stakeholder engagement are as well as how these indicators could lead to improved conservation outcomes in the future. The evaluation metrics needed in stakeholder engagement of threatened species were also important as highlighted in the literature, therefore this research question sought to identify these.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research methodology gives a detailed look into how the research was done as well as the repeatability of the study. The choice of research methodology is discussed in detail under each section of this chapter.

4.2 Choice of methodology / research design

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019) indicated that there were a number of philosophies that can be found in research studies. Interpretivism, which is associated with qualitative research, has its roots as a human interaction theory. Therefore, it was appropriate to this study, given the complex nature of stakeholder engagements where the stakeholders were seen as the “social actors” and interviewed in order to gain in-depth insights into stakeholder engagement and performance measurement (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

The research approach was inductive in nature as the research outcomes and data collected informed current theories on stakeholder management and performance management which meant that a ‘bottom-up’ approach was followed in order to develop theories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Saunders et al., 2019).

Mono-method research that was qualitative in nature was performed which was the methodological choice (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). The research design was qualitative as the participants were allowed to give their in-depth opinions and viewpoints on the relevant questions asked through the semi-structured interviews (Creswell, 2014; R. Kumar, 2011; Saunders et al., 2019).

The research strategy that was adopted was a grounded-theory strategy (Flick, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). This strategy was used to explore the issues identified in the

research questions concerning stakeholder engagement and performance in the context of threatened species in southern Africa.

Looking at the time-horizon as indicated by Saunders et al. (2019), this was a cross-sectional study conducted between June and September 2019. The research questions lent themselves to a cross sectional study as they did not seek to understand change or development between different periods but rather at one particular point in time. The grounded-theory was not time-based and therefore appropriate (Saunders et al., 2019).

The research was exploratory in nature and sought answers to the research questions posed (Saunders et al., 2019). The research analysis and interpretation, therefore, left doors open to various explanations, or possibilities that emerged related to these fields of study.

4.3 Population

The research population was selected because of the need to obtain information on what was practically happening within conservation management whilst having to triangulate findings with experts in stakeholder management (Saunders et al., 2019; Stake, 2010).

The study population consisted of two groups of people; conservation management professionals and stakeholder engagement experts, which enabled triangulation of findings (Stake, 2010). The first population group selected of research participants included experienced professionals, meeting the following criteria;

- actively working in, or having worked in, conservation of threatened species,
- working within protected areas, or with conservation authorities managing protected areas. These included individuals working for the state, privately, NGO's or voluntary associations and any other areas closely related to these.

The second group of research participants included experts, such as academics or professionals, having worked for more than ten years in stakeholder management within threatened species conservation in southern Africa.

4.4 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for the first group was professionals and for the second group was experts.

4.5 Sampling method and size

Purposive and snowball sampling was done within the two population groups identified, meeting the sampling criteria. (R. Kumar, 2011; Saunders et al., 2019) Purposive sampling was done as the researcher identified participants to partake in the study based on their knowledge in the field of nature conservation. Snowballing was done after each interview, where the participants recommended other possible participants which were contacted by the researcher to include in the study.

The quota for the two groups included eight participants from the professional's population and four participants from the expert population. Flick (2018) indicated that while no rule exists for the number of interviews that would be sufficient, it was important to establish a point of saturation for the answers. Saturation was reached with the 12 interviews and no new interviews were conducted due to this saturation being reached (Flick, 2018).

For quotas, the number of participants from a single organisation was limited to two, thus increasing the reliability of the information, and the likelihood of the study being representative and generalisable (R. Kumar, 2011).

4.6 Measurement instrument

4.6.1 Semi-structured interviews: interview protocol

For the techniques and procedures, a semi-structured interview was conducted which suited the exploratory nature of the research. By making the questions open-ended (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019) participants had sufficient time and opportunity to provide their professional insight into the topics covered. The interviews were recorded (at least two recordings on separate devices) for transcription purposes.

The interview protocol, also known as an interview guide, was developed to produce a list of interview questions which were considered relevant to the research questions. The researcher considered various aspects of conversation that would develop as well as the questions that would elicit responses that would speak to the research questions developed. The interview questions were ordered to speak to the research questions, in groups of questions, as well as ordered to allow the conversation to flow from broad open questions ending with more detailed questions (Flick, 2018).

Table 5 shows an interview protocol which allowed for the semi-structured interviews to be performed without bias, and to enable reliable and trustworthy results. The interview protocol was applicable to both experts and to the conservation professionals (Turner, 2010).

Table 5 - Interview protocol / schedule and research question mapping

Stage	Description / question	Time allocated
Introduction	Introduction - Introduction between researcher and participant - Thank you for participating and consent statement - Protocol observed: Recorded, anonymity (if required)	5 Minutes

Stage	Description / question	Time allocated
Participants Role	Introductory question - To understand the background of the interviewee. For example, tell me about your role in conservation of threatened species?	5 Minutes
Main Discussion	- Discussion questions relating to RQ1: 1. What is meaningful stakeholder engagement? 2. How do you engage with your stakeholders? 3. What are the outcomes of meaningful stakeholder engagements, and for whom are these outcomes intended? - Discussion questions relating to RQ2: 4. What are the challenges you face with achieving your stakeholder engagement objectives? 5. What assists you in achieving your stakeholder engagement objectives? - Discussion question relating to RQ3: 6. What indicators tell you whether your stakeholder engagements are working or not? 7. What are the warning signs of success or failure? - Discussion question relating to RQ4: 8. Would better measurement of stakeholder engagement lead to improved conservation outcomes?	40-45 Minutes

Stage	Description / question	Time allocated
	9. How should you measure stakeholder engagement? 10. What evaluation metrics should be used to measure stakeholder engagement?	
Conclusion	Closing question - How will stakeholder engagement, in the context of threatened species management, change in 10 years' time? - Debrief / thanks for participation	5 Minutes
Total time spent interviewing		± 60 Minutes

The time allocated was a guide only and interview times varied depending on the depth to which the questions were answered by the participants. The researcher however, tried to guide the process to adhere to the times as far as possible, and to avoid extremely lengthy interview times.

4.7 Data gathering process

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which were led by an interview protocol (refer to Table 5), which allowed for meaningful guided conversation to emerge (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This provided structured conversations to occur around the central themes of stakeholder engagement and performance measurement (Saunders et al., 2019). The interviews were conducted using Zoom / Skype video calls, given the geographical spread of the research participants. The interviews were conducted after receiving written informed consent approval (Flick, 2018). All interviews were recorded on two devices, namely a built-in laptop sound recorder as well as a mobile phone.

The initial interview was done as a 'pilot' which ensured the flow and the wording of the questions were easy to understand and that they invoked discussion rather than

single-worded answers. The pilot interview identified any timing issues, and allowed the interviewer to practice the art of interviewing in such a way that probing questions were avoided and judgmental statements were removed from the dialogue. No issues arose from the pilot and this was included in the results. The researcher kept to the timing allocated for the interview.

The interviews were conducted in settings that were not disorientating or unsettling as the aim was to seek a controlled space that allowed for conversation, and participants were therefore allowed to choose any place they felt comfortable with to be interviewed. As the interviews were conducted via Skype or Zoom, this allowed the participants to feel comfortable in their own offices or their preferred space (R. Kumar, 2011).

During the interviews, recordings made on two devices were used to record the audio data, whilst the researcher engaged actively with the interviewee. The audio recordings were uploaded onto Google Drive. Note taking was avoided as this may have detracted from the listening process of the researcher, would have disengaged eye contact between the researcher and interviewee and may have distracted the interviewee. Where 'silences' occurred in the interview process, the researcher then asked follow-up questions which included 'tell me more?', or 'could you give me an example of that?'. In general, when conducting interviews, Flick (2018), indicated that biased answers may be generated where the interviewer talks more than the interviewee as this potentially can lead to 'guiding' the conversation. Therefore, the interviewer listened attentively.

4.8 The role of the researcher

The role of the researcher is paramount in qualitative research, especially in studies where data is collected through interviews as the researcher is often involved with sustained interactions with the participants. The researcher must be cognisant of gender, history, biases and socioeconomic status that could come across in the interviews and therefore shape answers – and if necessary, inform readers, of the limitations this may place on the study (Creswell, 2014). The researcher tried to avoid any such biases creeping in and was aware of the consequences that such bias could create should they occur.

4.9 Analysis approach

The data analysis technique that was implemented to analyse the research was that of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Flick (2018) indicated that thematic analyses was a flexible strategy that could be used in a variety of qualitative studies with different data collection methods. The coding of the data was done after all the interviews were transcribed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Thematic analysis allowed for 'identifying, analysing and reporting' patterns that were found in the primary data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following process model (Figure 7) was developed to indicate the stages of qualitative analysis that was used for this research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006; R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saunders et al., 2019).

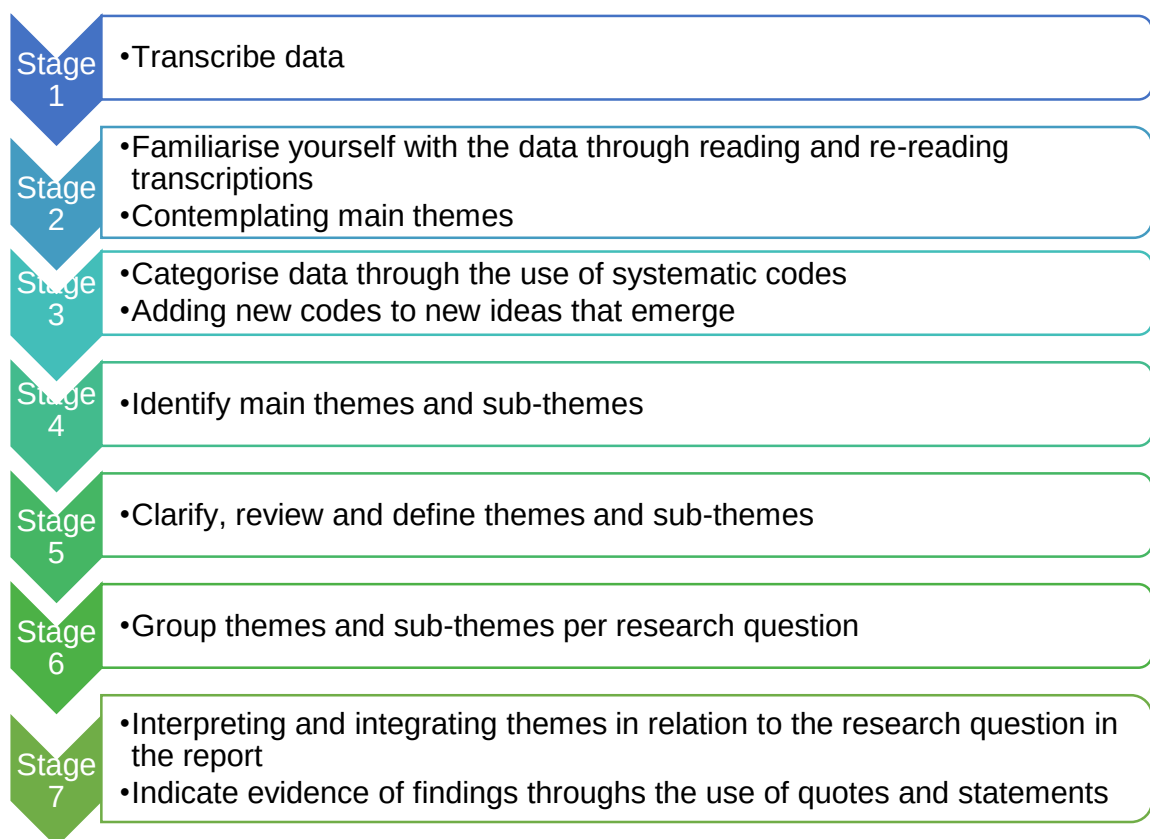


Figure 7 - Qualitative Analysis Process (Thematic Analysis) adapted by the researcher

Qualitative analysis as discussed by Saunders et al. (2019) included categorisation, unitising data, recognising relationships and developing categories, and finally

developing and testing of theories to reach conclusions. This was partially aligned to the process of Braun & Clark (2006) which indicated familiarising yourself with data, generating initial codes, themes, review themes, defining and naming themes, and finally producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Step 1: The first step in analysing the data was for the data to be transcribed accurately. (Saunders et al., 2019) The data was given to an external transcriber who transcribed all the audio files into word documents.

Step 2: The researcher then read through all the transcriptions and listened to the audio files so that the data was familiar to the researcher and the researcher was comfortable with the data set. During this time, themes that were common throughout all the transcripts were contemplated and written down so that when the data was coded, the main themes were at the forefront of the researcher's mind (Braun & Clarke, 2006; M. B. Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Step 3: All the data was coded in ATLAS.ti by the researcher according to data categorisation which was determined by a systematic coding system. Kumar (2011) indicated there were four stages to qualitative data analysis which included 1) identifying main themes, 2) assigning codes to the themes, 3) clarifying responses under the main themes and then 4) integrating themes and responses into the text of the research report. This was similar to the process of analysing data by Bloomberg & Volpe (2012) where the data was coded by main themes which allowed categories to emerge. Once the researcher had coded the data set, categories were then grouped under each research question. The coding was sequential and on-going and new categories were added in during the analysis process. Each transcribed document took approximately 45-90 minutes to code, thereafter, themes were determined and the results written up.

Step 4: Main themes and sub-themes were identified after the data had been systematically coded in step 3 (Braun & Clark, 2006). The coding aided the development of themes and sub-themes where the categories of grouped data were used to develop the themes that arose.

Step 5: All themes were clarified and reviewed and any new themes that presented were identified and included. All sub-themes were clarified and clearly defined by the researcher (Braun & Clark, 2006; Saunders & Lewis, 2009).

Step 6: After themes and sub-themes were developed, the themes were then grouped under the relevant research question where the number of times a particular theme came up was recorded. (Braun & Clark, 2006; Saunders & Lewis, 2009)

Step 7: The themes that arose have been discussed in chapter 5 of this research report. Quotes and statements were included in this chapter too, which highlight the themes that presented from the interviews.

4.10 Quality controls (validity and trustworthiness criteria)

Kumar (2011) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) indicated that quantitative analysis seeks to provide valid and reliable results using statistical analysis. Similarly, high quality research needs to be provided by qualitative researchers, which occurs in the form of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness has four main elements which contribute to the 'validity' and 'reliability' of the qualitative research, which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. (R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016)

Credibility refers to the acceptance of the results by the research participants themselves. (R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) Credibility was checked during the data collection period by confirming interpretation of answers with the research participants.

Transferability refers to the ease the results can be generalised and transferred to other contexts. (R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) Transferability was improved by detailing the exact method of the process, however, given the subjectivity involved in the interviews, this may not always be possible.

Dependability indicates whether the same results could be obtained again by following the same research process (R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). By recording the interviews, validity is evident. The recorded interviews could also be

listened to again by the researcher to ensure that the data coding and analysis is accurate and a true representation of the interview.

Confirmability is demonstrated through the use of direct quotes in the findings and seeks work that can be corroborated and confirmed by others (R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Confirmability was demonstrated through the use of direct quotes in the results (refer to chapter 5).

Intra-rater reliability (the same person produced the same results) was ensured where the same researcher asked the same questions in the semi-structured interviews in order to ensure consistency among the interviews and eliminated bias from occurring (R. Kumar, 2011). Thereafter, the data was coded at the same point in time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Bias is one of the main contributing factors that affects the trustworthiness of research due to the fact that qualitative research is subjective (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher tried to eliminate bias as far as possible through preventing researcher and interviewee bias as far as possible (Saunders et al., 2019).

A quota was set by the researcher by limiting the number of participants from the same organisation to a maximum of two participants. This also ensured trustworthiness and generalisability of the results.

Throughout the entire interviewing process, the researcher tried to ensure that the interviews were as valid and trustworthy as possible. This was completed by the researcher being fully aware of all the problems that could potentially arise from the interviewing process (Saunders et al., 2019).

4.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was received on the 25th of July 2019 for this study. Refer to Appendix 1 for the ethical clearance letter by Gordon Institute of Business Science MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee who approved the study.

When considering the ethical issues relating to the study the key question of 'do no harm' was adopted as a guiding principal. In this study, this would be mainly to do no harm to the research participants, the threatened species, or any other human that may be affected by this research.

Informed consent forms were signed by each participant who took part in the study (refer to Appendix 2 for informed consent forms). Any person who refused to sign the informed consent form was not forced to partake in the study and any person who wished to withdraw from the study could do so at any point even after signing informed consent.

Upon examining the ethical nature of the research, the research aims were to bring positive developments to conservation management. One consideration was to ensure that participants understood that the research was exploratory and the research may or may not provide any positive outcomes and therefore limit any false expectations within candidates for any sort of solution to this critical problem; and that the research at best may only provide practical recommendations.

Lastly, the researcher's intent in research participant selection was to avoid any sort of discrimination. This was to individuals or organisations.

4.12 Limitations

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019) and Kumar (2011) indicated that limitations were items that affect the outcomes or boundaries of a research design, and often provide constraints faced during the research. There were a few limitations that arose after conducting this study, which are discussed below.

The sample size of this study was a limitation, as well as the snapshot nature of the work, which provided insights at one specific time point and not necessarily over a period (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This makes generalisability of results a challenge.

Biases from the researcher may have presented in the interviews where the researcher's own feelings and views on the subject may have presented in the interview without his realisation. The researcher was aware of this and tried to

eliminate this as far as possible (Bryman & Bell, 2011; R. Kumar, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saunders et al., 2019).

The researcher was not an expert in conducting interviews and had no prior experience or training in collecting data via interviews. This may have resulted in bias occurring without the conscious knowledge of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; R. Kumar, 2011).

Participants were actively involved in protected areas, which may have affected the way in which they answered the questions. Experts and professionals were also chosen as the unit of analysis groups; however, there are many other stakeholders in stakeholder engagement. This limits the generalisability of the results of this study which is in itself a limitation (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The findings from the interviews have been included and are discussed in this section. The findings are reported according to each of the four research questions. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the information from each participant so to facilitate the interview process so to answer the research questions. Interview questions were aligned to the research questions in Chapter 3.

5.2 Interview sample

The table below, Table 6, indicates a list of the participants in this study according to the unit of analysis group and years of experience in the field of threatened species. Appendix 3 shows the detailed list of the participants (all names are excluded to ensure confidentiality). A number of highly experienced individuals participated, as well as three experts within this field.

Table 6 - Participants

Participant	Unit of analysis group	Experience: Years in threatened species conservation
Participant 1 (P1)	Professional	>30
Participant 2 (P2)	Professional	>20
Participant 3 (P3)	Expert	>10
Participant 4 (P4)	Expert	>20
Participant 5 (P5)	Professional	>10
Participant 6 (P6)	Expert	>10
Participant 7 (P7)	Professional	>20
Participant 8 (P8)	Professional	>10
Participant 9 (P9)	Professional	>20
Participant 10 (P10)	Professional	>20
Participant 11 (P11)	Expert	>10

Participant	Unit of analysis group	Experience: Years in threatened species conservation
Participant 12 (P12)	Professional	>5

5.3 Findings presentation

The findings for each research question are shown below where the themes for each research question are presented. 158 codes were generated in the analysis process, which were then categorised and analysed for emerging themes. Appendix 4 shows a detailed list of codes and categories used to identify relevant themes in this study.

5.4 Findings for RQ1

RQ1: What does meaningful stakeholder engagement encompass in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of the research question was to determine what meaningful stakeholder engagement encompasses in relation to threatened species. How the stakeholders are engaged as well as the outcomes and causes of meaningful stakeholder engagement were therefore important in this regard. Frequency analysis (refer to Figure 8) was used to identify commonality between participants.

The research participants answered three interview questions by talking about relationships, trust, processes, buy-in, consultation, time requirements, facilitators, goals and outcomes and attitudinal or behavioural changes. The themes that emerged are discussed below and generally indicated either a requirement for the engagement, a method to enable meaningful engagement or a picture of what meaningful engagement can produce.

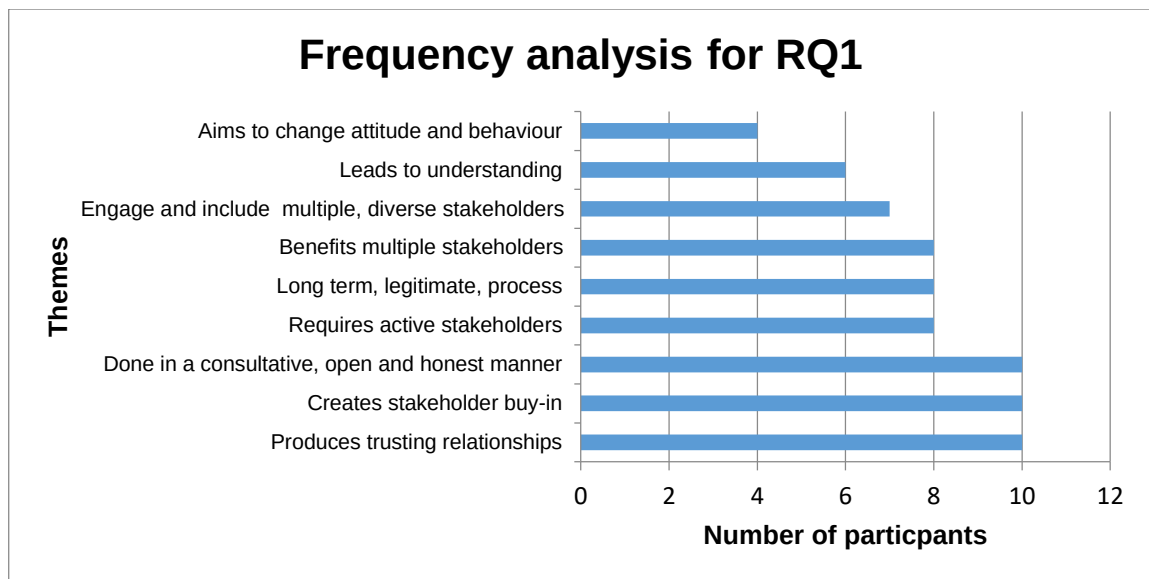


Figure 8 - Frequency analysis of themes for RQ1

The number of participants as well as the number of times a quote was mentioned is shown in Table 7. Each theme was ranked according to the number of times a theme was mentioned.

Table 7 - Rank of themes and corresponding participants for RQ1

Rank	Theme	Participant	Quotations
1	Produces trusting relationships	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P11, P12	27
2	Creates stakeholder buy-in	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11	19
3	Done in a consultative, open and honest manner	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12	19
4	Requires active stakeholders	P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P11, P12	18
5	Long term, legitimate process	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P10, P11	17

Rank	Theme	Participant	Quotations
6	Benefits multiple stakeholders	P1, P2, P4, P5, P9, P10, P11, P12	16
7	Engage and include multiple, diverse stakeholders	P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P9, P11	14
8	Leads to understanding	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7	8
9	Aims to change attitude and behaviour	P6, P9, P10, P11	6

5.4.1 Produces trusting relationships

Ten of the participants indicated that relationship development was a key facet of meaningful engagement and that meaningful engagement can lead to trusting relationships being developed. This was the most prevalent theme and discussion point across the interviews and was coupled with the idea that trust, including the development thereof, is an integral part in the engagement process. Participant 6 showed that relationships are at the essence of meaningful engagement.

Participant 6: *“Simply put, it is a relationship”.*

Participant 1 indicated that relationships were the foundation of the engagement process. Participant 4 also indicated relationships as being key.

Participant 1: *“Once you have got a good firm, solid relationship then you can start actually engaging with people to try and change behaviour or influence a decision in a particular way”.*

Participant 4: *“I think the biggest thing for me was because I was trying to build a trust relationship in that situation it took a very long time. I was lucky in that when I was doing it I could just drive onto farms and find the people. I think if I had done it a few years later it would have been quite a different scenario. But certainly it is about building trust and it only comes with time”.*

Participant 12 further supported the idea that relationships were central to engagement. Participant 12 also indicated relationships could produce good working conditions.

Participant 12: *“...Ah, maybe the outcome will be a, either a good partnership. Or a good working relationship”.*

5.4.2 Stakeholder buy-in

Obtaining stakeholder buy-in and commitment to conservation efforts emerged as another central theme for meaningful engagement. It emerged as crucial in achieving conservation outcomes and often involved creating buy-in to the extent that stakeholders become champions of the conservation effort and drive the initiative.

Participant 7: *“I think for most of our work whether we’re doing biodiversity management plans, non-detriment findings, is having buy in to that, to those outcomes and the recommendations within it”. Further participant 7 added: “Well again I think it is buy in. It is building relationships over the time that I can look back on the seven years that I’ve worked here, you know, and kind of constantly engaging with very similar stakeholders. It is the same faces you see at most of these engagements. It is building the relationship. Building an understanding. Building a knowledge base. So every time you engage you know that everybody knows a little bit more. You learn a little bit more about your stakeholders. Your stakeholders learn a little bit more about the process. It becomes personalised. It becomes faces and people. It is a lot harder to fight with someone you know than to fight with a mythical person or thing that you’ve never seen or engaged with. So I think it is building personal relationships and getting... and again, the buy in”.*

Lack of buy-in was also seen as a reason for failure. Participant 6 indicated that a project was done to swap out wildlife for livestock as part of the San Bushman project. However, the project lacked buy-in from the San people from the start.

Participant 6: *“the programme failed because after three years I think there was only kraal that was in and two that were still functioning properly. So the*

attrition rate is huge, and at the end of the day we realised what had gone wrong was that the idea was ours and the idea of the project didn't come from them. And it turned out that it wasn't what they wanted because they don't like to swap out, the bushmen don't like to. So the government forces livestock down their throats because it is easy, and they usually don't want to give them goats and sheep, and they will say 'thank you very much' and they will sell them, get drunk and (laughter). So the point of the matter is that if it is not a priority for them then it is not going to work. So this time we went in and said 'what do you want' and they said ... livestock didn't come into it!''.

The use of role-playing games emerged as a method where buy-in and understanding could be obtained. Participant 9 spoke about these role-playing games and how if participants made suggestions, they could become invested in the conservation initiative. This was evident by the following:

Participant 9: "there are some nice examples in Zimbabwe with role playing games and we have also been working within the communities. And that really gets the stakeholders talking to each other, and coming up with plans about how to sort out issues that are there you know? And that is the best way of doing it! Instead of government coming in and telling the communities 'you are not going to have your cattle in the park'".

5.4.3 Consultative, open and honest engagements

The participants indicated that imposing a single agenda on stakeholders would not lead to buy-in, and that engagements need to be consultative with many stakeholders feeling like they have been heard and that their opinion has been considered. Participants also indicated that it may be difficult to meet the many stakeholder needs, and consulting and creating further buy-in can change the expectations of the stakeholders.

Participant 5: "...then taking the time to actually engage with the process, be it one on one situation, independently or through what in Botswana they call lekgotla, which is a community meeting basically, where people are able to ask questions and provide their inputs without fear of prejudice or anything

else; it is an open forum and anybody and everybody from.... for instance in Botswana, the lekgotla is anybody from the youngest person to the oldest person is able to come – everybody is equal and everybody is able to stand up and voice their opinion”.

The statement by Participant 5 was further echoed by Participant 6, Participant 7 and Participant 11. These quotes included the following:

Participant 6: *“for me it’s a two way process: it has to be. It can’t be just us going into there and tell everyone what we want to see and what should be done or whatever it is about”.*

Participant 7: *“You can’t always incorporate everybody’s views and everybody’s wants and needs, but at least they need to have the right to express them and the right to be listened to and the right to have their comments and ideas being considered and incorporated in as far as possible as you can, given the context of what is required from the specific activity”.*

Participant 11: *“So a meaningful stakeholder engagement will mean that people that have been part of that conversation feel connected to each other and to whatever the conversation was about. And I suppose they feel that their voices were heard and that they are a legitimate part of that conversation, and that their opinion is valued and that they have been able to contribute to that conversation”.*

5.4.4 Requires active participants

The participants spoke about involvement and participation being key to meaningful engagement. This required stakeholder participation in various workshops, role-playing games and other initiatives. However, implied and stated by the participants, is that the stakeholders must be actively participating and therefore relationships must be visible. These were stated by the participants below:

Participant 7: *“Then also having feedback. Having the ability to comment on whatever was developed out of a workshop. So it is being an active participant. Being part of it all”.*

Participant 9: *“So facilitating, so these techniques facilitate scientifically or collectively trying to get information out of stakeholders and what they think and where they want to be and how to make them think about the future, that they can develop, put themselves on good paths or bad paths and things like that. So these participation approaches, through a lot of workshops I think are critical ways to develop the stakeholders”.*

Participation also provides evidence that an actual relationship does exist. Participant 1 indicated the following statement:

Participant 1: *“Okay, so the outcomes (of meaningful engagement) would be actual physical evidence that there is a relationship”.*

5.4.5 Benefits multiple parties

The participants provided insight into the needs and requirements of stakeholders and identified that each stakeholder has different needs. Subsequent to this, they provided data that indicated that meaningful engagement attempts to provide benefits to multiple stakeholders, rather than only for one particular stakeholder.

The needs of stakeholders vary as evidenced already above by Participant 7. Human beings like knowing and feeling that they are benefiting. This is echoed by Participant 2 as stated below:

Participant 2: *“meaningful stakeholder engagement is finding common ground” and “that you need to make sure that whatever you are doing is benefiting everyone involved – which can be highly, highly challenging! Because people will not conserve vultures unless they can see benefit from it. That is the sad truth.”.*

Although this is expressed harshly this concept carried through with some of the other participants. Participant 1 indicated that mutual goals need to be achieved.

Participant 1: *“So it is leveraging whatever, wherever you can, to you know, achieve a mutually beneficial goal”.*

5.4.6 Long term, legitimate, process

Meaningful engagement was expressed in instances that indicated it was legitimate, that it was a process that took time. Further to this, participants indicated that there was a protocol to be followed, however, engagement processes should still be project specific.

Participant 11: *“I think the biggest challenge is that really true meaningful stakeholder engagement takes a very long time and it is an ongoing process. I think the missing sort of link with a lot of stakeholder engagement is that it is really about... one of the big outcomes should be the building of relationships, and relationships are never a once off engagement process. So keeping and maintaining a relationship requires ongoing engagement with stakeholders”.* Further, it was indicated by the same participant that *“meaningful engagement would be a type of engagement that is legitimate and that is going to have relevance to the people who are involved in the conversation”.*

Participant 5 simply indicated meaningful was putting in the relevant time for the process: *“And then meaningful, is then taking the time to actually engage with the process”.*

Relating to specific project protocols and processes Participant 3 indicated the following questions that should be asked:

Participant 3: *“What is the protocol to engage with a group of people within the community? There is a protocol always and you need to respect it otherwise it won’t work.”* and *“following your understanding of this spending a lot of time with stakeholders emerged”.*

Finally, it was indicated that the process should be managed by skilled and knowledgeable people. Participant 10 stated the following:

Participant 10: *“Once I have understood everything the best approach was (I had already worked this out) was to get a facilitator that had the passion we have and could interpret what we have chased down in writing form and educational form, could interpret it in such a way that it was not only fun for the kids, but that when they grasped it, the igniting of the flame was self-sustainable”* and Participant 11: *“people were given opportunities to give input and there was a facilitated process around that”* advocated for skilled facilitators to lead engagements.

5.4.7 Engage and include multiple, diverse stakeholders

The data indicated that engagement should be done with as many stakeholders as possible and that diverse views are required to make a meaningful impact. Furthermore, it was stated that all relevant stakeholders need to be included from the start of the engagements.

Participant 2: *“Then it is important to have as wide stakeholders as possible, you must be very careful that you involve everyone from the beginning because otherwise it will just hit you in the face later”.*

Participant 3: *“For me the first word that comes up is representativity of the stakeholders”.*

Participant 7: *“I think for me the most important is actually having a broad spectrum of stakeholders there. So it is not engaging with only a certain sector but having a diversity of stakeholders”.*

Additionally, participants felt that the conversation shouldn't be dominated by only one or two stakeholders. Participant 7 then further elaborated that:

Participant 7: *“ensuring that everybody's voices are heard and not only one or two mavericks that try and dominate an engagement. So it is... but that is*

a fairly simple thing to manage. It is just, you know, as a facilitator you need to be aware of those kinds of things and manage that kind of thing”.

5.4.8 Leads to understanding

The data indicated that engagement should provide understanding and knowledge around the issue. With this knowledge the stakeholders can then make better informed decisions which was evidenced in the following key quotes:

Participant 1: *“that for me is meaningful stakeholder engagement, allowing the parties involved to understand what is at stake and to make an informed decision and not one party imposing an agenda”.*

Participant 7: *“So then it is easier also to get your recommendations being implemented because people understand where the recommendations come from. They were a part in making the recommendations and then they are far more willing to actually do them or follow the rules that are being set down”.*

Participant 5: *“they need to come away knowing a lot more about the project and understanding what it is that the project is hoping to do and who is going to do it, as well as timeframes”.*

Participant 3: *“First thing would be that people understand exactly what you are here for”.*

5.4.9 Aims to change behaviour or attitude

A number of participants alluded to the engagement process bringing about a change in attitude and behaviour and that this was indeed needed for successful conservation outcomes. Further to this, a sustainable and lasting change was indicated as an important outcome.

Participant 9: *“The outcomes are how often people go away from these workshops with a better attitude. So they will come up with both sides of the story, the safari operators and the cattle owners will come up with a plan that*

everyone leaves feeling okay you know, we can make this work. That is really like the sort of outcome that comes out of it. It is still new, so there is still a long way to go but I think that's basically what we are looking at, is more positive outcomes for everyone involved, and positive attitudes and thinking".

Participant 10: *"In my opinion, it (meaningful engagement) is being able to relate to the people you are talking to – whether it is kids/adults/in-betweens; it is to be able to relate to them on their level in such a way that when you walk away you can see what you have left behind is sustainable change".*

5.4.10 Conclusion for findings to research RQ1

The findings indicated that meaningful stakeholder engagement, within threatened species conservation, is multi-faceted as a number of key themes emerged. The key themes were also regularly mentioned as the frequency analysis showed. This may imply that meaningful engagement requires a number of different elements to be present simultaneously.

Overwhelmingly, relationships are key across a number of themes. Producing trusting relationships, creating buy-in, and having a consultative, open and honest processes all ranked first in occurrences across the conversations. The stakeholders also have an important role to play as it emerged they need to be active participants. The process must be legitimate, seek benefits for multiple stakeholders and be focussed on the long term. Lastly, participants sought a positive change in attitude or behaviour.

5.5 Findings for RQ2

RQ2: What are the antecedents of stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ2 was to determine the antecedents associated with achieving meaningful stakeholder engagement. These barriers or enablers could then be used to provide insight into what the antecedents to meaningful engagements are.

Frequency analysis (refer to Figure 9) was used to identify commonality between participants.

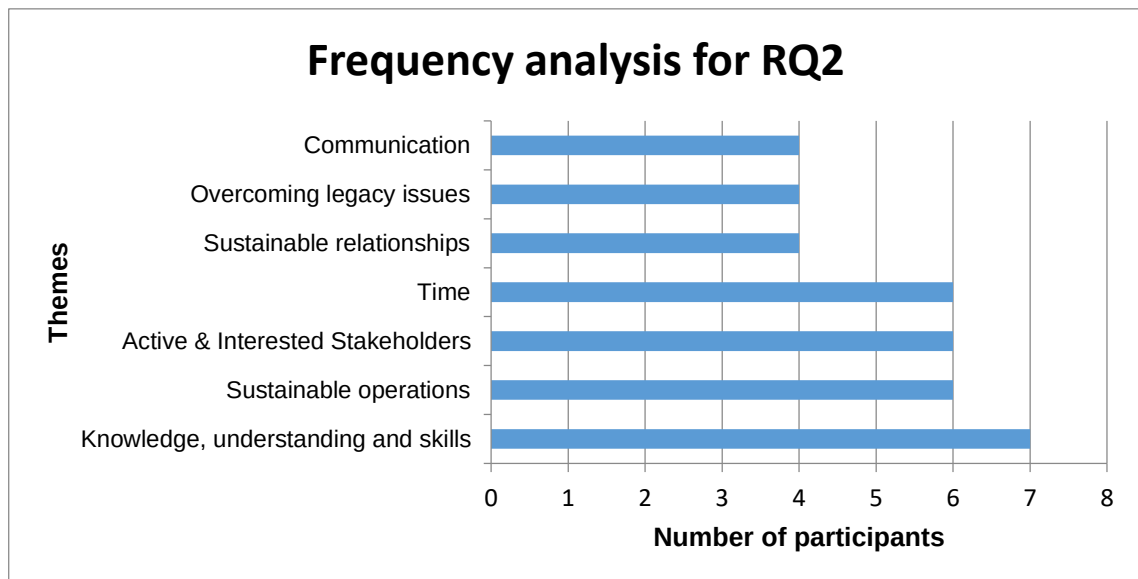


Figure 9 - Frequency analysis of themes for RQ2

The number of participants as well as the number of times a quote was mentioned can be seen in Table 8. Each theme was given a ranking according to the number of times a theme was mentioned.

Table 8 - Antecedents of meaningful stakeholder engagement

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
1	Knowledge, understanding and skills	P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11	7	11
2	Sustainable operations	P1, P2, P6, P7, P9, P11	6	12
3	Active & Interested Stakeholders	P2, P3, P4, P5, P9, P12	6	10
4	Time	P3, P4, P7, P8, P11, P12	6	8
5	Sustainable relationships	P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, P11	6	7

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
6	Overcoming legacy issues	P7, P8, P9, P12	4	5
7	Communication	P6, P8, P9, P12	4	5

5.5.1 Knowledge, understanding and skills

The participants answered consistently in the interviews that knowledge, skills and understanding facilitates meaningful engagement. This became evident either as an organisational ability to skilfully conduct the engagements, understand local issues and manage the process as well as within other stakeholder groups where understanding of the issue became important to create buy-in. Creating understanding around the issue was evidenced by the following quotation by Participant 7:

Participant 7: *“I think a lot of our communities that we need to engage with are not always as informed about processes, and understanding a lot of the government processes to engage meaningfully so you end up having to do a lot of pre-engagement to get communities”.*

Additionally understanding of the issue at hand needed to be nurtured as this was in some instances lacking, as described by Participant 6 while working on Cheetah conservation with a farming community in Botswana. Participant 6 stated the following:

Participant 6: *“And just ‘we have shot something, why should we have to conserve these things’ – the education levels of these people make it hard because you sort of say ‘we think it is very important’ and they say ‘they are not important, what are they important for?’ No. So that is a huge challenge. We have had the department of Wildlife Officer shoot our collared cheetah because they thought they were leopard”.*

Understanding local processes and issues became important. This was made clear by participant 3 and further echoed by Participant 5 who indicated the following:

“I think the best advantage is to have an insider. Someone that knows already all the relationships. They know the people in the community and they can help you surf in between the challenges, issues and opportunities. So what is called usually like a community liaison officer, but someone who is based in the community, I think it is something very important” (P3, 3:10).

Participant 5: *“And then with communities it is a lot of just trying to get not necessarily a personal connection but trying to make sure we use a consultant or an individual who understands the process and understands how that process works, so we can achieve the most from it. So it is no good somebody coming in from outside who doesn’t understand the culture, the traditions and the processes”.*

The final element to the theme of organisation knowledge and skills was indicated by Participant 11. This is stated below:

Participant 11: *“so I would say what you need is sufficient resources and you need people that have got those sort of skills to do that type of thing effectively. So people’s people as opposed to not people’s people”.*

5.5.2 Sustainable operations

Participants indicated that business or operational sustainability was required. This held true whether it be governmental organisations, NPO’s or profit companies. However, sustainability of finances, skills, resources and the allocation thereof was integral to the implementation of engagement processes. Furthermore, it seemed that limited resources were also not always allocated fairly to focus on engagement within these organisations. Key quotations are indicated below:

Participant 2: *“Obviously it is a lack of resources. We have got massive plans but we don’t always have the money to achieve that”.*

Participant 1: *“Ja (yes), so obviously finances are always a challenge, you know these things don’t ... building bridges and investing in community is not a bottom line, you know, have an impact on the bottom line. So one has to*

look at clever ways of remaining sustainable as a business, yet having a meaningful engagement with the stakeholders. So Ja (yes), it is looking at opportunities, for instance we use interns to do the cattle dipping and the interns were on a work experience”.

Operational issues were exaggerated by the misallocation of resources. This was expressed by Participant 11. Resources do exist but they are often not allocated to engagement as often as they are allocated to other operational issues:

Participant 11: *“So at a departmental level – so even now you will find in the context of the wild crime and the illegal wildlife trade you know there is such a call for doing more meaningful stakeholder engagement and stuff. But if you look at the resources, I mean I can’t give you figures and that but across the country if you look at the resources that are being put into more boots on the ground and stopping poaching from that side of things, versus the amount of resources that are put into the engagement side of things, you know I don’t think the resources that are being put into the community side of things matches the requirements on the ground”.*

5.5.3 Interested and aligned stakeholders

The data indicated a theme of needing to have interested and active stakeholders in alignment to the goals. This alignment included aligning with stakeholders by ensuring all stakeholders were included, that the correct stakeholders were engaged, that mutual benefits were aligned across a spectrum of stakeholders and that stakeholders accept each other, all emerged as elements relating to this theme. Ensuring the correct stakeholder is on-board can lead to meaningful engagement. Participant 5 provided an example of failing to align with key stakeholders.

Participant 5: *“Well for instance for every development we have to engage with all the necessary government departments – the wildlife, department of tourism, all those sorts of people – and the problem with them is that there are so many of these projects that the people that actually are informed and understand the system and both from a wildlife perspective, an environment perspective and from a tourism and business perspective – those people that*

have that knowledge, they might feel that responding to these queries is beneath them, so they delegate to a junior and then the junior doesn't necessarily know what they are doing and so either chooses not to do it because they don't know how to respond, or kind of responds in a kind of shallow way if you see what I mean".

Participant 2 provided details of how uninterested stakeholders can hamper engagement efforts. These too must be monitored.

Participant 2: *"Some stakeholders can be very apathetic. You know it sometimes is difficult dealing with the government, with local authorities who are just not interested in doing their work properly and you know unique, and then without them you can't do your job properly".*

5.5.4 Time constraints

Time constraints were indicated as either a barrier to the process when sufficient time was not available or an enabler when sufficient time was available. The key theme, which emerged from the conversations, was that ample time was required for meaningful engagements. An additional challenge which emerged around 'time' was aligning time-frames amongst stakeholders.

Participant 12: *"Ah, time lines in most cases because in most cases (the) project plan (has) time lines. Reaching the time lines is, sometimes it's very difficult. Because already some of the stakeholders have their own schedules".*

Participant 7: *"I think sometimes it is just... you know, often it is time. It is being able to get people, and especially in today's environment where people have an enormous amount of work".*

Participant 3: *"Time. I would say time. We are always constrained in terms of time. So you have a different [inaudible 20:50]. The time you spend in the field with engaging the stakeholder it is important to have time and to spend a lot of time with them. If you want to build that trust and pave the way for the future*

you need to spend time and usually we don't have that time because of... and at another level of time is project life time usually three/four/five years and this is not enough for engagement and to fulfil the trust that you have started or the interest".

Participant 3 also cautioned on the concept of engagement fatigue and how that must be managed in long engagements. This is stated below:

Participant 3: "You have lots of issues with research or development fatigue in the community. They see projects arriving, they are implemented two/three years, but in two/three years they see the project start five/six times in three years and then the project disappears and no feedback, nothing".

5.5.5 Sustainable relationships

Again, similar to RQ1, there was evidence of sustainable relationships being a key theme of meaningful stakeholder engagement. This theme explored the building of relationships but also maintaining those relationships over time. Participant 3 highlighted how poor relationships need to be avoided:

Participant 3: "Well the first thing is the thing I said at the beginning. It is representativity and not falling into issues related to poor relationships. There are always poor relationships. You will never know them entirely. I am mainly focusing on engaging with a local community. We tend to talk about local community as it was a homogenous entity but it is not. It is very heterogeneous and to grasp that is very difficult. I think it is one of the most important, the most difficult thing to grasp".

Relationships then need to be sustained in order to remain healthy. The following quote by Participant 2 highlighted the importance of this:

"I think I mentioned earlier, you need to maintain relationships and you know it is like tending a garden, you have to build relationships, very importantly with people who are on your side, people who think the way you do. That is the first step, maintaining those relationships. You know it is like any human

relationship, you have to maintain it. And if you can maintain healthy productive relationships between key role players you can get somewhere and that also offset the negative aspect of inter-organisational rivalry” (P2, 2:16).

5.5.6 Overcoming legacy issues

According to the participants, legacy issues and historical inefficiencies or failures created challenges that are often difficult to overcome. These may be issues relating to our apartheid past, engagement failures, or legislated policy that is difficult to change. Participant 8 described the challenges associated with overcoming engagement failures by others and the trust breakdown between stakeholders that this subsequently created.

Participant 8: “I think most people in our landscape have had such bad experiences in the engagement processes that their eyes glaze up if they hear the word (laughter) – you know are dealing with fifty years of dreadful work in the engagement process”.

As engagement processes have evolved, the remnants of poor engagement also remain as well as those that are attributable to South Africa’s historical past. Participant 7 elaborated by saying:

Participant 7: “then you still have the historical thing where for a lot of people engagement kind of constituted, we tell you what we want and you just nod in agreement and do what we say. You know, so that has also changed quite a lot, but that also requires that people a part of the engagement understand what the engagement is about”.

5.5.7 Communication

Communication led to the understanding of issues and was therefore a precursor to developing engagement processes to tackling issues, according to some of the participants. Further, the data indicated that communication must develop into a dialogue and therefore be two-way, with open channels to communicate through. It

cannot be simply one-way communication as this does not indicate active engagement. This dialogue, especially when between stakeholders, creates room for multiple benefits to accrue for the stakeholders. Awareness and understanding of the issue was critical for Participant 6 who stated:

Participant 6: *"It is hard to tackle problems we don't know about. So as long as they are willing to talk to us, they may tell me that they have shot 6 cheetahs and I actually appreciate that more than shutting down and not telling me anything, because at least I know. And most of them will open up eventually. So ja (yes), that is a huge help."*

Creating dialogue emerged as a challenge, particularly in South Africa. This was evidenced by Participant 8's statement of:

Participant 8: *"I think generally here in South Africa we don't really know how to dialogue; we know how to give each other information. I know how to tell people how I feel about my issue. And I know how to listen to you when you tell me about your issues. And then we take turns doing that to each other (laughs)".*

The concept of dialogue being key became evident by striving for multi-stakeholder dialogue by Participant 4. Participant 4 stated:

Participant 4: *"largely the multi-stakeholder dialogue is a key factor for me. Once you get everyone talking and discussing their problems – that for me starts to open new pathways for getting around problems. So yes, I would say the multi-stakeholder dialogue that is very important you know? You will never achieve your objectives unless you get people talking to each other and voicing their problems and then how can we get around these problems. Because when people start to talk to each other they might see each other's point of view you know, even though they might have total conflicting objectives – like safari lodge owners and cattle owners – it is completely almost conflicting objective, but when you start to talk to each other – you see that's another thing".*

5.5.8 Conclusion for findings to RQ2

The data indicated that there were a number of factors that enable and/or challenge meaningful engagement and these must be overcome in order to have meaningful engagement. There was no significantly strong response to a particular theme that arose, as was evident in RQ1, however, the findings still indicated substantive antecedents that should be considered, particularly knowledge, sustainable operations, active and interested stakeholders, time availability, sustainable relationships, legacy issues and communication.

From a business perspective, sound and continuing business operations ranked second of the antecedents, indicating the substantial need for strong business acumen even in the conservation of threatened species field.

5.6 Findings for RQ3

RQ3: What are the indicators of meaningful stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of RQ3 was to identify indicators for meaningful stakeholder engagement. Both the warning signs of poor stakeholder engagement and indicators of meaningful stakeholder engagement were used. Frequency analysis (refer to Figure 10) was used to identify commonality between participants.

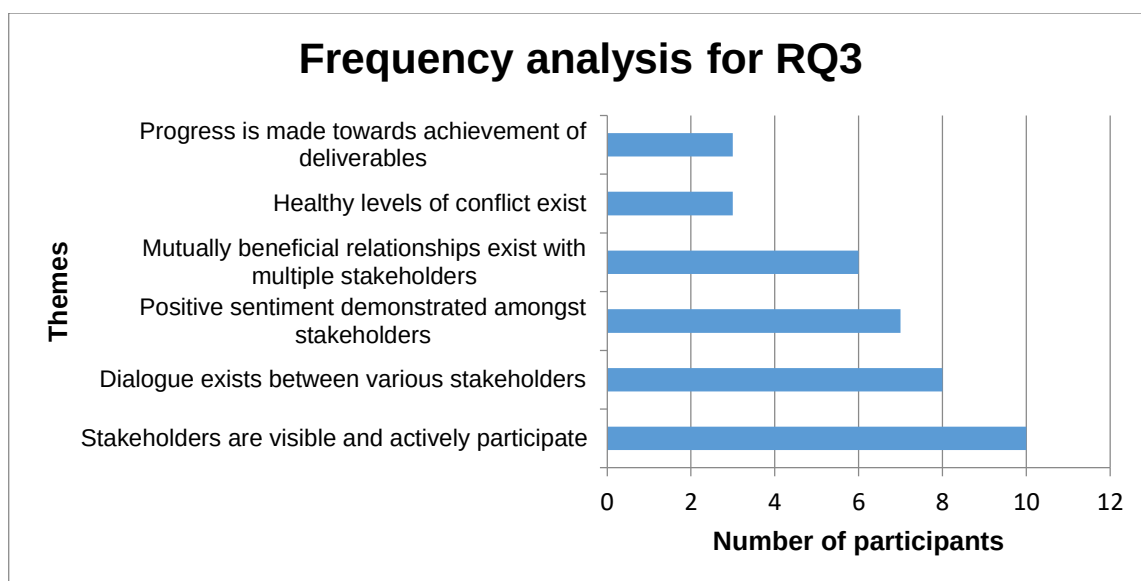


Figure 10 - Thematic analysis for RQ3

The number of participants as well as the number of times a quote was mentioned can be seen in Table 9. Each theme was then given a ranking according to the number of times the theme was mentioned.

Table 9 - Indicators of meaningful engagement

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
1	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10, P11, P12	10	19
2	Dialogue exists between various stakeholders	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P11, P12	8	8
3	Positive sentiment demonstrated amongst stakeholders	P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	7	13
4	Mutually beneficial relationships exist with multiple stakeholders	P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, P11	6	9

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
5	Healthy levels of conflict exist	P8, P9, P12	3	5
6	Progress is made towards achievement of deliverables	P2, P5, P7	3	4

5.6.1 Stakeholders are visible and actively participate

The data indicated that participation was an indicator of meaningful engagement. The participants indicated that this occurred in a number of ways, including through attendance, asking questions, showing interest, voluntary and un-coerced participation, stakeholders communication, additional stakeholders joining the engagement process, and stakeholders that do not avoid engagement.

Participant 3: *“The questions that people ask you during tea breaks where you can see there is an interest in what you are saying. It is basically the way you are asked for the second meeting”.*

Participant 2: *“Well I think the one is a simple one – if people arrive for meetings or not. You know if they come when they feel like it or when they can, then you know there is something wrong”.*

Participant 4 indicated that unwillingness to engage was a sign of potential failure, as evidenced by their quote:

Participant 4: *“I think signs of failure is probably when you phone them and they don’t take your calls or I had farmers who didn’t want to engage at all and when I got there they were quite offish and just didn’t want to talk to me”.*

Additional voluntary stakeholders also indicate positively for the engagements. Participant 10 indicated that he knew he was looking at success when additional stakeholders wanted to create similar projects.

Participant 10: *"We have had their neighbouring eco estate approach us on exactly the same grounds and we have had another one now in Mount Edgecombe approach us on exactly the same grounds and we have had a fourth one approach us which is not in that area, on the same grounds".*

5.6.2 Dialogue exists between stakeholders

The data indicated that communication was important, but even more so was continued communication and dialogue that is bi-directional. The participants indicated that stakeholders want to feel as though they have been heard and that 'top-down' engagement is limited.

Participant 1: *"So you know with us it is always about maintaining that personal contact, feedback, regular contact and communication, and ja, it's for us it has been the positive dialogues that we have had".*

Participant 6: *"basically if there is no buy in then it is doomed to fail, and if they don't want to contribute like initially to sort of planning and stuff, and it is really top down, then you know it is not going to work".*

Participant 5 said that lack of any sort of response and feedback was a tell-tale sign of failure. Participant 5 stated this below:

Participant 5: *"Well warning signs of failure is basically if you have not tailored your engagement to the right level. So you are not getting feedback basically, if people are responding to you and going 'I can't answer these questions, I am not going to respond to this'".*

5.6.3 Positive sentiment is demonstrated by stakeholders

The participants led examples indicating that qualitative information provided a good indicator into determining whether meaningful stakeholder engagement exists. In expressing some of these qualitative or 'soft' indicators, participants indicated that positive attitudes, feelings of happiness, change in attitudes, positive dialogue,

narratives and feedback were indicators that should be noted. These highlighted the importance of social sciences as a key skill that facilitators should potentially have.

Participant 11: *“I mean they are all softer indicators, they are not too quantitative stuff that you can really measure”*. An example of this was given by participant 10 on his experience when returning to one of their projects *“The kids when they see you they come running to you and they can’t wait to tell you the stories of for example the stream, and the bugs in the stream, or what they have discovered about the trees and how they work”*.

Participant 6 indicated that they currently measure their engagements informally with soft indicators. Participant 6 stated:

Participant 6: *“and we kind of at the moment do it in a sort of a really not structured way, whereas we will go, we will just go with a general feel of how people are treating us and how happy people seem to be with us and the work we do”*.

Further, participant 9 indicated that even just a change in attitude over time could be an indicator of meaningful engagement. The participant stated:

Participant 9: *“Well I think the indicators would be looking at communities, at attitudes, the communities’ attitudes, the safari operators as well, etc. Looking at how their attitudes change over time. So if you can get a baseline surveys of what an area thought at the beginning about the whole situation, and then over time, re-running those surveys and seeing do people’s attitudes change”*.

5.6.4 Mutually beneficial relationships exist with multiple stakeholders

A key theme through RQ1 to RQ3, was the need for multiple stakeholders to engage. Several participants also provided statements that stakeholders should have mutual benefits or multiple benefits. This was seen to enable active participation.

Participant 2: *“so signs of failure I think would probably be relationships – that would be a good indicator of that. So your outcome of effective community*

engagement should be positive relationships and I guess that the assumption is that a good relationship will influence attitudes and attitudes will result in some sort of behaviour that might be pro-conservation". Further to this, participant 2 elaborated by stating "meaningful stakeholder engagement is finding common ground" and "that you need to make sure that whatever you are doing is benefiting everyone involved."

Participant 5 indicated the need for multiple stakeholders. Participant 5 stated:

Participant 5: "So if there is a community meeting and it's getting a decent turnout; rather than like ten or fifteen people it is getting 30 to 40 people, and getting a number of people to actually respond rather than one or two people dominating the conversation. It's getting a broad spectrum and opinions being voiced are coming through".

5.6.5 Healthy levels of conflict exists

Participants indicated that when the engagement seemed too easy and that there was a lack of varied opinion amongst stakeholders, the engagement could be in trouble. Some participants elaborated that conflict, where multiple opportunities were given for stakeholders to raise their opinion, could lead to debate and this in turn leads to understanding. These participants therefore felt that a healthy level of conflict also demonstrated healthy stakeholder engagements.

Participant 8 indicated that when one stakeholder dominates the conversation this can be a sign of failure. However, the participant elaborated by adding:

Participant 8: "if there is never a conflict or dissension then I think there is also something wrong. Then I think there is a group that is dominating the space with their stories. So if it is too easy then I think you also have a problem with your stakeholder process".

Participant 9, however, warned that the conflict should not be too strong. Participant 9 stated the following:

Participant 9: *“I would say when you start to see people in strong conflict with each other, that is showing that things are not working. And when people have strong attitudes towards others then that shows there is a problem”.*

5.6.6 Progress is made towards achievement of deliverables

The data indicated further that indicators of meaningful engagement can also be found by exploring whether deliverables have been achieved. The participants noted however, that this simply cannot be a ‘tick-box’ exercise. Gradual progress towards a goal therefore indicated some meaningful engagement has occurred.

Participant 2 stated: *“also if people deliver on their deliverables you know that is an indicator. That sort of thing”.*

Participant 5 indicated the need to achieve more deliverables and measure them to gauge stakeholder engagement and that it simply cannot be a ‘tick-box’ exercise.

Participant 5: *“and I think that is certainly a weakness from our side in terms of we don’t really quantify, we don’t really say ‘we have achieved our goal’ it is ‘have we engaged them – yes’, ‘have we got a response – yes’. Okay there we go – regardless of what the response is. Obviously we like it more if people do respond and give us good valuable feedback, but the baseline is once we have got that response we have kind of ticked that box and we are happy”.*

5.6.7 Conclusion for findings to RQ3

The indicators that were identified in the data were both quantifiable and qualitative data (not to say it cannot be measured). The data indicated that participation is vital to success and that even evidence of communication or dialogue can indicate meaningful engagement is taking place. Further to this, parties acknowledged that when mutual benefits are evident and that all stakeholders felt included then meaningful engagement had occurred. Additionally, some conflict may indicate meaningful discussions had taken place, and this could therefore drive understanding around the topic, as expressed in RQ1 and RQ2.

The themes identified above could assist in identifying criteria which need to be measured when measuring the performance of stakeholder engagements. The participants' responses in any event do identify matters that would signify success or failure for the project initiatives.

5.7 Findings for RQ4

RQ4: How should stakeholder engagement be evaluated in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The aim of the research question was to determine the methods and the evaluation metrics that should be used to evaluate stakeholder engagements in threatened species management. Further to this, the research question sought to understand whether evaluation was an important issue to the participants.

The participants provided data around a number of themes that provided insight into the current practices with regards to evaluation, importance of evaluation, the methodology that should be used, and finally the important aspects of engagement that should be measured.

5.7.1 Importance of measuring stakeholder engagement

Overall, the participants provided input indicating that there was agreement around the need to measure or evaluate stakeholder engagement. Nine of the 12 participants answered affirmatively that better measurement of stakeholder engagement would lead to improved conservation outcomes, or was important in some way. The participants provided a variety of reasons for doing so. However, the frequency analysis did not indicate agreement on why this led to improved outcomes. The findings were substantive enough to indicate it was an important aspect of stakeholder engagement. The various reasons provided for why it was important included: leads to continuous improvement, could indicate future success, provide time and cost savings, identify when deliverables have been met, creates stakeholder accountability and leads to better understanding of engagement as well as better understanding of the stakeholders involved.

Participant 6: *“So yeah, it is hugely important, learning from your mistakes, and finding out what works – it is just common sense ...)”*.

Participant 3: *“but being able to measure the engagements we will be able to fulfil my project objectives which is about development in the context of conservation”*.

Participant 5: *“if there was a way that you could quantify the success of that engagement then you could again tailor your engagements, you could improve that engagement step by step; so if it is proving successful, okay you go with it – and if it is not successful you tweak it and go in a different direction”*.

Participant 1: *“Well that is something that I have no idea (laughs) We have one of our clients is Roehampton University in the UK, and another one is Edinburgh University, and they bring out Master’s level students and they do a survey in the community and they come up with very interesting and very fancy survey methodologies and they go out into the communities and do their stuff. And it is fascinating, but at the end of the day I just want to know what the answers are. (laughs)”*.

5.7.2 Difficulty in evaluating stakeholder engagement

Another theme that arose was that the current way of measuring is insufficient and that measuring is a difficult thing to attempt. Ten of the 12 participants (P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, and P12) indicated some concern with evaluation of engagement, their own insufficient measuring practices or were not sure how to go about it. This highlighted the difficulties of evaluating stakeholder engagement within threatened species management.

Participant 5: *“But I guess the problem with it, with stakeholder engagement, is to a large degree it is subjective, so it is very difficult to actually put a really quantifiable value on it, it is subjective, and what success means maybe is a failure for you”*.

Participant 8: *"You know those things are very difficult to measure and to nail down to a metric".*

Participant 3: *"The problem is it is usually through informal discussions that you get some... at least something [inaudible 35:13]... you could go to them and ask them, did you enjoy it and they say yes or no. Then what do you think about the women, we didn't hear them enough. You know the women, when the chief is there they don't really talk, but I am sure they enjoyed it. So that's... usually you have some insight just from the informal conversations. That is why it is difficult to measure properly".*

Participant 4: *"So it can be quite difficult to even identify who they are. Even then how you engage with them effectively and was that engagement effective only for us or was it effective from the stakeholder's point of view also. That is a very hard thing to measure. I certainly think that it needs to be done".*

Participant 5: *"I don't think I have an answer to that question! (laughter) I would have to really think about how you would go about measuring it, to get the quantifiable, repeatable value or measure. I can't think how that would be done at this stage".*

Participant 4: *"We basically have just been using like 'okay we have had this many workshops, we have reached this many, we have placed this many, this many say they are happy, this many say that they changed their behaviour'. At this point there hasn't really been any monitoring research".*

Participant 7: *"It is information kind of awareness and then there is behavioural change, but often, you know, the outcomes are not actually measured in the correct way and I think that is often a difficulty but there is also..."*

Participant 12: *"I don't know I have no idea".*

5.7.3 Principles for measuring engagement

The participants indicated a variety of principles and instruments for evaluating engagement. This theme was broken down even further and a frequency analysis performed on sub-codes. The themes that emerged were that metrics should be aligned with the objectives, conservationists should use questionnaires and surveys and finally, participants indicated that measurement should be independent, cost effective and not just a “tick-box” exercise.

Table 10 - Principles for measuring stakeholder engagement

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
1	Metrics should be aligned with the objectives	P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	7	8
2	Use of surveys and questionnaires as a measurement instrument	P1, P4, P6, P9	4	6
3	Gauging of human behaviour through discussions	P3, P5, P8	3	3

5.7.3.1 Evaluation should be aligned with the objectives

The principle that emerged from the data was that measurement should be aligned with the objectives of the engagement. The data indicated that objectives must be identified and that metrics developed align with the objectives. The participants indicated measurement of the correct metrics, and not just measure for a ‘tick-box’ exercise was important.

Participant 6: *“And so if you want to look at impact with any sort of monitoring and evaluation impact, you need to look at what are your actual goals and*

what impacts them. And you need to make sure you are measuring the right things”.

Participant 7: “I think the question... the type of engagement that you’re looking for will dictate what kind of outcomes, whether you want to measure outcomes and what kind of outcomes you want to measure. If I want behaviour to change then I need to put certain things in place to actually measure that. If I just want information to be provided, I kind of want awareness to be created, you measure in a different way. So I think that step one is kind of, what is the outcome you require and what kind of measures you’re going to put in place to measure outcomes of that specific activity or process?”.

Participant 11: “I think you should measure it based on the objectives that you have set out for your engagement and it will be very dependent on what those objectives are, and obviously the more robust those objectives the more you will have buy in from the stakeholders in terms of what you are trying to achieve through your engagement and you will have better outcomes. So I think for more effective measurement you need to have sort of almost co-developing your objectives of engagement and then from there being very clear on your methods of engagement, so that they fit in terms of your objectives”.

Participant 8: “So for us definitely what we do is we sit with our stakeholders, our diverse interest groups as we also like to call them, and we figure it out – what does success look like for us and where do we want to be by when, and you know we are going to take charge of making sure we reach our milestone”.

Participant 10: “It is like I think it was Einstein who said ‘if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, he is going to be pretty stupid”.

5.7.3.2 Use of questionnaires and surveys as measurement instruments

Some of the participants indicated that a survey or questionnaire would be useful to measure stakeholder engagement. Participant 9 felt that a baseline survey was necessary as a starting point with follow-up surveys thereafter to measure engagement throughout the entire process. Participant 6 indicated that they had used such surveys in the past.

Participant 9: *“what I think, survey work needs to be done, you need baseline work and then follow up surveys, carefully design surveys to look at attitudes and the responses to be looking at say wild life population numbers and movement and things like that. So monitoring work over time. I think that is the key”.*

Participant 6: *“And then so we did surveys with the farmers at the agricultural show in July, finding out you know, ‘are you having problems you are not telling us about’ or ‘are you not reporting to the Department of Wildlife?’*

5.7.3.3 Gauging of human behaviour through discussions

Human behaviour discussions as discussed by some of the participants was something that could be considered to measure stakeholder engagement, however, this was subjective, as discussed by Participant 5. Asking questions is a way of gauging human behaviour as stated by Participant 3.

Participant 5: *“Again, some of it definitely could be measured but as I say it is such a subjective process and I think you would really need to engage with some sociologists who are really a bit more experienced in terms of gauging human responses and gauging their feedback”.*

Participant 3: *“you could go to them and ask them, did you enjoy it and they say yes or no. Then what do you think about the women, we didn’t hear them enough. You know the women, when the chief is there they don’t really talk, but I am sure they enjoyed it. So that’s... usually you have some insight just from the informal conversations”.*

Participant 8: *“So for us that is what we want; we want a better outcome for people in the unprotected and the protected areas. And I think then again, how do you measure that those relationships do exist, if you look at poaching, number of incursions, and the data, but then if you ask people ‘how do you feel about this reserve, what does a rhino mean to you, how often have you been to the reserve for reasons other than work in the last three years?’”.*

5.7.4 Measurable indicators for meaningful stakeholder engagement

The data indicated a number of items that should be measured to gauge meaningful stakeholder engagement. Table 11 provides these indicators through themes that arose.

Table 11 - Indicators for stakeholder engagement

Rank	Theme	Participant	Frequency	Quotations
1	Attitude and behaviour	P4, P6, P8, P9, P11	5	8
2	Measure stakeholder participation	P2, P3, P4, P6, P7	5	7
4	Relationship and sentiment	P3, P4, P8, P11	4	7

5.7.4.1 Attitude & Behaviour

The participants provided evidence that measuring stakeholder engagement, to determine if it is meaningful, could be done through evaluating the attitude of the different stakeholders as well as their behaviour. Further elaboration by Participant 4 indicated that proxies could be used to understand behavioural change.

Participant 4: *“if you’re looking for some kind of behavioural change in your engagement then it gets more difficult and you may have to find sort of proxies of behavioural change that you can use because you can’t use [inaudible*

18:23] behavioural change, so it could be something like a project in the schools and you're trying to speak about single use plastic and it is important to keep the environment clean, maybe you can't measure how school children's opinions have changed towards the environment, but you could maybe look at is the playground cleaner? Or are they putting recycling in the recycling bins after engagement. So I it is about in how we measure that change of behaviour that we're trying to get through our stakeholders, if a change of behaviour is what we're trying to achieve".

Participant 9: "what I think, survey work needs to be done, you need baseline work and then follow up surveys, carefully design surveys to look at attitudes and the responses to be looking at say wild life population numbers and movement and things like that. So monitoring work over time. I think that is the key. Further the participant added "Um...how should you measure it...well as I said, with using these participatory workshops, you get ways to measure the people's attitudes, and then what they are wanting. That is one way of doing it, and then there is also the just carefully designed surveys and questionnaires to look at what people are thinking. And ja. Most of the things we have been discussing, your interviews, surveys, workshops – all those sort of things".

Participant 11 added that attitudes and perceptions would be important to measure as they would signify meaningful engagement. However, they would not indicate a direct link to a conservation outcome.

Participant 11: "So by using things like perceptions and attitudes but it is important to remember with those sort of things that your level at which you are measuring your perceptions and attitudes must be the same sort of scale at which you are expecting an outcome. So for example if you are measuring... so this is the idea of scale again – if you are measuring perceptions at a very broad level you can't expect that to be an indicator of very direct outcomes such as the reduction in poaching".

5.7.4.2 Stakeholder participation

The data indicated that participation would signify that meaningful engagement has occurred. The participants suggested this would be measureable across items such as contribution to outcomes, attendance, phone calls and other communicate from stakeholders, attention and interest. Participant 2 spoke about contribution to goals, and that meaningful engagement could be measured through stakeholder's contribution and that if stakeholders are not contributing, then this could signify issues in the engagement.

Participant 2: *"Well I suppose it would be in terms of contributions, by measuring their contributions, their outputs, their contribution to the goals, the tasks that we set ourselves, the actions we identify. You can't be a successful stakeholder unless you contribute to those outcomes".*

Further to this, participant 2 indicated that lack of commitment, and failing to participate as agreed, would be a good measure to have. Participant 2 stated:

Participant 2: *"So for instance if you have a position charter with the company your participation as a stakeholder should be part of your division charter. If it is not, if you can't commit in terms of what your involvement must be, then... so your adherence to your terms of reference I suppose – that's what I am getting at".*

Participant 4 indicated that while engaging one should measure the attention of the various stakeholders. Participant 4 stated the following which was echoed by Participant 3:

Participant 4: *"I mean when you're engaging with the people you could look at things like, are they paying attention? You could maybe do a short quiz at the end to see what their retention of information was or something like that, but I come from a science background so I like to measure stuff. Maybe something a bit short term, or super short term measure of your effectiveness. Even by a show of hands at the end of the thing, you know, who thinks this and who thinks that or something".*

Participant 3: *"I would say participation during the meeting, during the engagements. You could ask a few questions at the end of the meeting".*

Participant 6 indicated that stakeholders reaching out and communicating was a good indicator of meaningful engagement. Participant 6 indicated:

Participant 6: *"I guess yeah, measure it like the number of phone calls you get, the number of texts you get from them. I don't know, I really... it's a tricky one. I don't know".*

Participant 7 indicated continued and regular contact with stakeholders was how measurements of engagements were conducted. Participant 7 stated:

Participant 7: *"When it comes to our work pretty much I measure it, and it is fairly informal, is the continuous relationship with the stakeholders I have and then the level of implementation of recommendations. With our stakeholders stakeholder engagement for me is a continuous process. It is regular contact with the various stakeholders through the various forums that we're on".*

5.7.4.3 Relationship sentiment

Participants spoke about the 'soft' indicators as a way to gauge meaningful engagement. This was evident when they indicated that the feelings of stakeholders needed to be observed, and that attention must be paid to the narrative and stories people tell. Particularly here, positive narratives and feelings emerged as indicators that meaningful engagement had occurred. Sentiment could also be used as a way of gauging the relationship and the quality thereof, and that is so important to be able to demonstrate that relationships do exist.

Participant 10: *"Ja (yes), ja. It is so difficult for me to put in to words, I have it all in my mind, I am just trying to find the right way to put it into explain it... how would I measure that...again this is not something you can put in black and white and tick a box, I would measure it from when you look at a kid and you have explained something and he has explained it back to you with*

interest, you can not only feel the right energy from the child, you actually engage with the energy from the child because it is so... it is magnetising, it pulls you in. This is a very difficult one, so I do a lot of things I do especially when I do deal with staff or hiring of people, I do from a gut feel; so it is on energy level, it is not from a mind level”.

Participant 8: *“Because I can’t imagine a better metric for kind of a social process, than that people experience! So you have got to work on the assumption that people are knowledgeable and you have got to use the data that they give you about their experience. So we harvest that all the time, we use Survey Monkey and we send out surveys all the time, it’s just amazing the things you learn if you pay attention and you look at it over time, and you know the more stories you record the more patterns you start to see. So ja (yes).”.*

Participant 8 spoke about a metric being an inappropriate way to measure engagement as engagement is about people. Softer indicators would be required. Participant 8 explained that the connection or quality of relationships were important which should be evaluated and used to signify meaningful engagement which was supported by Participant 11.

Participant 8: *“Something like metrics is just inappropriate for functional process. We are not making cars, it is not a factory, you are not measuring how many units do you produce per hour, we have to create and think about how do you measure the quality of connections between people”.*

Participant 11: *“being able demonstrate a relationship other than a picture by the fire is important and hopefully people will become a little bit more aware of the softer components of it and that you know, the relationship side of it is a really important part of it”.*

5.7.5 Conclusion for findings to RQ4

A number of interesting themes emerged from the interviews regarding the evaluation of meaningful stakeholder engagement. The strong and most common

response indicated that measuring engagement was worthwhile and important in the field of threatened species conservation. The participants also indicated that conservation would benefit from such performance measurement. Noteworthy, was the overlap and commonality between several of these themes and RQ3's.

A number of challenges emerged about how to measure performance effectively, as well as indications that more measurement needs to be completed in the industry as a whole. Although some worthwhile measurable focus areas were identified, it appeared that there was not a strong concurrence between the participants of exactly what needs to be measured. This may, however, be as a lack of current performance measurement within the field, and limited knowledge around key metrics that should be looked at. The three focus areas, however, that emerged were attitude and behaviour, stakeholder participation and relationship sentiments.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The discussion of the findings looked at the findings as presented in chapter 5 together with the available literature in chapter 2 to ensure the research questions developed in chapter 3 were answered.

Additionally, the research findings, other than attempting to answer the research questions, also provided insight into stakeholder engagement within threatened species conservation as viewed by professionals and experts actively participating within this conservation area.

6.2 Discussion for RQ1

RQ1: What does meaningful stakeholder engagement encompass in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The participants answered this question through examples and statements. The findings from the frequency analysis indicated there were nine key features of meaningful engagement in threatened species management, with the majority of the themes occurring in over half of all the interviews conducted. These features are discussed in more detail below.

6.2.1 Produces trusting relationships

In the definition of conservation, relationships were highlighted as a key factor (Sandbrook, 2015). Miles (2017) discussed value creation within an organisation where trusting relationships were present together with stakeholder engagement. Relationships, as seen in the available literature, are key in stakeholder engagement, where awareness and understanding of how these relationships work add value (Freeman et al., 2010, 2018; Freudenreich et al., 2019; S. Miles, 2017; Phillipson et al., 2012).

Multiple authors emphasised the need for strong relationships which must be present in order to ensure a sense of trustworthiness, as well as ensuring an in-depth understanding of stakeholder engagement (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018).

Given the emphasis on relationships that stakeholder theory and other literary pieces on stakeholder engagement within conservation has, it was not surprising that ten of the 12 participants raised this as a key feature. The findings indicated that the purpose of stakeholder engagement was to create these relationships as well as maintain these relationships, as this creates value in the long run, thus aligning with Miles (2017).

6.2.2 Benefits, inclusion and engaging of multiple, diverse stakeholders

As an organisation can benefit from stakeholder engagement as found by Harbour (2009), so too can stakeholders benefit from the process of stakeholder engagement. Mease et al. (2018) indicated that different stakeholders should be included to ensure that a broad spectrum of viewpoints are addressed. Relationships with many different stakeholders are key, which promotes the inclusion of multiple stakeholders (Mease et al., 2018). Ensuring that multiple stakeholders' inputs are valued was also found by Talley et al. (2016) as a recommendation for ensuring successful future stakeholder engagement.

The strong response from the participants, with eight of the 12 participants advocating for this, including the experts, aligned with the theory. Therefore, in summary, multiple stakeholders add value to the engagement process, and that by including multiple stakeholders, the benefits of the engagement or the project can be realised by more than a single beneficiary.

6.2.3 Leads to understanding

Stakeholders can have differing viewpoints which must be understood in order to ensure successful stakeholder engagement (Mease et al., 2018). Sterling et al. (2017) emphasised that understanding how the stakeholder engagement process works was imperative to ensuring effective and successful stakeholder engagement.

The literature therefore was clear that understanding plays an integral role in the engagement process. However, the findings also indicated that understanding of the project can also come about through the engagement process, which aids buy-in as is discussed next. Additionally, understanding aligns with the definition by Liberati et al. (2016) of stakeholder engagement.

6.2.4 Creates stakeholder buy-in

Talley et al. (2016) discussed co-ownership and engagement of local stakeholders as a way to ensure buy-in by the relevant stakeholders ensuring success of future stakeholder engagement (Talley et al., 2016). All the experts included in a total of ten participants indicated this is an outcome of meaningful stakeholder engagement and that the purpose of stakeholder engagement was to build relationships so that buy-in or acceptance of the project can be achieved. Additional alignment with literature was seen by looking at the definition by Liberati et al. (2016) of stakeholder participation:

“an integral part of structured decision making because it increases transparency, acceptance, and understanding of planning outcomes and results in better implementation and progress towards conservation goals” (p. 37).

6.2.5 Done in a consultative, open and honest manner

Mease et al. (2018) highlighted the importance of transparency in stakeholder engagement in the principles of stakeholder engagement. It was found imperative that transparency is evident to ensure stakeholders are involved in the entire process. The Clarkson Principles also supported open communication with stakeholders (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009). Talley et al. (2016) supported open discussions, where successes and failures have been laid on the table for stakeholders to see clearly. Given this, there was alignment between the findings and the literature, specifically as ten of the 12 participants indicated this as important, including the expert participants.

6.2.6 Requires active stakeholders

Active stakeholders included those who communicated regularly, make active decisions with the project coordinators and voice their viewpoints throughout the entire process and not merely at one or two points (Mannetti et al., 2019; Mease et al., 2018). Active participants created dialogue and communication within the engagement which fosters understanding, as indicated in the discussion of the findings in section 6.2.3. Over and above communicating, the participants sought out champions to drive their engagements, specifically within local communities. This finding is different to the literature, and may be because to local communities of southern Africa are unique and they play an important role in threatened species conservation; however, this was beyond the scope the research.

6.2.7 Long term, legitimate process

Sufficient time must be given for the stakeholder engagement process in order to ensure success, as seen in the available literature (Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018). Realistic time-based goals should be set up which ensures the process is legitimate. This indicated there was definite alignment with the findings that stakeholder engagement is a lengthy process, as eight of 12 participants indicated this was a feature. Practitioners in threatened species conservation may also want to use relevant stakeholder engagement methodology in order to ensure success (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016). It can be concluded that because a process must be followed to engage stakeholders, some methodology of engaging has been followed throughout the stakeholder engagement process. However, this was not expressly stated in the findings for RQ1.

Whilst the duration of the engagement has not been defined in the literature, it was evident from the findings that engagement within threatened species conservation is a long-term process, with participants indicating the process can run for as long as a few years. Given the lack of emphasis on a specified duration in the literature, and the confirmation by the participants of long durations, the engagement process is assumed to be longer in threatened species stakeholder engagement than traditional stakeholder engagement in other conservation programmes.

6.2.8 Aims to change attitude and behaviour

The literature available focussing specifically on attitude and behaviour was limited as stated by Sterling et al. (2017) due to the challenges associated with the assessment thereof (Sterling et al., 2017). Attitudes and behaviours were considered important when monitoring and assessing project outcomes in conservation (Brooks et al., 2013). This being said, there seemed to be improved attitudes of stakeholders with increased knowledge and values (Sterling et al., 2017).

The findings were also not overwhelming compared to some of the other features, but these cannot be ignored as a third of participants indicated that an attitudinal or behavioural change was necessary for meaningful stakeholder engagement. There was also a likelihood that, given the urgency and importance of threatened species conservation as well as the importance of ensuring timeous action, more focus would be paid to achieving a visible change in the stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour. However, this was not evident in the findings or the literature.

6.2.9 Conclusion for discussion of findings for RQ1

Meaningful stakeholder engagement in threatened species, as experienced by those in the study, was similar to that reported in literature (Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016). Certain aspects emerged that perhaps may be more important to focus upon, including the importance of finding a champion for the project and ensuring that engagement is of a long-term nature. The findings differed from the literature as setting clear and common objectives and goals as is advocated in the literature, was this was not present in the findings for RQ1 (Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016).

6.3 Discussion for RQ2

RQ2: What are the antecedents of stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The participants, through their experience and knowledge in threatened species conservation, were able to provide insight into the challenges faced in their own

engagement experiences as well as enablers that led them to success. By analysing their responses, a number of antecedents to meaningful stakeholder engagement were identified and highlighted.

Seven themes were identified, with five of the themes having been highlighted by 50% or more of the participants; this indicates an important antecedent to achieving meaningful stakeholder engagement. These antecedents are discussed below.

6.3.1 Knowledge, understanding and skills

Sterling et al. (2017) indicated that an understanding of how the stakeholder process works led to effective stakeholder engagement. This correlated with the findings from the research that an integral part of achieving meaningful engagement is being able to effectively communicate the process to the stakeholders so they understand how the process works.

It was found imperative that the knowledge of the relevant stakeholders is used in the most beneficial way so that the skills of each stakeholder supports what each stakeholder is capable of doing. (Gray et al., 2012; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016). The participants highlighted this as particularly important in ensuring that the engagement team have the necessary people-skills to manage the engagement.

An additional element to this antecedent, as discussed by Tally et al. (2016), was that having an insider or local knowledge (as opposed to foreign or international expertise) was seen to be an important aspect of stakeholder engagement; this emerged as particularly true for local community engagements.

6.3.2 Sustainable operations

Having a sustainable operation and business (whether for profit or not for profit) is one reason for success in the longer term on engagements, or a reason for failure. Therefore, this was viewed as an antecedent to stakeholder engagement. Whilst having a successful operation is logical, the resources required to carry out stakeholder engagements in threatened species requires sustainable business plans. This idea did not was not found in the literature for stakeholder engagement,

Additionally, the participants indicated that competition for funding was huge in this particular industry due to many NGO's existing, all fighting for a bite of the small donor pie.

6.3.3 Active & Interested Stakeholders

Active involvement of stakeholders during the entire stakeholder engagement process was seen as imperative in order to ensure effective stakeholder engagement (Sterling et al., 2017). This aligned well with the frequency analysis that was done as six out of the 12 participants spoke about involved, participatory and engaging stakeholders in their interviews.

One of the reasons for this is that active stakeholders are generally passionate about conservation management and are therefore more willing to participate in the process at all stages (before, during and after the entire process) (Decker et al., 2012). Decker et al. (2012) here compares to the findings of this research, indicating stakeholders need to be actively involved in the project. Specifically, a champion needs to be identified who would have those similar qualities and that is aligned with the conservation effort.

6.3.4 Time constraints

A number of participants felt that time constraints caused them the most challenges in achieving their stakeholder objectives. This aligned with the principle of allowing sufficient time during the stakeholder engagement process to ensure successful and efficient stakeholder engagement (Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Waylen et al., 2015). Waylen et al. (2015) also indicated that the time allowed for a project often exceeds the budget, which then in turn makes meeting the timelines of the process even more imperative.

Findings from RQ1 indicated a similar trend, that stakeholder engagements are long-term processes. Whilst this may not be a set rule, and because the literature by Reed et al. (2018) indicated that each engagement process may be different, it is more important to schedule additional time than what typical stakeholder engagements in normal conservation would require.

6.3.5 Sustainable relationships

Relationships build trust and confidence in the stakeholder engagement process where previous existing strong relationships ensure maximum cooperation and participation from the stakeholders (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018). Stakeholder engagement is not a ‘once-off’ event and strong relationships built from the beginning will ensure sustained partnerships and commitment in the future. The participants highlighted agreement with the above literature by Carroll and Buchholtz (2009), Mease et al. (2018) and Reed et al. (2018), particularly focusing on tending and nurturing the relationships so as not to let them ‘die’.

6.3.6 Overcoming legacy issues

Waylen, et al. (2015) found challenges associated with legacy, which included stringent rules and regulations, time allocated to projects exceeding resources (which links to section 6.3.4) and funding, poor training and lack of skills of staff as well as public sectors (Waylen et al., 2015). Organisations have also been found to have their own interests at heart (Voegtlin et al., 2019; Waylen et al., 2015). The legacy issues that emerged also seem to be slightly different to those indicated in literature and arise out of South Africa’s apartheid past as well as poor engagement practices by other stakeholders within the industry, which hamper current activities. Whilst, there are legacy issues documented in literature, this emerged as a key issue in the discussions and it therefore may important to understand this in the context of threatened species management, particularly in relation to South Africa’s political past.

6.3.7 Communication

Communication with the stakeholders done in the most transparent manner ensures the success of a project (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Reed et al., 2018). This not only includes communication between the project coordinators and the stakeholders, but also between the relevant stakeholders themselves so that no stakeholder feels excluded at any point during the process. This particularly aligned with the findings of RQ2 as well as those for RQ3, where dominant stakeholders that exclude others

emerged as a warning sign. This was not surprising considering it was also found that active and involved stakeholders are required, which implies dialogue exists between interested stakeholders.

6.3.8 Conclusion for discussion of findings for RQ2

The findings indicated themes that are consistent with literature, except for the emergence of sustainable operations being imperative to meaningful engagement with stakeholders the participants of this study. Having enough sustainable resources therefore impacts meaningful engagement. Additionally, another finding that was not apparent in the literature was that legacy issues, specific to South Africa, provided challenges to stakeholder engagement.

Further, alignment between the findings and literature on ensuring time is not constrained, that facilitators and managers have skills and knowledge to manage the engagements and that relationships provided good insight into the antecedents of meaningful stakeholder engagement.

6.4 Discussion for RQ3

RQ3: What are the indicators of meaningful stakeholder engagement in threatened species management in southern Africa?

The research question aimed to identify indicators that would identify if meaningful stakeholder engagement was taking place, or provide warning signs to stakeholders that the engagement is facing challenges.

The findings indicated that there were six indicators of meaningful stakeholder engagement within the context of threatened species conservation. These indicators were then cross-referenced back to literature to identify if they align with other findings from literature.

6.4.1 Stakeholders are visible and actively participate

Ten of the 12 participants, including all the experts, indicated that visible and active participants indicated meaningful engagement is taking place. Active participation of stakeholders as discussed in 6.3.3 was seen as vital to ensure effective stakeholder engagement, particularly those who have a passion for nature conservation (Decker et al., 2012; Sterling et al., 2017). This aligned with the literature as well as other findings for the RQ1 and RQ2. Key here was that stakeholders must be visible in the process, which implied open and honest interactions as well as transparency being created in the engagement process.

6.4.2 Dialogue exists between various stakeholders

Eight of the participants, including all of the experts, agreed that communication was key as it ensures active involvement of stakeholders as discussed in 6.3.3 and 6.4.1, where open discussions were at the forefront (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Reed et al., 2018). Reed et al. (2018) emphasised the need for dialogue to occur as soon as possible; this was particularly important when focussing on nature conservation and threatened species (Reed et al., 2018). The implication of this finding was that communication, especially when it is top-down or one-sided is not sufficient, dialogue, or multi-directional open communication channels must exist. Top-down communication emerged from the examples given by participants as harmful to engagement. Additionally, to the literature, participants indicated that communication should at times be initiated by different stakeholders, rather than a single stakeholder having a dominant voice.

6.4.3 Positive sentiment demonstrated amongst stakeholders

The literature states that positive attitude or behaviour is a challenge to measure due to the subjective nature of these feelings, however, these were nonetheless viewed as important when looking at measuring stakeholder engagement (Brooks et al., 2013; Sterling et al., 2017). Some participants indicated that indicators of meaningful engagement were simply a feeling that one got. In one example, an indicator of meaningful engagement was simply seeing smiling children and another example

indicated being aware of an attitude. Conversely, negative sentiment can be a warning sign of challenges with the engagements.

6.4.4 Mutually beneficial relationships exist with multiple stakeholders

The importance of having multiple stakeholders involved in the engagement process has been seen as imperative due to multiple view-points being included and different ways of solving problems can be addressed (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016). If one stakeholder benefits and another stakeholder not, trust and strong relationships may be broken (strong relationships discussed in 6.2.1).

Half of the participants highlighted this in their engagements that multiple beneficiaries must be present. This implies that during the design of any conservation outcome and stakeholder engagement, there should be multiple beneficiaries visible and actively involved which aligns with Talley et al (2016).

6.4.5 Healthy levels of conflict exist

Due to a 'healthy' level of conflict being a subjective concept, limited literature was available focussing on 'healthy conflict' in nature conservation. However, healthy levels of conflict will only occur if strong relationships and trust are built at the beginning of the stakeholder engagement process (Freeman et al., 2010, 2018; Freudenreich et al., 2019; S. Miles, 2017; Phillipson et al., 2012).

Whilst the literature on creating healthy conflict within stakeholder engagement is limited, some business approaches have utilised conflict or pressure to enhance performance, which may explain why a managed amount of conflict does, and should, exist within the process. Full and deep insight into this indicator was also not possible due to the limited responses from participants highlighting this as an indicator of meaningful engagement (a quarter of the participants agreed) however the level of agreement does indicate this to be a worthwhile theme to note. Whilst this was still considered worthwhile in engagements, as it may contribute to some degree of success or failure of engagements, it requires additional research for better understanding.

6.4.6 Progress is made towards achievement of deliverables

Talley et al. (2016) indicated that outcomes of stakeholder engagement should be looked at and discussed, where any successes or failures are documented throughout the entirety of the stakeholder engagement process. This will ensure that the end result will be achieved, as any problems that arise during the process can be addressed and emphasis can be placed on areas that are achieving excellent results (Talley et al., 2016). A clear lack of progress towards engagement outcomes indicated that the engagement may be problematic. Even though this emerged from the interviews, the experts did not voice this as an indicator of meaningful engagement, and only a quarter of all participants indicated it. The findings were significant enough to warrant attention, however it will require additional research to understand better.

6.4.7 Conclusion for discussion of findings for RQ3

The participants were largely in agreement with a number of findings in this research question. There were indicators that highlighted involvement of stakeholders which included: dialogue existing between stakeholders, positive sentiments and mutually beneficial relationships. All of these were documented in the literature; and therefore it can be concluded that these are indicators that stakeholder engagement facilitators and others involved in engagements need to be fully cognisant of when their engagements take place, as they indicate the health status of the engagement. Additional warning signs of not achieving any progress or conflict may also indicate that engagements are not proceeding as they should.

Whilst the literature indicated this may be difficult to measure, human beings, who are sentient often can sense positivity and therefore it may be wise to utilise facilitators that have strong emotional intelligence. Additionally trying to identify a measurable way or a framework for indicating positive sentiment, and reporting thereof, would assist in making this indicator more tangible.

The findings highlighted a difference to the literature in the agreement of participants that a healthy level of conflict should exist and this is an area that could be focused on more in the future.

6.5 Discussion for RQ4

RQ4: How should stakeholder engagement be evaluated in threatened species management in southern Africa?

This research question sought to explore the recommendation expressed by Mease et al. (2018) that more thorough and easy-to-use indicators are required to measure stakeholder engagement in conservation. Additional research searches indicated that measurement principles and criteria are not available for stakeholder engagement within threatened species conservation within southern Africa.

Furthermore, the question sought to get clarity on whether this is important for conservationists working in the industry, as again, there is limited evidence available regarding performance measurement of stakeholder engagement.

In order to analyse the findings, and be able to provide some reinforcement to the findings of RQ1-3, the findings from RQ4 have been applied to other findings throughout this research (RQ1 to RQ3) as well as the literary principles of conservation.

6.5.1 Importance of measuring stakeholder engagement

Performance measurement systems should form an integral part of stakeholder engagement, according to Sterling et al. (2017). This was further evidenced by Freudenreich et al. (2019), who indicated that a meaningful stakeholder engagement management programme should include a performance measurement system. This is because measurement of the engagements provided a clear and sound method to achieve results.

Furthermore, when looking at sustainable business practices, like performance measurement, performance measurement systems can include the measurement of dynamics and teams, interactions between departments, relationships between parent and subsidiary organisations as well as performance measurement of the supply chain (Bourne et al., 2018). All of these aimed at measuring interactions and may therefore also be applicable to stakeholder engagement. If performance

measurement is a sustainable business practice, as proposed by Micheli and Mari (2014), and sustainable operations are required for meaningful stakeholder engagement, as was found in RQ3, then it seems performance measurement should indeed play a role within this field.

The importance, therefore, of a performance measurement system in stakeholder engagements, as documented in literature was further echoed in the findings. The findings indicated that performance measurement of engagements would provide a number of benefits including leading to continuous improvement, being an indicator of future success, providing time and cost savings, identifying when deliverables are met, making stakeholders accountable and leading to better understanding of engagement as well as a better understanding of the stakeholders involved.

Nine of the participants and three of the experts, provided reasons for why performance measurement of stakeholder engagement could lead to improved outcomes for their conservation efforts, and not only their stakeholder engagements. This implies that there could be a definitive link between measuring performance and conservation outcomes, most likely due to improvements with stakeholder engagement practices. However, this study was not able to explore this important concept further and make definitive findings around a direct link between the two. What can be concluded from this study, however, is that performance measurement of stakeholder engagements was seen as a crucial undertaking.

6.5.2 Difficulty in evaluating stakeholder engagement

Sterling et al. (2017) indicated the difficulty in measuring stakeholder engagement due to a number of outcomes being subjective. Although the participants indicated other reasons as to why it was difficult to do, they agreed in general that measurement is an incredibly difficult undertaking. One participant even indicated it was not possible. Ten of the 12 participants, including all the experts, indicated that they found it difficult to implement in practice and there were a number of shortcomings in the way they attempted to measure their own engagements in the past. Additional evidence from the participants indicated that this was an area that they should focus more on, and give some thought to. A number of participants indicated they do not know how they should be measuring stakeholder engagement.

6.5.3 Principles for measuring engagement

Whilst participants indicated that it was difficult to do, they did also provide some recommendations for how the performance measurements should be done. This included using surveys and questionnaires, assessing qualitative metrics through discussions with various stakeholders and they indicated that the measurement metrics should be aligned with the objectives. Aligning metrics with objectives was recommended by a number of authors (Chenhall & Langfield-Smith, 2007; Robert S. Kaplan, 2007). This, therefore, indicated that the performance management system must be properly developed and the design thereof being crucial (Lucianetti et al., 2019).

6.5.4 Measurable indicators for meaningful stakeholder engagement

Qualitative outputs were found to be the most dominating type of indicator that participants felt should be measured in meaningful engagement. However, many participants admitted that they felt their organisations lacked in this department, or they did not have the knowledge to answer this question adequately. Therefore, the findings for RQ4 may not be conclusive, in and of itself, for identifying measurable indicators.

6.5.4.1 Attitude & Behaviour

Five of the participants and two experts indicated that measuring a positive attitude or an improved behavioural change resulted in positive meaningful engagement, which supported the findings by Brookes et al. (2013). Sterling et al. (2017) also found that attitude improvement resulted in an improved engagement process, which was supported by the findings of this study.

The participants' responses indicated this would be an effective way to measure the engagement, however the findings by Sterling et al. (2017) also indicated that measuring attitude and behaviour has always been a challenge. As a consequence comparative studies using this as an assessment method were limited. Particularly, the findings indicate one could measure attitude change over time, and analyse the

patterns and trends that emerge; and therefore baseline surveys become an important starting benchmark for stakeholder engagement.

6.5.4.2 Stakeholder participation

Five of the 12 participants (including two experts) indicated it was worthwhile measuring stakeholder participation. The participants indicated this would be measureable across items such as contribution to outcomes, attendance, phone calls and other forms of communication from stakeholders, attention and interest. As stated in sections 6.3.7 and 6.4.2, communication and dialogue are key aspects of stakeholder engagement as supported by Carroll et al. (2009) and Reed et al. (2018). The findings indicated that meaningful engagement is indicated by the participation of interested stakeholders. This was supported by the findings of Decker et al. (2012).

6.5.4.3 Relationship sentiment

Four of the 12 participants (including one expert) identified measuring the quality of relationships that exist. Participants spoke about 'soft' indicators as a way to gauge meaningful engagement. This was evident when they indicated that the feelings of stakeholders needed to be observed, and that attention needs to be paid to the narrative and stories that people are telling, which is supported by the findings of Brooks et al. (2013). Particularly here, positive narratives and feelings emerged as indicators that meaningful engagement had occurred. Sentiment could also be used as a way of gauging the relationship and the quality thereof, and that it is an important proxy to be able to demonstrate that relationships do exist.

6.5.5 Conclusion for discussion of findings for RQ4

Performance measurement within the field of engaging stakeholders in threatened species conservation still needs to be developed. The findings indicated that in many instances, performance measurement programmes did not exist, or were inadequate. Many professionals operating in this field were unsure exactly what to measure or how to do it. This was despite the overwhelming evidence that indicated it is important to do and that there are a number of benefits for doing so, including: leads to continuous improvement, could indicate future success, provide time and

cost savings, identify when deliverables are met, makes stakeholders accountable and leads to better understanding of engagement as well as better understanding of the stakeholders involved.

Although the participants indicated that it was challenge to do, they did not indicate it was impossible to do; and some participants even went on to indicate how it could be done. Whilst the findings for identifying metrics that could be used only provide three themes, attitude and behaviour, relationship sentiment and stakeholder participation, these themes are echoed throughout this paper and are undoubtedly important to attempt to measure. Furthermore, because of the lack of practical application demonstrated within the field, this cannot be viewed as an exhaustive list, particularly after analysing the findings from the other research questions.

6.6 Final discussion

Table 13 below provides a synopsis of the discussion, based upon comparisons between the findings and the literature. This research culminated in providing recommendations on the elements or features of stakeholder engagement that should be measured within stakeholder engagement processes taking place to protect threatened species in southern Africa.

Table 12 - Summary of performance metrics for meaningful stakeholder engagement developed from findings of this study

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Relevant literature
1	Participation	Active participants	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4	(Decker et al., 2012; Mannetti et al., 2019; Mease et al., 2018; Sterling et al., 2017)
2	Strength, openness and trust in relationships	Strong, open and trusting relationships	RQ1, RQ2, RQ4	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al.,

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Relevant literature
				2018; Talley et al., 2016)
3	Communication	Multi-directional communication and dialogue	RQ2, RQ3, RQ4	(Carroll & Buchholtz, 2009; Reed et al., 2018)
4	Attitudes and behaviours	Positive attitudes and positive changes in behaviour	RQ1, RQ3, RQ4	(Brooks et al., 2013; Sterling et al., 2017)
5	Time	Long term engagement process	RQ1, RQ2	(Mease et al., 2018; Reed et al., 2018)
6	Understanding	Greater understanding of the engagement process as well as conservation issue	RQ1, RQ2	(Mease et al., 2018; Sterling et al., 2017)
7	Number of stakeholders and their benefits	Multiple stakeholders with multiple beneficiaries	RQ1, RQ3	(Mease et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016)
8	Stakeholder buy-in	Stakeholders buy-in to conservation effort	RQ1	(Talley et al., 2016)

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Relevant literature
10	Skills of stakeholders	Skills of each stakeholder matches capabilities	RQ2	(Gray et al., 2012; Reed et al., 2018; Talley et al., 2016)
12	Achievement of goals	Achievement of stakeholder engagement outcomes	RQ3	(Talley et al., 2016)
13	Conflict level	Healthy levels of conflict exist	RQ3	(Freeman et al., 2010, 2018; Freudenreich et al., 2019; S. Miles, 2017; Phillipson et al., 2012)

Table 13 identifies the unique and different findings of the research to the literature.

Table 13 - Differences in findings compared to the literature

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Potential unique finding of this research
1	Participation	Active participants	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4	-
2	Strength, openness and trust in relationships	Strong, open and trusting relationships	RQ1, RQ2, RQ4	-
3	Communication	Multi-directional communication and dialogue	RQ2, RQ3, RQ4	Whilst dialogue is evident in the literature the findings indicate that initiation

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Potential unique finding of this research
				of communication should be by multiple stakeholders rather than by only a few stakeholders.
4	Attitude and behaviour	Positive attitudes and positive changes in behaviour	RQ1, RQ3, RQ4	-
5	Time	Long term engagement process	RQ1, RQ2	Whilst having sufficient time is not unique to the literature, the literature does not provide timeframes. The findings of this research indicate that engagement must be long term within conservation of threatened species.
6	Understanding	Greater understanding of the engagement process as well as conservation issue	RQ1, RQ2	-

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Potential unique finding of this research
7	Number of stakeholders and their benefits	Multiple stakeholders with multiple beneficiaries	RQ1, RQ3	-
8	Stakeholder buy-in	Stakeholders buy-in to conservation effort	RQ1	-
9	Sustainable business operations	Sustainable business operations by resources	RQ2	Sustainable operations are key to stakeholder engagement, and should be a principle of engagement and a measurable item when evaluating performance thereof. Specifically, the concept of funding being primarily through donors emerged as problematic due to sharing of 'small pie'.
10	Skills of stakeholders	Skills of each stakeholder matches capabilities	RQ2	-
11	Legacy issues	Overcoming legacy issues	RQ3	South Africa's legacy issues, including apartheid and education led to a

No.	Performance measurement element	Indicators of meaningful engagement	Research questions	Potential unique finding of this research
				unique finding that this barrier to engagement must be overcome for engagement to be meaningful.
12	Achievement of goals	Achievement of stakeholder engagement outcomes	RQ3	-
13	Conflict level	Healthy levels of conflict exist	RQ3	Businesses use pressure as a means to drive performance, however the finding indicates a measure of conflict amongst stakeholders leads to robust discussions and consensus.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a conclusion of the research. The remainder of this chapter indicates the meaningful engagement performance metrics that were developed as principal conclusions to the research. Following that the implications that this research has on managers within conservation of threatened species as well as active professionals. A summary of the limitations of the study as well as worthwhile future research is then presented.

7.2 Principal findings

7.2.1 Importance of measuring stakeholder engagements

The literature provided a strong background to stakeholder engagements and performance measurement as well as providing the researcher with an imperative need for this research to be done, which is to link stakeholder engagement principles to evaluation and to do research that would lead to improvements within stakeholder management and nature conservation of threatened species.

A conclusions from this research indicated the importance of measuring performance of stakeholder engagements. This is because measurement could provide benefits of continuous improvement, measurements could provide an indication of future success, provide time and cost savings, identify when deliverables are met, makes stakeholders accountable and lead to better understanding of engagement as well as better understanding of the stakeholders involved.

The research cannot provide for a framework or model to be used for performance measurement of stakeholder engagements, primarily because engagements are unique and objectives may differ in each stakeholder engagement process where one of the principles of stakeholder engagement indicated measurements must be aligned to the objectives What can be demonstrated, however, by this research are

areas that should be given thought too when designing a performance management system for stakeholder engagements.

7.2.2 Stakeholder engagement measurement areas

The research found 13 areas that should be performance-measured within stakeholder engagements and provided associated metrics that could be considered in designing the performance management system. These measurement areas included: participation of stakeholders, strong, open and trusting relationships, communication, attitudes and behaviours, time allocated for engagements, understanding, number of stakeholders and multiple beneficiaries, stakeholder buy-in, skills of stakeholders, legacy issues, sustainable operations, achievement of deliverables and conflict levels between stakeholders.

Participation of stakeholders must be evidenced by active stakeholders that are involved in a number of different ways. In short, the research found that they must be visible.

The second area for measurement included assessing whether strong, open and trusting relationships existed between the various stakeholders.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement promotes dialogue between stakeholders. Whilst the majority of literary articles indicated communication is important dialogue emerged as a measurable indicator for meaningful engagement. An aspect of this finding that is different to the literature indicates that communication must be initiated by multiple stakeholders rather than being top-down or bottom-up.

An area that should also be measured is the attitudes and behaviours of the stakeholders. The stakeholders must exhibit positive attitudes as well as a change in behaviour. Engagements that create negativity and do not attempt to change behaviour cannot be seen as meaningful.

A unique finding for this research was that engagements must be long term. Time constraints are a barrier to engagements according to a number of literary pieces, however, the specific mention of long term processes as highlighted in the discussion

allowed the research to conclude that engagement processes should be conducted over the long term.

Meaningful engagement has occurred when there is a greater understanding of the engagement process as well as the conservation outcomes and therefore understanding emerged as an area that should be measured during the engagement process.

With conservation of threatened species the stakeholder engagements must seek to provide multiple beneficiaries with benefits as this leads to a greater buy-in by each stakeholder.

A unique finding was the need for businesses conducting conservation programmes to be operationally sound and have sustainable operations. Additionally, this research found that when these businesses fail, the engagements fail, and this creates legacy issues that future conservation programmes need to overcome.

The skills of stakeholders must be evaluated to match the skills required for the engagements. Poor alignment of skills and capabilities will not lead to meaningful engagement and therefore conservationists must include this evaluation area in their performance management system.

Another unique finding was the legacy issues in southern African conservation of threatened species are unique when compared with other parts of the world. Legacy issues must be highlighted at the start of the engagement and measured during the engagement process with specific reference made to the unique legacy issues affecting southern Africa.

Goals and objectives, of the engagement, must be set at the start of the engagement process and these should be evaluated during the engagement process. This relates specifically to the goals and objectives of the engagements rather than the conservation outcome.

The final measurement area was to evaluate the conflict level between the various stakeholders. The research indicated that healthy levels of conflict should exist

between stakeholders as this leads to robust discussions and a better understanding of each stakeholder's needs and ultimately creates acceptance and buy-in of each stakeholder.

7.3 Research Contribution

This research provides an extension to the research conducted by Mease et al. (2018). Mease et al. (2018) recommended further research be done on evaluating stakeholder performance, within the context of threatened species conservation, this research has provided insights that enable this and identified worthwhile areas for measurement purposes as well as concluded that performance measurement of stakeholder engagements must be done.

Further, contributions from this research found some potentially unique areas for measurement within conservation of threatened species in southern Africa. Firstly, legacy issues, usually in the form of apartheid era challenges or from previous engagements must be overcome and recognised. Secondly, the engagements must be a long term process. Thirdly, healthy levels of conflict should exist between stakeholders as this leads to healthy debates, understanding of different viewpoints and the issues at hand and ultimately creates buy-in. Fourthly, the sustainability of the operation as a business must be measured as this impacts severely on engagement outcomes, particularly because many organisations within threatened species conservation survive from the small donor 'pie'. Finally, dialogue must be created and initiated by multiple stakeholders rather than just exist.

Interestingly, the interconnected cycle between failed businesses (financially) leading to failed engagements creates legacy issues, which in and of itself is a barrier to engagement, is noteworthy.

7.4 Implications for management

The study brings to light a number of implications for management working to conserve South Africa's threatened species. The business community is undergoing changes to how their performance measurement systems report and measure their business's impact by including environmental and sustainability in their

measurement systems (Chenhall & Langfield-Smith, 2007; Porter et al., 2011). This practice must be adopted by all non-profit organisations, NGO's, government departments, and for profit organisations within threatened species conservation.

Therefore, management should develop performance management systems to evaluate their stakeholder engagements as well as incorporate stakeholder engagement performance measurements in their annual performance reviews. If these benefits could be achieved, then measuring engagements is a worthwhile practice to adopt. Therefore, management should develop performance management systems to evaluate their stakeholder engagements as well as incorporate stakeholder engagement performance measurements in their annual performance reviews.

An additional finding of the research indicates that multiple beneficiaries should be sought during the engagement process as well, since meaningful stakeholder engagement requires sustainable business operations. These two findings link with modern shared value approaches, which is a theory gaining traction currently within the global business world. Shared value advocates for business to seek opportunities that can provide a platform for sustainable business as well as provide stakeholder engagement including multiple beneficiaries (Porter et al., 2011). Therefore, perhaps the conservation of threatened species provides an opportunity for business to seek such shared value opportunities.

It is the researcher's fervent hope that the this research can improve current management practices in the conservation of threatened species, and result in positive conservation outcomes and success stories, and in so doing provide hope that future generations will inherit the earth, with as much diversity as exists today, as we are the guardians and custodians of today.

7.5 Limitations of study

The limitations of the research are as follows:

- Bias is one of the main limitations that can occur in qualitative research, as it is very subjective in nature as well as can be impacted upon subconsciously

and therefore is difficult to control during the interview process (Saunders & Lewis, 2018)

- The size of the sample could be considered a limitation as twelve participants were included (Kumar, 2011) Only four experts were chosen to form part of the sample.
- The interviewee's state of mind during the interview could not be measured; and this specifically impacts the experts group more as only four experts participated

7.6 Recommendations for future researchers

While the study did find a number of performance measurement areas, an additional need for research would be to focus on each performance measurement area and find the most appropriate method for measuring that area. A number of the areas are subjective and therefore conservationists would benefit from research that provides a more thorough and practical guide to measuring each of those areas.

The conclusion of this study indicated that measuring the performance of stakeholder engagement could provide a positive effect on conservation outcomes, and not only on the engagements themselves. This, was not covered in detail in this research and therefore, an area for future study would be to link positive or negative stakeholder engagement measurements with conservation outcomes using a longitudinal study and perhaps find a link between the two.

Finally, focussed research should be conducted to determine evaluation areas within a specific threatened species or within a specific category of threatened species.

7.7 People are at the heart of everything we do

The following quote underlines the need for future research into our engagements and the way we measure our relationships and is an apt closing to this research, which the researcher hopes is a stepping stone to future research:

Participant 8: *"Because I think we need to set up a think tank about how do we measure these connections and what these connections bring about because let's face it, nothing that we have ever achieved in our working life, came as a result of something we did by ourselves. It is as a result of stuff we did with other people. Because there was good chemistry between us and we worked well together".*

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Ethical approval letter from Gordon Institute of Business Science
University of Pretoria

25 July 2019

Steven Verwey

Dear Steven

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

Please note that approval is granted based on the methodology and research instruments provided in the application. If there is any deviation change or addition to the research method or tools, a supplementary application for approval must be obtained

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards

GIBS MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee

APPENDIX 2

Informed consent form used in the study

INFORMED CONSENT

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.

I am conducting research on stakeholder engagement and threatened species conservation, and am trying to find out whether better or more effective measurement of engagement could lead to better outcomes for our threatened species.

*The interview is expected to last about an hour, and will help us collect data which could provide insights into our research. **Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.** All data will be reported without identifiers (names). If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.*

Researcher name: Steven Verwey
Email: 2816082@mygibs.co.za
Phone: +27 60 579 7915

Research Supervisor Name: Dr. Jill Bogie
Email: bogiej@gibs.co.za
Phone: +27 11 771 4000

Participants Name:
Email:
Phone:

Signature of participant: _____
Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX 3

List of participants (names excluded)

Table 14 - Detailed list of participants in this study

Participant	Unit of analysis group	Title / Qualification	Key threatened species Area	Experience within Protected Area	Experience: Years in threatened species conservation	Organisation
Participant 1	Professional	Founder	Various	Hluhluwe and Umfolozi & other Natal Parks	>30yrs	African insight and Africa Academy
Participant 2	Professional	Species Project Manager	Vultures	Transfrontier Parks southern Africa	>20yrs	Bird Life SA
Participant 3	Expert	Researcher /Coordinator/ PhD	Various	Transfrontier Conservation Areas southern Africa	>10yrs	Cirad
Participant 4	Expert	Lecturer / PhD	Cheetah and Wild Dog	Kruger National Park & others	>20yrs	CAT Specialist Group & Tshwane University of Technology
Participant 5	Professional	PhD	Various	Okavango Delta & others	>10yrs	Independent Environmental Consultant
Participant 6	Expert	Awareness coordinator	Cheetah	Kalahari	>10yrs	Kalahari Research and Conservation (CCB)

Participant	Unit of analysis group	Title / Qualification	Key threatened species Area	Experience within Protected Area	Experience: Years in threatened species conservation	Organisation
<i>Participant 7</i>	Professional	PhD	Elephants	Tuli Block and others	>20yrs	SANBI / IUCN Working Group for Elephants
<i>Participant 8</i>	Professional	Programme Coordinator	Cheetah	Kruger National Park and others	>10yrs	WWF
<i>Participant 9</i>	Professional	PhD / Senior Research Fellow	Plant and other vegetation	Okavango & Kruger National Park & various others in southern Africa	>20yrs	Okavango Research Institute / University of Botswana
<i>Participant 10</i>	Professional	CEO Free Me SA	Blue duiker and others	Timbavati, Kruger National Park and various others in southern Africa	>20yrs	Free Me SA
<i>Participant 11</i>	Expert	Social Scientist	Various	South African National Parks	>10yrs	SANParks
<i>Participant 12</i>	Professional	Community Liaison Officer	Cheetah and Lions	Okavango	>5yrs	Kalahari Research and Conservation (CCB)

APPENDIX 4

List of codes used in data analysis
(excludes subthemes for RQ4)

Table 15 - Codes, categories and theses developed by the researcher

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ1: Change in attitude	RQ1: Change in human characteristic	Results in attitude and/or behavioural change
RQ1: Change in behaviour	RQ1: Change in human characteristic	Results in attitude and/or behavioural change
RQ1: Create passion	RQ1: Change in human characteristic	Results in attitude and/or behavioural change
RQ1: Sustainable change	RQ1: Change in human characteristic RQ1: Long term	Results in attitude and/or behavioural change
RQ1: Open and honest engagements	RQ1: Consultative and honest process	Consultative, open and honest
RQ1: Stakeholder is consulted	RQ1: Consultative and honest process	Consultative, open and honest
RQ1: Stakeholders are heard	RQ1: Consultative and honest process	Consultative, open and honest
RQ1: Stakeholder buy in	RQ1: Create buy-in	Leads to stakeholder buy-in
RQ1: Don't impose an agenda	RQ1: Create buy-in RQ1: Consultative and honest process	Leads to stakeholder buy-in / Consultative and Honest Process
RQ1: Responsible people and champions	RQ1: Create champion amongst stakeholders	Leads to stakeholder buy-in
RQ1: Achieving what you set out to achieve	RQ1: Goals	Outcome orientated
RQ1: Can't meet everyone's needs	RQ1: Goals	Outcome orientated
RQ1: Results in an outcome	RQ1: Goals	Outcome orientated
RQ1: Informed decisions	RQ1: Leads to understanding	Produces understanding
RQ1: Stakeholders acknowledge benefits	RQ1: Leads to understanding	Produces understanding

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ1: to be abreast of what is going on	RQ1: Leads to understanding	Produces understanding
RQ1: Understanding of consequences for actions	RQ1: Leads to understanding	Produces understanding
RQ1: Done by a skilled person	RQ1: Led by a skilled facilitator	Process
RQ1: Takes time	RQ1: Long term	Long term process
RQ1: Benefits multiple parties	RQ1: Multiple beneficiary's	Mutually beneficial to multiple stakeholders
RQ1: Common ground	RQ1: Multiple beneficiary's	Mutually beneficial to multiple stakeholders
RQ1: Others interest at heart	RQ1: Multiple beneficiary's	Mutually beneficial to multiple stakeholders
RQ1: Diversity of Stakeholders	RQ1: Multiple stakeholders	Engagement with multiple and diverse stakeholders
RQ1: Engagement with powerful stakeholders	RQ1: Multiple stakeholders	Engagement with multiple and diverse stakeholders
RQ1: Include all stakeholders	RQ1: Multiple stakeholders	Engagement with multiple and diverse stakeholders
RQ1: Physical engagement	RQ1: Physical engagement	Requires active participation
RQ1: Role playing games	RQ1: Physical engagement	Requires active participation
RQ1: Targeted workshops	RQ1: Physical engagement	Requires active participation
RQ1: Workshops	RQ1: Physical engagement	Requires active participation
RQ1: Adaption of process	RQ1: Protocol	Long term, legitimate, process
RQ1: Build relationships before engaging	RQ1: Relationships develop	Produces trusting relationships

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ1: Electronic Engagement	RQ1: Protocol	Long term, legitimate, process
RQ1: Engagement is project specific	RQ1: Protocol	Long term, legitimate, process
RQ1: Follow engagement protocol	RQ1: Protocol	Long term, legitimate, process
RQ1: Legitimate engagement	RQ1: Protocol	Long term, legitimate, process
RQ1: Relationship develops	RQ1: Relationships develop	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Visible Relationships	RQ1: Relationships develop	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Relationships take time	RQ1: Relationships develop RQ1: Long term	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Active participants	RQ1: Requirements	Requires active participation
RQ1: Multiple needs	RQ1: Stakeholders have multiple needs	Mutually beneficial to multiple stakeholders
RQ1: Stakeholder expectations are met	RQ1: Stakeholders have multiple needs	Mutually beneficial to multiple stakeholders
RQ1: Credibility	RQ1: Trust created	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Development of trust	RQ1: Trust created	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Multiple ways to develop trust	RQ1: Trust created	Produces trusting relationships
RQ1: Trust takes times	RQ1: Trust created RQ1: Long term	Produces trusting relationships
RQ2: Apathy	RQ2: Apathetic Stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Compliance exercise	RQ2: Apathetic Stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ2: Passion	RQ2: Apathetic Stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Professional conflict	RQ2: Apathetic Stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Uninterested stakeholders	RQ2: Apathetic Stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Donations and grants	RQ2: Finances	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Finances limited	RQ2: Finances	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Funding	RQ2: Finances	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Lack of knowledge	RQ2: Knowledge and skills	Knowledge, understanding and skills
RQ2: Local knowledge	RQ2: Knowledge and skills	Knowledge, understanding and skills
RQ2: Skilled people	RQ2: Knowledge and skills	Knowledge, understanding and skills
RQ2: Western mind-set	RQ2: Knowledge and skills	Knowledge, understanding and skills
RQ2: Legacy issues	RQ2: Legacy issues	Legacy issues
RQ2: Tradition	RQ2: Legacy issues	Legacy issues
RQ2: Maintaining relationships	RQ2: Maintaining relationships	Sustainable relationships
RQ2: Poor relationships	RQ2: Maintaining relationships	Sustainable relationships
RQ2: Relationships assist in achieving goals	RQ2: Maintaining relationships	Sustainable relationships
RQ2: Failing to include all stakeholders	RQ2: Misalignment with stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Incorrect Stakeholder	RQ2: Misalignment with stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Mutual benefits	RQ2: Misalignment with stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ2: Stakeholder Acceptance	RQ2: Misalignment with stakeholders	Aligned and interested stakeholders
RQ2: Poor policy	RQ2: Poor policy	Legacy issues
RQ2: Communication	RQ2: Requires Communication	Communication
RQ2: Dialogue helps	RQ2: Requires Communication	Communication
RQ2: Business	RQ2: Sustainability of Business	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Creative solutions	RQ2: Sustainability of Business	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Fixed mind-set	RQ2: Sustainability of Business	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Insufficient resources	RQ2: Sustainability of Business	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Misallocation of resources	RQ2: Sustainability of Business	Sustainable Business
RQ2: Engagement fatigue	RQ2: Time	Time
RQ2: Lack of time	RQ2: Time	Time
RQ2: Understanding of engagement	RQ2: Understanding of engagement	Knowledge, understanding and skills
RQ3: Achievement of deliverables	RQ3: Achievement of deliverables	Progress towards deliverables
RQ3: 'tick-box' exercise	RQ3: Achievement of deliverables	Progress towards deliverables
RQ3: Avoid engagements	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: More stakeholders want to participate	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ3: Participation by influential stakeholders	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Questions and interest	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Stakeholder interest	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Stakeholders voluntarily participate	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Stakeholders initiate communication	RQ3: Active & Interested stakeholders RQ3: Open communication and dialogue	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Attendance	RQ3: Attendance	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Change in attitude over time	RQ3: Change in human characteristics	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Misunderstanding stakeholder needs	RQ3: Defined stakeholder needs	Communication
RQ3: Engagement	RQ3: Engagement	Stakeholders are visible and actively participate
RQ3: Feeling of mutual benefaction	RQ3: Feeling of mutual benefaction	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Single benefaction	RQ3: Feeling of mutual benefaction	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Happy feeling	RQ3: Happy feeling	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ3: Soft indicators	RQ3: Happy feeling	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Conflict amongst stakeholders	RQ3: Healthy conflict	Healthy levels of conflict
RQ3: Engagement seems too easy	RQ3: Healthy conflict	Healthy levels of conflict
RQ3: Participation from multiple stakeholders	RQ3: Multiple stakeholders	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Single stakeholder dominating	RQ3: Multiple stakeholders	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Communication	RQ3: Open communication and dialogue	Dialogue between various stakeholders is evident
RQ3: Continued dialogue	RQ3: Open communication and dialogue	Dialogue between various stakeholders is evident
RQ3: Feeling of being heard / contributing	RQ3: Open communication and dialogue	Dialogue between various stakeholders is evident
RQ3: Only top down engagement	RQ3: Open communication and dialogue	Dialogue between various stakeholders is evident
RQ3: Negative attitude	RQ3: Positivity amongst stakeholders	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Positive feedback after engagement	RQ3: Positivity amongst stakeholders	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Positive narrative	RQ3: Positivity amongst stakeholders	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Positive attitude	RQ3: Positivity amongst stakeholders	Positive sentiment amongst stakeholders
RQ3: Staff retention	RQ3: Staff retention	Evaluation metric

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ3: Decline in relationship	RQ3: Strengthening relationships	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Poor relationships	RQ3: Strengthening relationships	Multiple stakeholders are engaged
RQ3: Lack of varied opinions	RQ3: Variety of opinions	Healthy levels of conflict
RQ4: Better understanding	RQ4: Better understanding	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Change over time	RQ4: Change over time	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Current method insufficient	RQ4: Current method insufficient	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: In practice measuring is not done often	RQ4: Current method insufficient	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Currently not measured correctly	RQ4: Currently not measured correctly	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Currently measures outcomes not engagement	RQ4: Currently Practices	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Depends on your objectives	RQ4: Depends on your objectives	Principles
RQ4: Identify objectives / outcomes	RQ4: Depends on your objectives	Principles
RQ4: Measure the right things	RQ4: Depends on your objectives	Principles
RQ4: Metrics developed with objectives	RQ4: Depends on your objectives	Principles
RQ4: Difficult to measure	RQ4: Difficult to measure	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Hard	RQ4: Difficult to measure	Difficult to do or unsure how

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ4: Done independently	RQ4: Done independently	Principles
RQ4: Gauge human responses and feedback	RQ4: Measure through informal discussion	Instruments
RQ4: Indicate future success	RQ4: Indicate future success	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Informal	RQ4: Informal	Difficult to do or unsure
RQ4: Measure through informal discussion	RQ4: Measure through informal discussion	Instruments
RQ4: Show of hands	RQ4: Surveys, Questionnaires	Instruments
RQ4: Makes stakeholders accountable	RQ4: Makes stakeholders accountable	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Measure agreement	RQ4: Measure agreement	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure attendance	RQ4: Measure attendance	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure attitude	RQ4: Measure attitude	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Behaviour change	RQ4: Measure behaviour change	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Proxies indicating behaviour change	RQ4: Measure behaviour change	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure feelings	RQ4: Measure feelings	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure participation	RQ4: Measure participation	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure phone calls, texts from stakeholders	RQ4: Measure phone calls, texts from stakeholders	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure quality	RQ4: Measure quality	Evaluation metric

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ4: Measure quality of connections between stakeholders	RQ4: Measure quality of connections between stakeholders	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure regular contact with stakeholders	RQ4: Measure regular contact with stakeholders	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure relationship	RQ4: Measure relationship	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measure stakeholder attention	RQ4: Measure stakeholder attention	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measuring contribution to outcomes	RQ4: Measuring contribution to outcomes	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Measuring is important	RQ4: Measuring is important	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Surveys, Questionnaires	RQ4: Surveys, Questionnaires	Instruments
RQ4: Metrics (quantitative) not useful	RQ4: Metrics (quantitative) not useful	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Must be cost effective	RQ4: Must be cost effective	Principles
RQ4: Not a 'tick-box' exercise	RQ4: Not a 'tick-box' exercise	Principles
RQ4: Not developed enough	RQ4: Not developed enough	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Patterns and trends	RQ4: Patterns and trends	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Positive organisational scholarship	RQ4: Positive organisational scholarship	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Save time and money in future	RQ4: Save time and money in future	Importance of evaluation

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Themes</u>
RQ4: Social metric	RQ4: Social metric	Evaluation metric
RQ4: Subjective	RQ4: Subjective	Difficult to do or unsure
RQ4: Unsure	RQ4: Unsure	Difficult to do or unsure how
RQ4: Continuous improvement	RQ4: Why	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Know when objectives are achieved	RQ4: Why	Importance of evaluation
RQ4: Provide a clear understanding of who the stakeholders are	RQ4: Why	Importance of evaluation