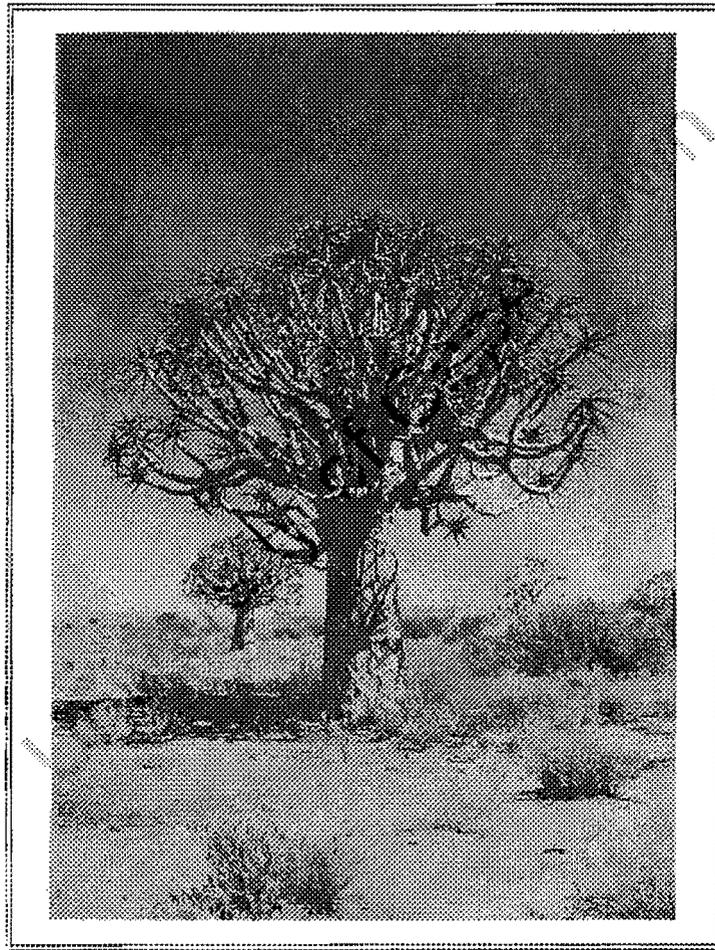


**AN ECOTOURISM APPROACH
TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE
GREEN KALAHARI DISTRICT OF THE
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.**



David Owen

Dissertation submitted to the University of Cape Town in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Philosophy in Environmental and Geographical Science.

May 1999

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As a consequence of the M.Phil programme and my participation in the Feasibility Study, on behalf of the Peace Parks Foundation, I have become vastly more aware that conservation can no longer take place, in many cases, purely to champion the cause of preservation. Conservation must be viewed in light of all other land uses and must compete on the basis of its sustainability and viability. Conversely, all other land use development options need to be viewed in a similar fashion, so that assessment for all options is carried out on an equal playing field.

In addition, this study made me acutely aware of the complexities contained within the tourism industry and the difficulties involved in implementing sustainable tourism.

This particular study gave me the opportunity to meet an array of individuals, groups and specialists, which was a privilege and priceless experience.

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Abbreviations Used

| | |
|---------------|---|
| AFNP | Augrabies Falls National Park |
| DEAT | Department of Environment and Tourism |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| EMF | Environmental Management Framework |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GEAR | National Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy |
| GTFCFA | proposed Gariep Transfrontier Conservation Area |
| ICDP | Integrated Community Development Programme |
| IEM | Integrated Environmental Management |
| IUCN | The World Conservation Union |
| KGNP | Kalahari/Gemsbok National Park |
| LAPC | Land and Agriculture Policy Centre |
| LDC | Less Developed Country |
| LODC | Lower Orange District Council |
| NCDS | Northern Cape Development Strategy |
| NCTA | Northern Cape Tourism Association |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| PDC | Previously Disadvantaged Community |
| PPF | Peace Parks Foundation |
| RDP | Reconstruction and Development Plan |
| SANP | South African National Parks |
| SATOUR | South African Tourism Board |
| SMME | Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise |
| TFCA | Trans Frontier Conservation Area |
| TGJMC | Trans-Gariep Joint Management Committee |
| VFR | Visiting Family and Friends |
| WTO | World Tourism Organisation |
| WTTC | World Travel and Tourism Council |

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the study

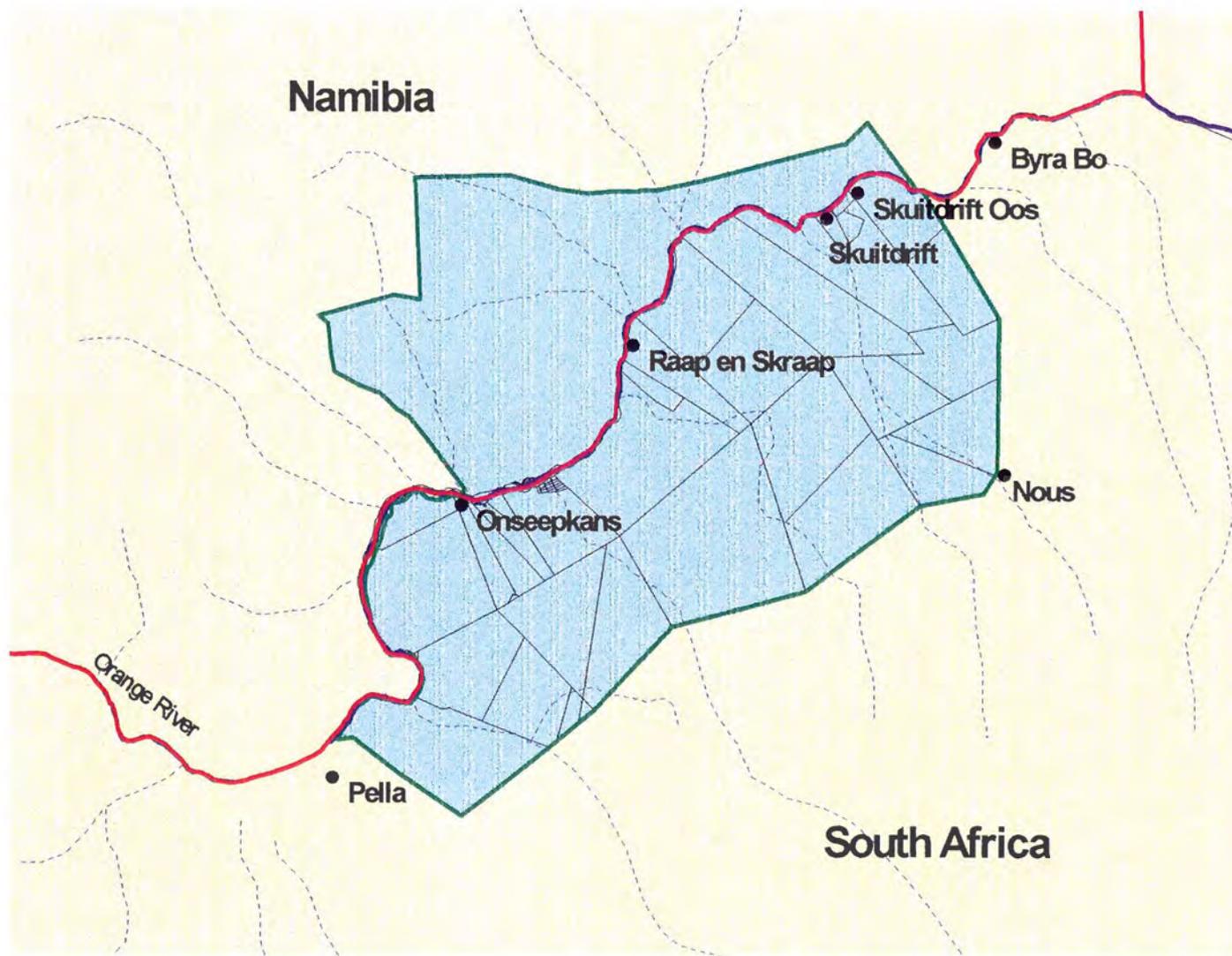
This dissertation arises from a study commissioned by the Peace Parks Foundation to investigate the feasibility of establishing a new conservation area known as the Gariep Transfrontier Conservation Area (GTFCA), entitled; **Feasibility Study of the Proposed Gariep Transfrontier Conservation Area: Environmental Overview of the South African Section**. The proposed GTFCA encompasses an area of 2,774 km² (277,400 hectares) straddling either side of the Orange River, which represents the international border between South Africa and Namibia.

The author of this dissertation was a member of a small team of postgraduate students from the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science at the University of Cape Town who spent six months, from November 1997 to May 1998, focusing on the South African section of the proposed GTFCA, which covers approximately 2,000km² and is situated in the Northern Cape (MAP 1).

The proposed GTFCA is one of seven TFCA's which were initially identified by the Peace Parks Foundation, with the assistance of South African National Parks, KwaZulu-Natal Conservation Services, and conservation agencies of neighbouring countries (MAP 2). In contrast to the other proposed TFCA's, the Gariep TFCA does not have conservation status, and, according to a Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) preliminary report (Gelderblom *et al.*, 1997), this region has been neglected as an area of study in the past. The CSIR preliminary report highlighted the lack of data about the Gariep area, particularly with respect to its socio-economic profile, the wildlife and plants, global importance and its cultural history.

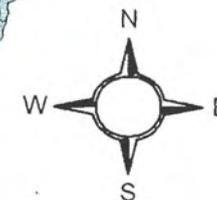
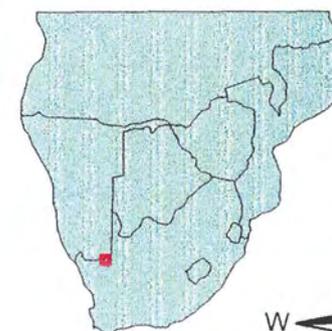
MAP 1

Proposed Gariep TFCA



PROPOSED GARIEP TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)

- Settlements
- International border
- ∩ Orange river
- - - Ephemeral rivers
- ▬ TFCA boundary
- Farm boundaries
- TFCA

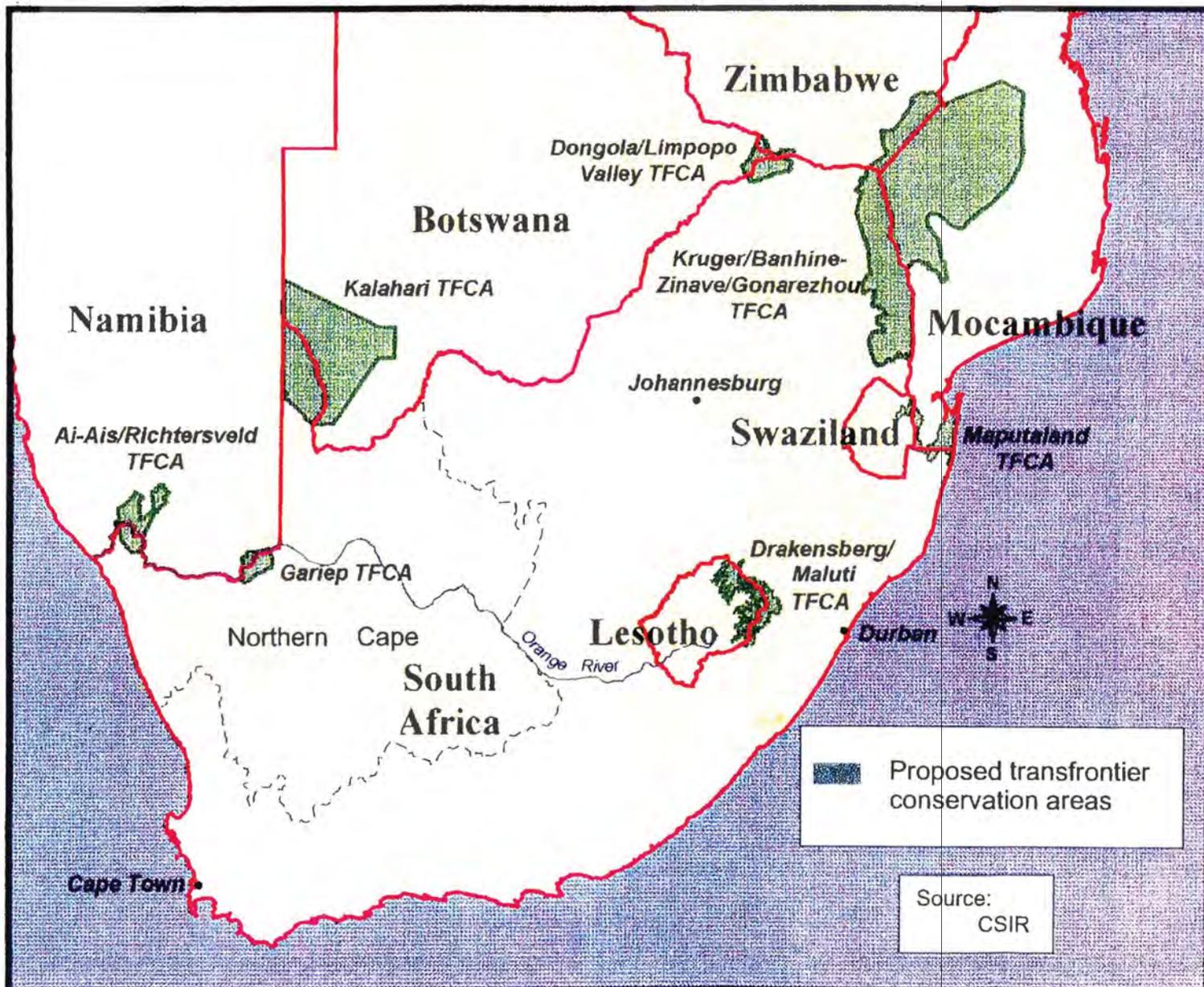


30 0 30 60 Kilometers

N

MAP 2

SOUTHERN AFRICA PROPOSED TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREAS



The Feasibility Report addressed the area's conservation value, the land ownership details and future land use scenarios, and consequently described the major issues affecting the proposed Gariep TFCA. It is intended to serve as the basis for an informed decision on the feasibility of establishing the Gariep TFCA in accordance with the objective of the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF). This study reaffirms the Feasibility Report's main conclusion, that the area deserves to be conserved because it contains features that are unique, threatened by present land uses, or underconserved within South Africa.

1.2. The Purpose of this Study

During the course of the Feasibility Report it became clear that the benefit from conserving this area, which had the greatest potential for economic development, was tourism. Internationally, the vast majority of conserved areas are in a similar position, and provide for, essentially, one type of tourism – **Nature-based tourism**.

Nature-based tourism has the potential, as an approach to sustainable development, to harness the areas conservation value in such a way that it acts as a foundation for employment, economic development and social upliftment. Achieving these goals will contribute significantly to the total benefit of conservation and could prove that conservation, in this instance, can not only pay its way, but can also surpass other land use option for this area.

Adding to this potential is the fact that, globally, there has been an intensifying focus on all things environmental. This includes a growing awareness of the heritage that Africa has bestowed on the world and part of this new focus has manifested itself in tourism. As such, nature-based tourism presents South Africa, the Northern Cape and the Green Kalahari, in which the proposed GTFCA is situated, with growth potential that is the envy of many tourist destinations. In order to maximise this potential, it has been recognised that, in this highly competitive market, truly unique and authentic tourism products need

to be created that have marketing potential. While, in order to maximise the benefits; tourism development needs to be sustainable, participatory and viable.

The Open Africa Initiative has suggested the concept of Afrikatourism, which represents a mode of tourism specific to Africa that could provide the avenue to capitalise on these potential advantages:

"You can be an ordinary tourist anywhere; you can even be an ecotourist anywhere. But there is only one place in the world where you can be an Afrikatourist."

(Noel De Villiers, 1998)

The aim of the Afrikatourism concept is not to prove that Africa is better, but that it is different. The vision is to develop a type of tourism that is specific to Africa's characteristics and circumstances. Using this concept can improve awareness and pride in all things African so that this difference can be turned into a valuable asset for others to appreciate and Africans to benefit from.

In South Africa the concepts relating to an African mode of tourism are embraced in government thinking in what is termed 'Responsible Tourism'. Open Africa's suggestion is to give Responsible Tourism an African Brand - Afrikatourism. In short, Afrikatourism is a logical extension to what the rest of the world calls ecotourism. It is envisaged that the Afrikatourism strategy can link all Africa's splendours through a continuous network of "routes" from the Cape to Cairo (Noel De Villiers, 1998).

This concept runs parallel with the goals of the Peace Parks Foundation, of uniting neighbouring countries with the common aim of using tourism as an avenue to economic development. The industry relies on creative and multiple partnerships at a range of levels and it is this characteristic that has given tourism the label of the world's "peace industry" (D'Amore 1990).

The objective of the Peace Parks Foundation is to contribute to converting the transfrontier conservation potential of Africa into working examples of what can be achieved through co-operation. Without being an owner or an operator, the Foundation aims to be a catalyst for adding exploitable value to the natural assets which Southern Africa possesses.

“This means tackling the two inextricably related vulnerabilities of conservation in Africa” (Peace Parks Annual Review 1997):-

- **Firstly**, there is the need to generate popular support for conservation. The only way this can be achieved is by creating a widespread realisation that conservation can offer greater benefits than some present land uses and is therefore a realistic land use option which can support development.
- **Secondly**, protected areas must be economically viable, especially at a regional level. Protected areas need to be economically sustainable so that the wildlife authorities and the local community can manage the land for conservation.

(Peace Parks Annual Review 1997)

However, whilst it is true that nature-based tourism is a recognised way of harnessing conservation value and a proven tool for successful development in emerging economies, if tourism development is not planned and managed properly it can cause direct and indirect irreversible impacts; environmentally, economically and socially. There are countless examples where programmes of tourism development have been embarked on with the belief that it was a “smokeless” industry that creates employment and training in rural areas, adds to Gross National Product and generates foreign exchange earnings. The reality has been that in many cases local communities and the natural environment have not benefited from conservation due to a lack of planning and management, and over exploitation.

It became clear while working on the Feasibility Report that these negative impacts from tourism need to be acknowledged, mitigated against and prevented for successful sustainable tourism development to occur. For tourism to achieve its maximum sustainable potential a Regional Strategic Tourism Plan is required that integrates and coordinates the tourist attractions of the region and manages environmental resource use. In other words, the success of the proposed GTFCA is not only dependent on the activities that take place within its boundaries but also on the successful implementation of a strategy towards tourism development in the surrounding region. A strategy that champions conservation as a sustainable land use and at the same time, creates a mutually beneficial environment for **appropriate** economic growth.

It is postulated that an ecotourism approach to tourism development in the Green Kalahari can provide the framework for an appropriate and sustainable form of development. **Ecotourism**, as a form of nature-based tourism, is being presented by a diverse number of individuals and organisations as an important force for responsible conservation and development. Swanson (1992) believes that ecotourism could be a useful component of locally directed and participatory rural development. Nevertheless, ecotourism can only be one element of conservation and development and cannot be a panacea (Swanson 1992). It needs to be integrated into an all-encompassing development plan. This is the challenge that will determine the future success of tourism in this part of South Africa.

1.3. Objectives of this dissertation

Using the Feasibility Report as a platform, this study hopes to contribute to the establishment of the GTFCA, focusing on how to reach the objective of the PPF.

It must be noted at this point that there is more to opting for conservation as a land use than just tourism. The Feasibility Report compared conservation and tourism with present land uses in the proposed GTFCA, on the basis of sustainability and economic viability. The first part of this study assesses the benefits and costs within this comparison in more

depth, and discusses where these benefits and costs will be distributed. This will give greater understanding of what is required in order to satisfy *'the two inextricably related vulnerabilities of conservation in Africa'*, as mentioned above.

The study will then aim to provide a reasoned argument for the creation of a set of ecotourism principles upon which tourism can be developed sustainably in the Green Kalahari. Adopting these principles could act as a foundation of support for the proposed Gariep TFCA, if it is established, and will integrate other conserved areas into a responsible tourism development strategy. This is in keeping with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity: Policy Objective 1.4:

"Promote socially and ecologically sustainable development in the areas adjacent to or within protected areas" (Appendix 1)

An integrated sustainable approach to tourism development will be important to the success of the proposed Gariep TFCA because it will:

- Provide protection for the Buffer Zone - the delineation of the boundaries of the proposed area is to a large degree arbitrary. A full understanding of the area required to sustain the ecosystems contained within these boundaries is not presently known;
- Create the opportunity of keeping as many of the benefits of conservation local; and
- Improve the chances of the proposed area becoming economically viable and hopefully reduce the time needed to attain this situation.

In order to investigate the proposal that ecotourism can be a sustainable approach to tourism development for the Green Kalahari region of the Northern Cape the following objectives are proposed:

- To investigate current land uses within the proposed Gariep TFCA and compare these against the benefits and costs of the conservation option;
- To provide a background to current strategies for tourism development in South Africa. This will show the important role tourism is expected to play in the economic growth and redistribution objectives of the national government;
- To introduce the proposal that ecotourism can be a suitable approach to tourism development for the region, that can provide mutual benefits for conservation and economic growth based on a set of performance principles;
- To provide a review and analysis of the current situation regarding tourism development in the Northern Cape and the Green Kalahari, to determine the suitability as well as the constraints that may exist, and thus
- To determine, based on the principles of ecotourism, what actions the Green Kalahari needs to carry out to overcome these constraints in order to implement ecotourism development.

It is hoped that this study can support tourism development in the Green Kalahari by providing a set of performance principles which can act as guidelines for a sustainable approach to tourism development, in line with the unique development imperatives facing South Africa today. This will highlight considerations that will need to be addressed if conservation of this area is to attain its maximum potential and play a role in the integrated development of the region.

1.4. Approach and Methods

1.4.1. Theoretical Approach

A literature search was undertaken in order to review policies and definitions concerning nature-based tourism and ecotourism in particular. Various journals were consulted with a view to identifying general potentials and constraints associated with nature-based tourism and its contribution to sustainable economic growth, especially in less developed countries such as South Africa.

Research relied heavily on discussions while gathering information for the Feasibility Report and telephone interviews afterwards. Consultation included a wide range of stakeholders and informants from relevant organisations and individuals at national, provincial and local levels involved in tourism.

Certain concepts form the basis of this study which do not carry precise definition. Therefore while this study aims to be objective, the goal strived for in most scientific endeavour, the author is aware that subjective biases and assumptions are evident.

1.4.2. Sustainable Development

Concepts derived from sustainable development theories underpin the approach to this study. The concepts of 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' originated from the 1987 United Nations Commission Report - the Brundtland Report, 'Our Common Future', which intended to form a basis for integrated policy making for future decades. Although these concepts mean different things to different people, and at times are abused in order to promote vested interests, the fundamental principle underlying sustainability is that systems will only survive if there is an understanding of their interdependence (Anderson 1994, cited in Kilele 1996).

Concepts of sustainability include 'intergenerational equity', the challenge to live within the carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystems in meeting needs without compromising those of future generations (Yeld 1997). South African national policy also concurs with this concept:

"...tourism development, management and any other tourism activity which optimises the economic and other societal benefits available in the present without jeopardising the potential for similar benefits in the future" (White Paper: The Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, 1996)

There is not enough empirical evidence or experience on which to base a solid definition, as the meaning itself is evolving. However, sustainable development is seen as dependent on environmental improvement and equity, rather than on growth alone (Kilele, 1994). Sustainable development is the intuitively solid *'handrail that guides us along as we proceed toward development'* (Tickell, 1991, cited in Holmberg and Sandbrook, 1992). In other words *'development that does not meet the intergenerational equity criterion simply must be bad development, as common sense would (should) tell us'* (Holmberg and Sandbrook, 1992). This is relevant to all tourism development since its success and longevity is dependent on its basic resource base - the environment. Further more, this involves the capacity of users, including institutional structures, to govern and manage the environment sustainably.

Three attributes, making up a broad definition of sustainable tourism (Bramwell, B. *et al.*, 1994):

1. **For the host area**, it should provide carefully planned economic growth with satisfying jobs, without dominating the economy. It must not abuse the environment and should be architecturally respectable. Decision making should be local and traditional values and societies should be maintained. The benefits of tourism should be diffused through many communities and not concentrated;

2. **For the holidaymakers**, it should provide a good value, harmonious and satisfying holiday experience. The experience must respect the intelligence of both the visitor and the host population;
3. **For the operator**, responsibility will be the key to success. Responsibility entails accepting and building up the role of the go-between – explaining the need for the long-term ecological care of the tourism resource – scenery, place, people, fauna and flora – to both the host people and the visitors.

1.4.3. A Broad Definition of the Environment in Planning

In parallel with the Feasibility Report, which forms the basis of this study, a broad definition of the term 'environment' is adopted. This is in line with the principles of Integrated Environmental Management (1992)(IEM), and the new Environmental Management Framework Document (1998).

A broad definition is necessary to ensure an holistic consideration of the implications of tourism development because tourism is such a complex of interrelated activities. Therefore planning must encompass all of these activities, their interrelationships, and their demands on environmental resources and services some of which are compatible with one another while others are antagonistic. In addition, tourism development must be embedded within a comprehensive planning framework for the whole region in order to avoid the unwanted consequences of conflict amongst incompatible land uses, the overdevelopment of one activity at the expense of the others and of the region itself. A planning framework will therefore provide for a reasonable allocation of local environmental resources and services among competing uses directed towards maximising and achieving sustainable development of an area (Briassoulis and van der Straaten 1992).

1.5. Research Methodology

Descriptive information as well as quantitative data relating to the various components of this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources, using literature reviews and data collected for the Feasibility Report which included personal interviews and observations.

The literature indicated in the reference list provided background information on tourism, ecotourism, and environmental economics in South Africa and other countries. Extensive use was made of tourism studies of the Northern Cape.

A wide range of stakeholders and informants from relevant organisations were interviewed for the Feasibility Report and additional interviews took place by telephone. These interviews were based on a set of key questions for the interviewee which attempted to be open-ended and exploratory.

1.6. Limitations

The fact that the proposed area has not been granted conservation status means that this study is based on potential and qualified assumptions. Whilst this is a limitation regarding a detailed assessment of the proposed area, it does not take away from the fact that many of these assumptions are relevant to all conserved areas.

At the time of collating information, up-to-date tourism statistics were unavailable. This does not detract from assessing the trends taking place within South African tourism, but it does limit the accuracy of the analysis.

1.7 Planning and Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation is presented in chapters, in a format which starts with a Benefit-Cost Analysis of conserving the proposed area, to a macro level and then moves on to concentrate on the study area, the Lower Orange District, 'The Green Kalahari Region', as a case study.

1.8. National Context

The South African economy is the largest and most developed in Africa. It occupies only 4% of the continent's surface area yet accounts for 40% of all industrial output and 25% of Gross Domestic Product, but has some large problems to overcome (South Africa Focus, The Official South African Tourism Directory, 1998).

Five years have passed since the first democratically free elections took place in South Africa and the government is determined to improve the living standards for the majority of South Africans. Despite the extent of political transformation that has taken place millions of South Africans are still living below internationally recognised minimum living standards. The government quest is for a successful strategy that will provide the greatest sustainable benefit for the greatest number of people, in which market forces have the upper hand so that growth can close the wealth gap, improve equity, and generate employment and empowerment.

The way these problems are being dealt with has attracted international attention simply because South Africa represents the cutting edge of where the First World meets the Third World. The willingness to break from the past and create a genuine commitment to a better "future for all" means that the North - South divide, which bedevils progress in international environmental forums is being tackled in resourceful ways. The National Government approach to try and redress past injustices is through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which has been adopted as an overarching framework for socio-economic development.

This makes South Africa one of the most exciting frontiers for achieving a practical, hands-on balance between the pressures of social and economic needs and the long-term conservation and management of natural resources.

The government's attempts to stimulate growth and shift dependence from gold in particular has brought the focus on other economic sectors to carry South Africa forward and tourism has been highlighted as having great potential to play a role.

Tourism, since 1994, has been seen as a catalyst for social change and healing by the state, the private sector, and community organisations. This is quite ironic given the fact that many of apartheid's most successful and brutal achievements were focused on the leisure industry, in particular tourism (Goudie *et al.* 1998). Consequently, the problems of inequity and deprivation, which the RDP seeks to redress, are entrenched in tourism in South Africa. Thus:

"The nature of the apartheid system, under which the majority of South Africans were excluded from economic and political activity, has meant that most South Africans have neither been potential tourists, nor have they been involved in developing their communities as potential tourist destinations." (Dor 1995).

Tourism is being increasingly held up as a major growth area of the South African economy (Fabricius 1995). However, it is critical that this growth in tourism serves to redress, and not reinforce, the evident inequitable and exclusionary nature of the tourism industry, as inherited from the past, so that tourism can contribute to job creation and to community empowerment (Gentle, cited in Goudie 1998).

As a consequence the government sees the opportunities and reforms possible through tourism today extending beyond the anticipated economic potential to include a means to promote *"political stability.....harmony and goodwill"* (Business Day, 1994).

This study will attempt to show how an ecotourism approach, based on performance principles to tourism development, can play a positive role in achieving the aims mentioned above in the Green Kalahari region of the Northern Cape.

CHAPTER 2

A Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Total Economic Value of Conserving the Proposed Gariep TFCA

2. AN ANALYSIS OF THE BENEFITS AND COSTS OF CONSERVING THE PROPOSED GARIEP TFCA

2.1. Introduction

Conserved areas provide many more potential benefits other than tourism. Whilst tourism is seen as having the greatest potential to provide positive sustainable economic benefits to a conserved area, these benefits do not represent the total value. The fact that many tourists pay far less to experience conserved areas than they are actually prepared to pay means that the tourists are retaining most of these economic benefits (Dixon and Sherman 1990; Lindberg 1991). Correspondingly the host region or country is capturing only a small amount of the benefits of conservation. But of critical importance is the distinction between tourism's economic impact and its economic value. The economic impact is reflected by the total expenditure by tourists, along with the increase in employment and foreign exchange earnings. However, some countries, such as Tanzania, centralise the revenue from protected area tourism for national programmes rather than deploying this money back into conservation and local tourism development. Thus losing the opportunity to generate local awareness of the value of conservation. Whilst the economic value of tourism is likely to be much higher, especially in the case of low-cost protected area tourism. Therefore, to determine the true economic value from protected area tourism it is necessary to measure aggregate consumer's surplus.

This chapter intends to explore all the potential benefits and costs accruing from conserving the proposed Gariiep TFCA. These will be described in a theoretical framework, supplemented by some empirical evidence from sources within South Africa. The assessment will provide an understanding of the need to put forward strategies that attempt to capture as many of the benefits that make up the aggregate consumer's surplus as locally as possible.

2.2. Limitations of placing Economic Values on Environmental Resources

Putting economic values on all the potential benefits of conservation is an issue that has attracted the attention of environmental economists for some time and many problems have still to be resolved. Consequently, trying to justify the reasons for conserving the proposed Gariep TFCA in purely economic terms can not be done completely. But, for conservation at large, it is considered to be of vital importance that attempts are made to incorporate conservation into economic decision-making so that a more holistic and integrated approach can be taken to assess economic growth.

There are several schools of thought as to the extent to which economics is capable of incorporating environmental considerations within economic modelling and whether these results have any validity. There are the 'environmental moralists' (O'Riordan 1986) who deny that the environment should be viewed as a commodity and that man should be striving for the ideal of coexistence between humans and nature so that no value for the environment is required at all. While there are those, like Pearce (1994), who claim that through bioeconomics substantial progress has been made in attaching values and that Benefit - Cost Analysis is already of considerable use as a decision-making tool. This type of analysis is claimed to have gone some way towards building a bridge between the environmentalists and economists because monetary value creates "common ground". However, this approach will never be able to value environmental resources in monetary terms completely.

Norgaard (1989), on the other hand, states that the properties of ecological systems run counter to those of the 'atomistic-mechanical world view' of neo-classical economics. He claims that there needs to be a 'paradigm shift' of the whole system to a more ecumenical view in which environment and development issues are given equal consideration.

Amongst the properties of environmental resources that cause problems in neo-classical economics are:

- There is no perfect information and therefore consumers do not act rationally. This is a fundamental assumption of neo-classical economics;
- Many environmental goods and services cannot be divided and owned since they have a symbiotic relationship, which is constantly evolving over time. In addition, economic models can not resemble the complexities of environmental relationships;
- Environmental systems are never in a state of equilibrium and can incur changes which are irreversible, altering the whole system. Economics is not adapted to consider total change but rather has a reductionist view of resources and their utility, based on the concept of margins.
- Environmental values are often based on perception of 'needs'. But 'needs' can be ranked in different societies because priorities can range from basic needs to aesthetic needs (Maslow, 1954 cited in Redclift, 1987).

These problems associated with environmental resources present difficulties within the normal working of the open market and are termed "market failures". As a result, some of the benefits accruing to society from activities both within and outside a conserved area are often underestimated or ignored completely. Because only a small portion of the benefits from conserved areas are 'captured' in monetary terms, the costs of protection can appear to be large both from the perspective of direct capital outlays to establish the area and the opportunity costs of foregoing the alternative development options.

In South Africa, environmental economics is still a relatively new and unexplored field and there are few economic studies of the interaction between conserved areas, tourism and economic development. Although environmental economic approaches and techniques, such as *cost benefit analysis* and *opportunity cost analysis* have been

successfully used to evaluate conflicting land use options in several cases, such as the St. Lucia debate, where environmental economic approaches were used to evaluate the relative benefits of ecotourism for the area in the argument against mining (Review Panel Report, 1993). The benefits of ecotourism, both direct and indirect were found to be greater than mining in the long term.

Cowling and others are using environmental economics methods in order to put a value on fynbos, particularly its value from tourism, and thereby encourage its preservation. Cowling predicts that tourist spending in the Western Cape as a result of the attraction of the unique fynbos vegetation would make plant conservation a highly competitive form of land use.

"This strategy could do most of all to safeguard the touristic glories of this 0.02% of the earth's land surface. Could South Africa's Rand belt, with its mineral output worth \$14 billion a year, eventually be matched by the Commercial Muscle of the Cape Floral Kingdom?". (Cowling and Richardson, 1995).

A further example is provided in Kenya (Ibed), where land in National Parks was given an economic value above other options. It was estimated to earn R112 per hectare compared with R3.60 per hectare were it used for agriculture.

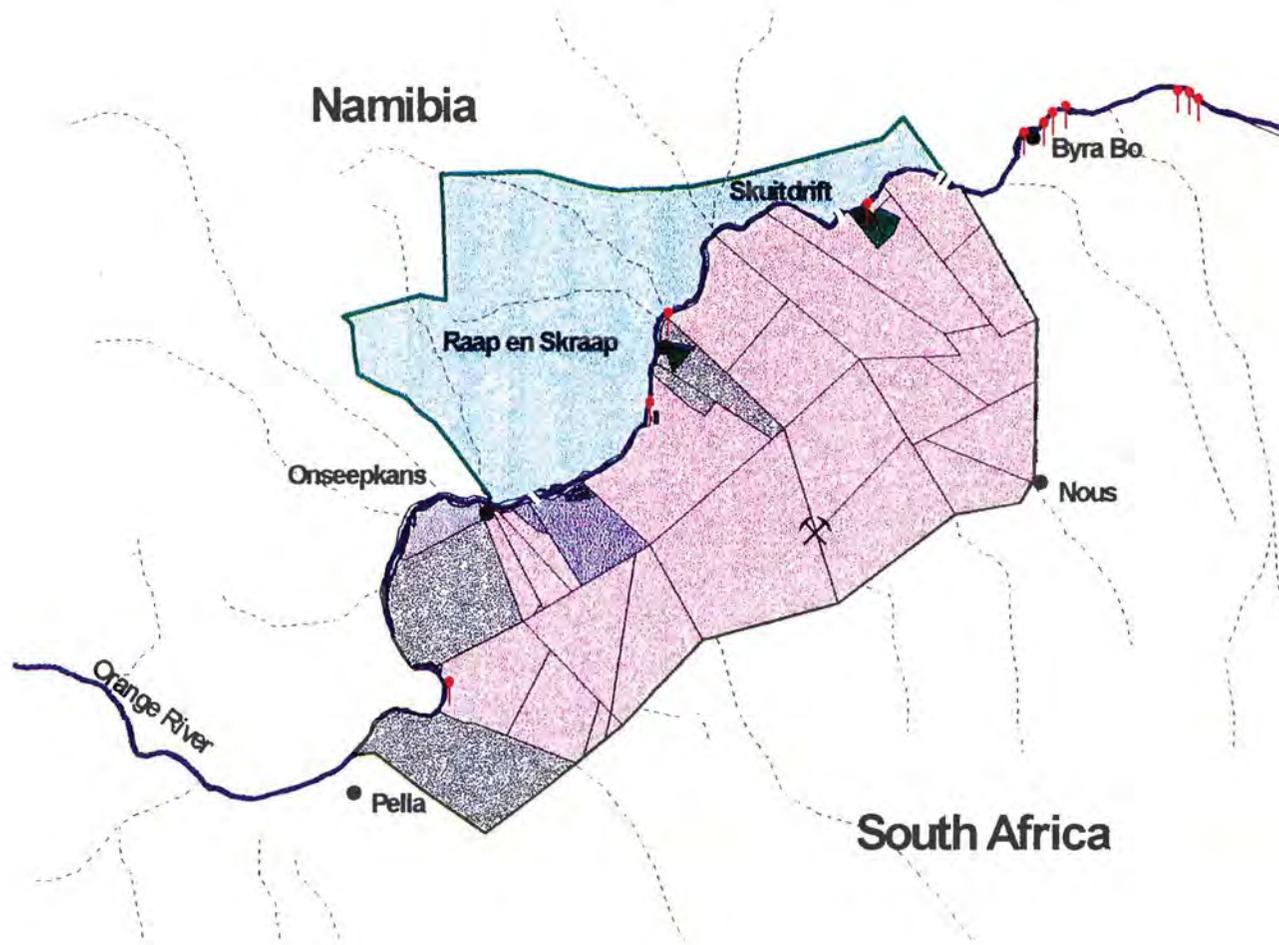
Therefore an economic approach can provide useful inputs to several key questions:

- What are the benefits from conserving an area? Who capture these benefits? How can more benefits be captured locally and nationally?
- What are the costs of establishing and maintaining a conserved area? Who incurs these costs?
- What options are available for increasing the contribution of conserved areas to social and economic development, especially in local areas?

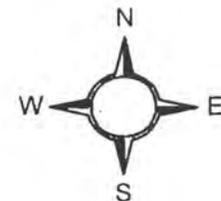
MAP 3

Farming Types & Other Activities

PROPOSED GARIEP TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)



-  Mines
-  Weirs
-  Waterpumps
-  Settlements
-  Viticulture
-  Stock
-  Fallow
-  Game
-  Irrigation
-  Unknown
-  Orange river
-  TFCA boundary
-  Ephemeral rivers
-  Farm boundaries



The benefits and costs of conserving the South African section of the proposed GTFCA will now be described in comparison with the present land uses in the area: Viticulture, Stock farming and Mining. There are three farms stocked with game, but since these do not create any noticeable impacts they are regarded, for the sake of this study, as unimportant (Map 3).

This analysis aims to act as an inducement, showing that if this area is conserved, it has the potential to be the most sustainable land use option and has the potential to be more viable on the basis of its Total Economic Value. A range of studies, both local and international, support the belief that, as a form of industrial development, nature-based tourism is well suited to rural areas, which have been neglected in the past. In addition, it is a better form of land use than most agricultural pursuits, especially in arid and semi-arid areas, like the proposed Gariiep TFCA. (Grossman and Liebenberg 1994, Koch 1994, Mokaba 1994, IDRC *et al* 1994, Conscorp undated, Ferrar 1994, Brandon 1993)

2.3. Present Land Uses

2.3.1. Viticulture

The viticulture industry has been experiencing substantial growth in the Lower Orange District, more than doubling in size over the last five years. It has now become a major economic stimulant and much of the current expansion is taking place along the lower reaches of the Orange River. In these areas larger profits can be generated than the equivalent viticulture operations further up the river as a result of higher temperatures. The viticulture operations in the proposed area have only recently been established but have become two small urban settlements, and occupy a total of 1,000 hectares of irrigated alluvial fans on the Orange River.



Photograph 2 - Aerial view of a viticulture operation in proposed Gariep TFCA.



Photograph 3 - Development of vineyards replaces natural vegetation, alters drainage patterns, and disturbs soil structures.

Although a viticulture operation requires huge capital investment (R25 million per 100 hectare, 1997), it can generate substantial short-term economic benefits (R60, 000 net profit per hectare when fully established), and provide employment to large numbers of people (150 permanent jobs and 950 seasonal jobs per 100 hectares).

2,000 more hectares have been identified to have the potential for further viticulture development within the proposed area (McKenzie, R.S. *et al.*, 1996). This could provide an additional 3,000 jobs permanent. The methods being used by some viticulture developers to assimilate these developments with the redistribution strategies of the National and Provincial governments through profit sharing schemes make this type of land use a potential vehicle for spreading wealth in a region which experiences high unemployment and a decline in the economic viability of mining and other forms of farming.

However, the feasibility report clearly indicates that viticulture creates negative environmental impacts. These include the alteration of drainage lines, deep disturbance of soil layers and chemical alteration of the pH of the river water. Many of these impacts are irreversible, and consequently as a land use viticulture is evidently unsustainable under the present land management techniques. But the rapid growth of viticulture is solely in pursuit of the large, possibly short-term, economic benefits at the expense of the environment. From a wider context, this type of agriculture adds to the negative cumulative impacts of all agricultural activity along the whole Orange River, which has left few areas, like the proposed area, in a relatively pristine condition.

In the long-term, there is uncertainty as to whether the table grape market will maintain the large profit margins of today, even with the declining value of the Rand. This will reduce the positive economic impact of this land use option for the whole region. This should be a cause for concern because the investment of large sums in infrastructure in these isolated areas is all depended on the success of viticulture alone and no attempts are being made to diversify the economic base. A state of inertia will make these developments vulnerable if the table grape market turns sour.

In addition, there is uncertainty surrounding the future availability of water from the Orange River for irrigation. Until the new Water Bill comes into effect no new licenses are being issued for irrigation. But the real issue, despite reassurances, is how the new Water Bill will effect the existing viticulture operations and what impact this will have on their profit margins.

2.3.2. Stock Farming

Stock farming is practised on almost all the properties in the area where the majority of herds are Dorper-cross sheep and goats. The gross income from this land use is very low, approximately R40 per hectare mainly due to the limited carrying capacity of 7 small stock units per hectare which is determined by the Department of Agriculture. In fact the Burger Report of 1987 claimed that 80% of the farm units in this area were too small to be economical. In the convening time the size of farms has not changed much and costs have increased. There are an estimated 20 people employed on stock farms in the area (PPF Feasibility Report, 1998) which equates to one person per 1,000 hectares. The consequences of this, and the low intensity of management required by stock farming, limits the employment potential of this land use and therefore limited opportunities exist for social upliftment through stock farming in this area.

The impacts of stock farming result primarily from overgrazing, especially during drought years, but also from trying to extract more from the land than it can sustain. Overgrazing can result in:

- the expansion of driedoring (*Rhigozum trichotomum*) which inhibit the growth of grasses;
- in combination with animal movements, the opening up of the riverine vegetation to invasion by alien plants such as *Prosopis glandulosa* (mesquite); and

- damage to the Aloe dichotoma plants.

Stock farmers are known to practise diligent ‘problem animal’ control, particularly leopards and Black Eagles and use gin traps to capture jackals and lynx, but often capturing other fauna. The wildlife is also effected by fencing which restricts the movement of many non-target animals.

2.3.3. *Mining*

Mining is a minor land use in this area but it has a long history. Granite mining has the potential to become more prevalent as farm owners try to find alternatives to supplement stock farming because, unlike stock farming, mining pays a regular and dependable income. In some cases the payment to lease a quarry site is R1,000 per month, and in addition the owner receives approximately R25 per tonne of granite extracted.

Although mining is occurring in a very limited way in the study area, at the moment, only one site is fully operational, it nevertheless creates irreversible impacts on the landscape. These include scarring not just from the mine but also from supporting roads and buildings. In addition, blasting operations, and the movement of heavy vehicles cause noise and dust pollution. Of particular concern is the negative impacts caused by mining on cultural artifacts which will damage the tourism potential of the area and contravenes the National Monuments Act 28 of 1969. It is therefore a land use which is incompatible with conservation.

Table 1 Summary Of Land Use Impacts

| | Stock Farming | Irrigation Farming | Mining | Electricity Grid | Recreational River use |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| Riverine vegetation | negative: trampling and browsing opens vegetation to <i>Prosopis</i> invasion; spreads <i>Prosopis</i> seeds | negative: irreversible, replaces natural vegetation; clearing for irrigation-pump placement, housing and gardens | neutral | neutral: indirect negative, allowing intensive irrigation farming | negative: cutting for firewood; clearing of pathways; accidental fires |
| <i>Aloe dichotoma</i> plants | negative: browsing damages growing point; push-over by rubbing animals | neutral | neutral - negative: roads and other infrastructure can damage plants | neutral | neutral |
| Alluvial plains | neutral - negative: overgrazing changes plant cover, promotes <i>Rhigozum</i> invasion | negative: irreversible, replaces natural vegetation; disturbs soil; changes drainage | neutral | neutral: indirect negative, allowing intensive irrigation farming | neutral |
| Inland plains | neutral - negative: overgrazing changes plant cover, promotes <i>Rhigozum</i> invasion | neutral | neutral - negative: roads and other infrastructure can damage vegetation | neutral | neutral |
| Granite outcrops | neutral | neutral | negative: irreversible removal of blocks of granite from exposed granite outcrops | neutral | neutral |

| | Stock Farming | Irrigation Farming | Mining | Electricity Grid | Recreational River use |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Invasive vegetation | positive: promotes invasion by <i>Prosopis</i> , <i>Rhigozum</i> , and others; spreads seed | unknown | neutral | neutral | neutral - positive: effects on riverine vegetation promotes <i>Prosopis</i> spread |
| Cultural sites | neutral - negative: trampling and disturbance | neutral - negative: disturbance | neutral - negative; disturbance or destruction | neutral | neutral |
| Fauna | negative: indirect, due to fences restricting movement; problem animal control | neutral - negative: herbicide, pesticide and hormone preparations used; return flow to river | neutral | neutral - negative: transmission lines interfere with birds | neutral - negative: overfishing effects on fish populations; disturbance of shy animals and birds |
| Scenery | neutral | negative: Irreversible , replaces plains with rows of trellised grapevines and urban developments which disturb sense of wilderness | negative: irreversible , damages granite outcrops which are prominent scenic features of the area | negative: intrudes into scenic vistas; disturbs sense of wilderness | neutral |

Figure 1. Benefit Categories for Conserved Areas

(Adapted from Dixon and Sherman, 1990)

Direct Use Values

- 1.- Tourism
- 2.- Education and Research
- 3.- Consumptive benefits; sustainable use of plants and animal products

Indirect Use Values

- 4.- Ecological processes
 - Fixing and cycling nutrients
 - Prevention of erosion and soil formation
 - Circulation and cleaning of air and regulation of hydrological systems
 - Essential life support systems of the biosphere

5.- Biodiversity

- Gene resources
- Species protection
- Ecosystem diversity
- Evolutionary processes

6. Nonconsumptive Values

- Aesthetic
- Spiritual
- Cultural and Historical
- Existence
- Bequest values

7. Future use values

- Option Values
- Quasi option value

Total Economic Value (TEV) = Direct Use Value + Indirect Use Value + Nonconsumptive Use Value + Future Use Value.

2.4. Method Used for Evaluating the Total Economic Value of the Proposed Area.

The various benefits from conserving this area can be grouped in a variety of ways. This study will use the approach put forward by Dixon and Sherman (1990), adapted by Pearce and Moran (1994) and used by Wells, M.P. (1995). This is a more complete breakdown of benefits than other methods. It categorises the benefits to include both on-site and off-site benefits, marketed and non-marketed benefits, and those that are intangible (Figure 1).

2.4.1. Direct Use Values

1. Tourism - is the primary means of receiving direct financial benefits from the proposed Gariiep TFCA and while this discussion will concentrate on the economic potential of tourism, following chapters will show the future for nature-based tourism in South Africa, and specifically the Green Kalahari region of the Northern Cape.

The reason why tourism has not taken place in this area before is primarily because all the land is privately owned and there has been a lack of awareness by the present landowners to the opportunities of developing tourism as an alternative or as a supplementary land use. Present recreational activities in the area, such as canoe trips and the Pofadder Hiking Trail, have been inhibited by this situation and are not able to take place at their maximum intensity.

The possible core attractions for tourism within the proposed area include:

- greater utilisation of the Orange River which is currently "user-unfriendly" due to its inaccessibility;
- the cultural and historical sites - the theme of Satour international marketing for the period 1997-2000;

- the aesthetic beauty and vistas of the terrain; and
- in the future, the potential for the area as a tourism destination will be increased by the reintroduction of wildlife.

(PPF Feasibility Report, 1998)

However the real economic value of tourism will be measured by its ability to positively impact on the surrounding area by stimulating employment and rural development. The impacts of tourism on the economy can be determined by means of the tourism multiplier effect.

1. (a) The Multiplier Effect

This is the additional income and employment generated by the tourism industry in other industrial sectors. However the fact that the tourism industry is so broad makes this difficult to quantify. In order to get a true representation of the total economic value of tourism attempts have been made to quantify the multiplier effect in the past. According to Satour (1993), the tourism income multiplier for South Africa is 1.5, which was higher than the income multiplier of 0.43 estimated for the South African economy as a whole.

In South Africa, and the Lower Orange District in particular, consideration of the concept of multiplier effects is an important issue if the opportunities from tourism are to have the maximum benefit. The multiplier concept is concerned with the marginal rather than the average changes in expenditure. In the field of tourism, this extra expenditure takes many forms, such as:

- spending on goods and services by tourists in the area;
- investment by external forces (e.g. in accommodation and by travel companies);

- government spending on infrastructure (e.g. Upington airport improvements and communications), and
- exports of goods and services stimulated by tourism (e.g. grapes and wine from the area).

Therefore, the nature of expenditure introduced into the economy by tourism can be analysed by assessing;

- direct expenditure on goods and services by tourists and investment in tourism in the area;
- indirect expenditure on goods and services by hotels, game lodges, shops, and tour operators from their local suppliers; and
- indirect expenditure by the increase in consumer spending resulting from tourism.

There are four types of multiplier effects. All four are economically linked and can be described as follows;

- *Sales Multiplier*: The extra turnover created by an extra unit of tourism expenditure;
- *Output Multiplier*: A sophistication of the sales multiplier, where the relative changes in inventories are taken into account;
- *Income Multiplier*: The extra income generated by an extra unit of tourism expenditure, and;
- *Employment Multiplier*: The extra employment generated by an extra unit of tourism expenditure.

(Muller, P., April 1992)

Very little scientific research has been done on tourism in South Africa generally and the tourism multiplier especially. However, preliminary studies conducted by Muller (1992), indicated that an extra unit of tourism expenditure causes a multiplier of twice the initial amount (2.2), and an income effect of almost double (1.7), while the employment effect is approximately 11 extra tourists create one extra tourism employment opportunity. These figures compare favourably with similar 'tourism countries' and also show the importance of directing investment towards tourism and its promotion.

Despite the severe shortage of comprehensive figures, the Government White Paper on Tourism (1996) recognises the importance of the multiplier effect and the need to reduce leakage. But in rural areas of South Africa where the economy is relatively underdeveloped, these positive multiplier effects are likely to be limited at the moment. The World Bank estimates that well over 50% of tourism spending eventually leaks, often back to developed countries, from rural areas where local entrepreneurs and property owners lack the capital and produce to provide supporting services for local tourism ventures (Urquhart 1995).

Apart from international leakage, even fewer of the economic benefits from conservation remain in the local area, although the potential is there. A study by the South African Institute for Natural Resources shows that less than 7% of the R80 million turnover of the Sabi-Sabi Wildtuin, South Africa's richest game reserve, flows to the local community. Thus the *equity* test may not be passed, as benefits are often not equitably distributed:

"Anyone who has ever travelled in Africa will testify to the limited benefits of the tourist industry to the surrounding community. Most tourist industries pride themselves on the secondary spin-offs, yet the most one sees is a battling curio industry in the midst of poverty" (Urquhart 1995).

The key factors determining the relative sizes of the various tourism multipliers are the diversity and range of local economic activities on offer in the tourism area. The wider this is, the greater the likelihood of higher multiplier values. Therefore tourism strategies

should address issues that reduce the amount of leakage of tourism expenditure on products from outside the local economy and attempt to supply tourism with goods and services from the local and regional community as much as possible.

The degree of leakage is also dependent on the type of tourists. This is of particular interest to nature-based tourism ventures, which typically involve small-scale facilities as opposed to resort-based tourism. Meijer did a comparative analysis of the economic benefits of organised group tourism to 'rucksack tourism'. He concluded that the economic impact of non-organised tourism is more than three times that of organised tourists for La Paz, Bolivia (Meijer, 1989). A similar study in South Africa would be extremely useful in exploring whether the economic benefits of nature-based tourism are greater than those from resort-based tourism. It could also help to determine whether the various types of tourism are complementary or competitive, in the sense of competing for the same natural or human resources (Healy, 1992).

This suggests that the economic data required to analyse tourism's contribution to development needs to include:

- Analysis of the backward and forward linkages between tourism and other sectors;
- Understanding of the spatial location of tourism activity; and
- Identification of the beneficiaries of its economic and other impacts (Ibed, 1992).

In an effort to create an environment where tourism provides a meaningful contribution to the Lower Orange District the following chapters will put forward suggestions supporting an integrated approach to tourism development that addresses these three points. A successful tourism structure in the surrounding region will benefit the future establishment of the proposed Gariiep TFCA by creating a tourism culture and understanding of the potential benefits. In addition, the lag time to making the conserved area economically viable could be reduced.

2. Education and Research - Research is often integrated into education and conserved areas such as the proposed Gariep TFCA could provide fertile ground for field work in one of the least known areas of South Africa. The Feasibility Report highlighted a number of features, ranging from the ecological to the historical elements that need more understanding. The amount of research that could take place here may justify the creation of a research station which could provide direct financial benefits just like tourism. Staffing of this facility could also include local people who have a wealth of untapped knowledge of the area and this should not be lost.

Conserved areas also provide an arena in which to educate people with an understanding and appreciation of the environment. However, estimating the economic value of this is extremely difficult and historically it is believed that the local area does not capture this benefit. This could be rectified by using the facilities to educate local people about the benefits of conservation and uniqueness of their own region as part of the Afrikatourism concept put forward by the Open Africa Initiative.

3. Consumptive benefits - The proposed Gariep TFCA could provide a number of direct outputs, which could include wildlife products, fish, herbs and medicines. But as the area will be protected it is necessary that the harvesting of these outputs be done in a sustainable manner and within the parameters of international agreements and conventions signed by South Africa, such as CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of 1973). In addition, the exploitation of some of these consumptive benefits may be restricted, even prohibitive, if wildlife is reintroduced.

In a study carried out in 1994 by the Natal Parks Board, the market for natural resources gathered in protected areas was valued at R2.2 million. Valuation excluded the value of ivory, due to the CITES ban, and the sale of live animals. This shows the extent of the potential.



Photograph 4 - Typical landscape of the proposed Gariep TFCA includes alluvial fans, riverine vegetation, and rocky outcrops in Bushmanland interior.



Picture 5 – Site of irrigation pumps, showing riverine vegetation clearance and levelling of river banks.

2.4.2. Indirect Benefits

4. Ecological Processes - The proposed area possesses its maximum conservation value as a continuous unit and protection will provide for its ecological maintenance in a natural balanced state.

In this way the natural fixing and cycling of nutrients will take place within the parameters the ecosystems allow and the balance between the interacting ecosystems can be maintained. This would keep the area free from inducement or prohibition by the application of chemicals, like those used by current agricultural practises in the area.

Viticulture uses large amounts of pesticides, herbicides and chemical feeds which not only negatively impact the soils but also flow back into the Orange River through ground water. The impact has not been analysed but consistent users of the river have noticed differences taking place close to the viticulture operations.

Although this area is in a comparatively good condition (Bezuidenhout, cited in PPF Feasibility Report, 1998), conserving the area will protect it from further damage from the present land uses and alien vegetation, and allow for rehabilitation to its natural state thus improving its environmental services.

Many of the environmental services from conservation will benefit the surrounding region, but it is not possible to put a direct value on them. Estimates of these benefits often rely on productivity effects or the costs of replacing these environmental services with technology. These services can be termed - local public goods (Turner, Pearce and Bateman, 1994) and include such services as the natural vegetation cover acting as a natural filter for air and water. Water filtration, in particular, should be recognised to be of vital importance in an arid area such as the Northern Cape, where the Orange River provides the life blood. Concern is growing, both in South Africa and Namibia, that the lack of environmental management of the river is leading to irreversible damage; caused primarily by the regulation of water flow through dams and mining. This concern

encouraged the setting-up of the Trans Gariep Joint Management Committee (TGJMC). For technology to replace the ecological function of water filtration, alone, in such a large area would probably be prohibitive. But the cost to replace the contribution this area would provide, if conserved in its natural state, to the life support systems of the biosphere would be incalculable.

5. Biodiversity - the maintenance of biological diversity, which includes all species, genetic variation within species, and all varieties of habitats and ecosystems, is currently considered to be one of the most important benefits of conserving natural areas and its significance is recognised internationally. South Africa has acknowledged these benefits and has made international conservation commitments, as well as various laws and development objectives supporting the protection of biodiversity in South Africa. Key amongst these are the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (acceded to in 1995), the South African Constitution (1996), and the policy contained in the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity (1997). All of these include the common threads of:

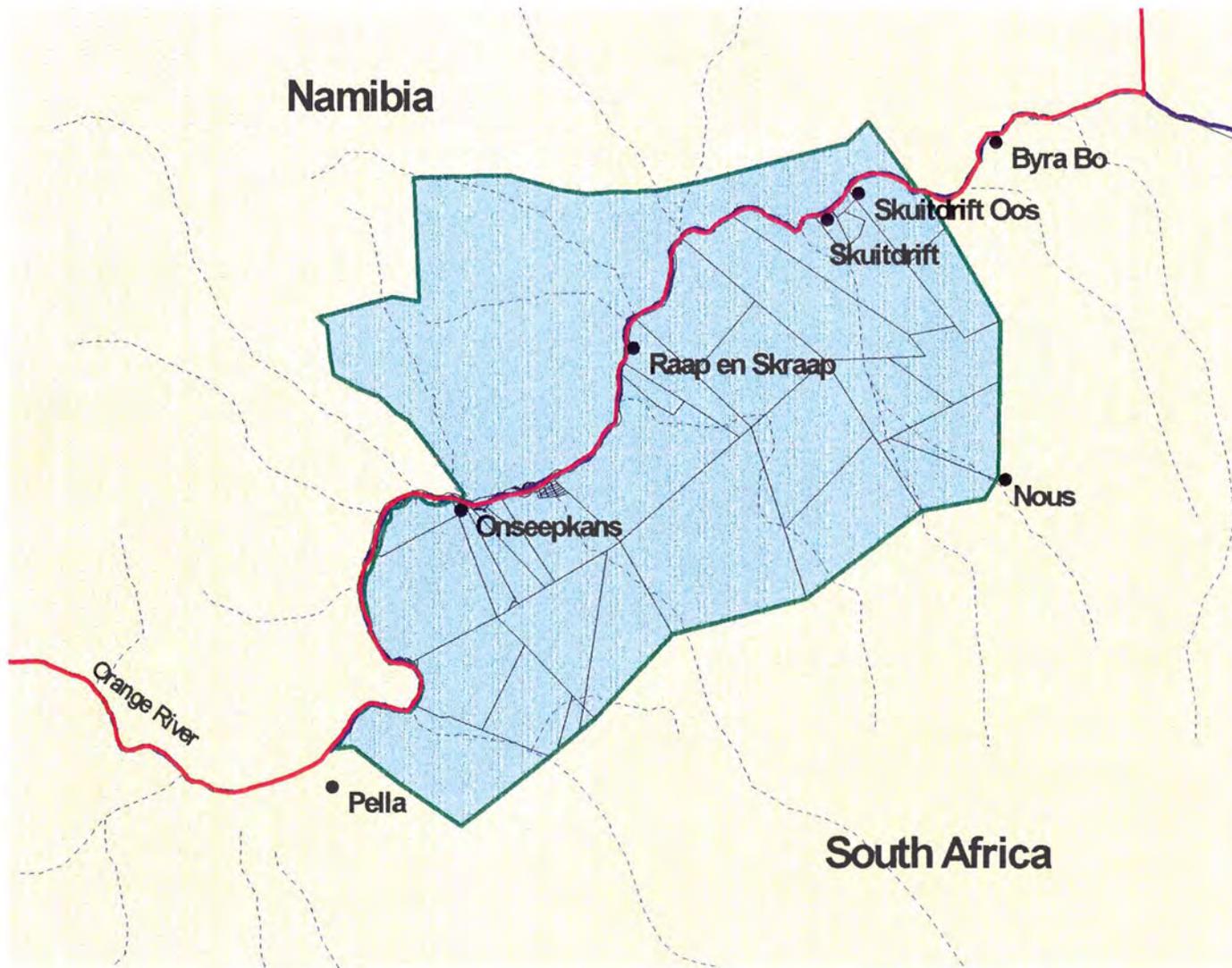
- promoting conservation of biodiversity;
- sustainable use of biological resources; and
- fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Despite these commitments, currently only 5.5% of South Africa's total area is conserved and biodiversity is being lost as a result of habitat loss and fragmentation. This is below internationally accepted levels which state that the environmental importance of a potential area should be assessed using the following criteria:

- Can the area be identified as a particularly important area of biodiversity;
- Does the area encompass a biome that is inadequately protected (i.e. significantly less than 10-12% of its total area).

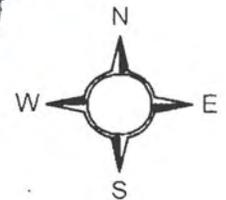
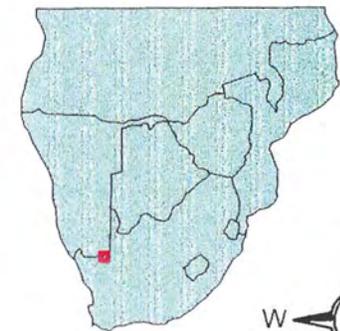
MAP 1

Proposed Gariep TFCA



PROPOSED GARIEP TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)

- Settlements
- International border
- ∩ Orange river
- ⋯ Ephemeral rivers
- ▬ TFCA boundary
- ▭ Farm boundaries
- TFCA



2



The proposed area is made up of Orange River Nama-Karoo vegetation, which occurs exclusively in the Northern Cape, and Bushmanland Nama-Karoo vegetation, of which 99% occurs in the Northern Cape. These are two of the six vegetation types that make up the Nama-Karoo Biome, and are both poorly protected within South Africa. 1.47% of the Orange River Nama-Karoo vegetation is conserved within Augrabies Falls National Park, the Richtersveld National Park, and Helskloof Nature Reserve (Map 4) and 0.03% of Bushmanland Nama-Karoo vegetation is conserved in Augrabies Falls National Park. The Nama-Karoo biome, despite covering almost a quarter of South Africa, is the least conserved of all seven biomes that exist in the country.

Although the Nama-Karoo biome has relatively few species for its area of coverage, on a global scale, as a semi-arid biome it is rich in flora - as rich as the Sonoran Desert of North America which is 1.5 times its size. However, the biome has not attracted the same amount of ecological interest as have other biomes in South Africa, and the functioning of the Nama-Karoo communities and ecosystems is still poorly understood. Since the vegetation appears to be in a relatively good condition, this area is a representative example of the functioning of the Nama-Karoo biome that has escaped the impacts of severe overgrazing from which most of the Nama-Karoo suffers (PPF Feasibility Report, 1998).

In addition the area contains two *Aloe dichotoma* 'forests' of which one, containing approximately 30,000 plants, occurs on the Bushmanland plains. It is one of the largest such forests in Southern Africa. It appears to be in a relatively healthy state and is of clear conservation importance. Also the area is already recognised as having conservation value as it is a centre of endemism for Mesembryanthema.

6. Non-consumptive Values - is the category of benefits which includes those values people derive from protected areas that are not related to direct use.

As a comparison, Augrabies Falls National Park is also situated on the Orange River and is one of the most popular destinations in the Northern Cape. It covers a relatively small area which limits its wildlife carrying capacity. Despite this, the park is experiencing an increase in visitors. The main reason for this is the parks aesthetic value due to the Augrabies Falls themselves and the increase in through traffic, but it is also an area of solitude, and contains beautiful vistas.

The proposed GTFCA also contains many potential non-consumptive benefits which include its:

- aesthetic beauty: a large expanse of plains interspersed by granite kopjies stretching down to the Orange River which has created a longitudinal oasis in this arid region;
- cultural and historical values: the area contains a hot spring which is a unique geological and cultural feature. It also contains numerous pre-colonial and colonial sites, and artifacts that have not been documented in any depth.

These non-consumptive benefits are often combined and labelled the existence value. Again, placing a monetary value on this benefit category is difficult since people do not pay for them directly. However, the fact that they exist can be counted as a positive and are benefits that the present land uses are damaging. A variety of survey techniques, termed contingent valuation methods, can be used to estimate the willingness-to-pay or the willingness-to-accept compensation for such benefits. However, time constraints prevent this study from giving these techniques more attention.

7. Future Use Value - In addition to the potential values derived from both consumptive and non-consumptive use, the proposed area also benefits from its potential future use value or option value. To a large extent these are unknown and at the present time look limited. Only viticulture, out of the present land uses appears to have any real future potential. However, many of the negative impacts of viticulture, discussed earlier are irreversible. Therefore there may be a value in delaying further viticulture development until the benefits of a more sustainable land use, such as conservation, can be completely assessed. If information can be gained by delaying the irreversible impacts of a decision to proceed with more viticulture developments, the conditional expected value of that information is termed the quasi-option value or the no regrets approach. The fact that there are limited development opportunities already in this area and there is a need for immediate development to support social restructuring makes this category a relatively weak argument for conservation. However it should not be dismissed but rather viewed as the 'status quo' category.

2.4.3. Conclusions

This analysis has shown that only some of the categories can be valued in monetary terms. In addition, the lack of specific detail is largely due to the fact that the area does not exist as a conserved area at present and therefore many of the categories that could be measured can only be expressed as potential benefits. However, this does not limit the results of analysing the potential benefits of conserving the proposed area over current land use practises. The fact that they can all be considered as positive means that the Total Economic Value is potentially large.

Analysis could go further and include a determination on the importance of each category through weighting their values. In this way it could be possible that those values that can be identified and valued may be large enough to ensure protection. Alternatively, those categories that cannot be valued may be deemed important enough to warrant conservation on their own. There are global cases where this has taken place purely based

on the biodiversity category. These include the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which lays down that this region shall be used only for peaceful means, in an attempt to protect the unique Antarctic environment, and the proposed International Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities of 1988.

In order to complete this analysis it is necessary to compare the benefits of conserving this area to the costs of protection.

2.5. Costs of Conservation

There are three main types of costs associated with the establishment of the proposed Gariep TFCA. These are; direct costs, indirect costs and opportunity costs.

1. Direct Costs - represent the budget outlays. Establishing the conserved area could include land acquisition, the preparation of management plans and the development of infrastructure. Once in operation costs include maintenance and protection, and staff costs. It is hoped that a substantial amount of the cost of establishing the proposed Gariep TFCA can be raised through various international conservation funds and donors who see the significance of conserving this area and its potential benefits. The following discussion on an ecotourism approach to tourism development could also play a part in attracting financial support because of its integrative and sustainable qualities.

This study will not try to put a price tag on the land contained within the proposed area. However it is clear that there is a marked difference in the land values for the different present land uses.

The costs of establishing a viticulture operation per hectare, the potential profits that can be expected, and the employment potential of such an operation means that the price of this land will be high. Raising the funds to purchase the two established viticulture operations for conservation may be difficult in the immediate future. In addition, the

length of time required to make a protected area economically viable can be long. This would mean that the pay back time on this type of investment would probably be held against a purchasing decision such as this.

Land that has the potential for viticulture, currently thought to be no more than 2,000 hectares, and much of the land close to the river, referred to as “binneveld” has a higher value than the interior land, “buiteveld”.

On the other hand, stock farming has limited potential in the area. As a land use, the costs of establishing a stock farm are relatively cheap and profits per hectare are small. Therefore, as long as farmers are willing to sell, it may be possible to purchase a large percentage of the land currently under stock farming.

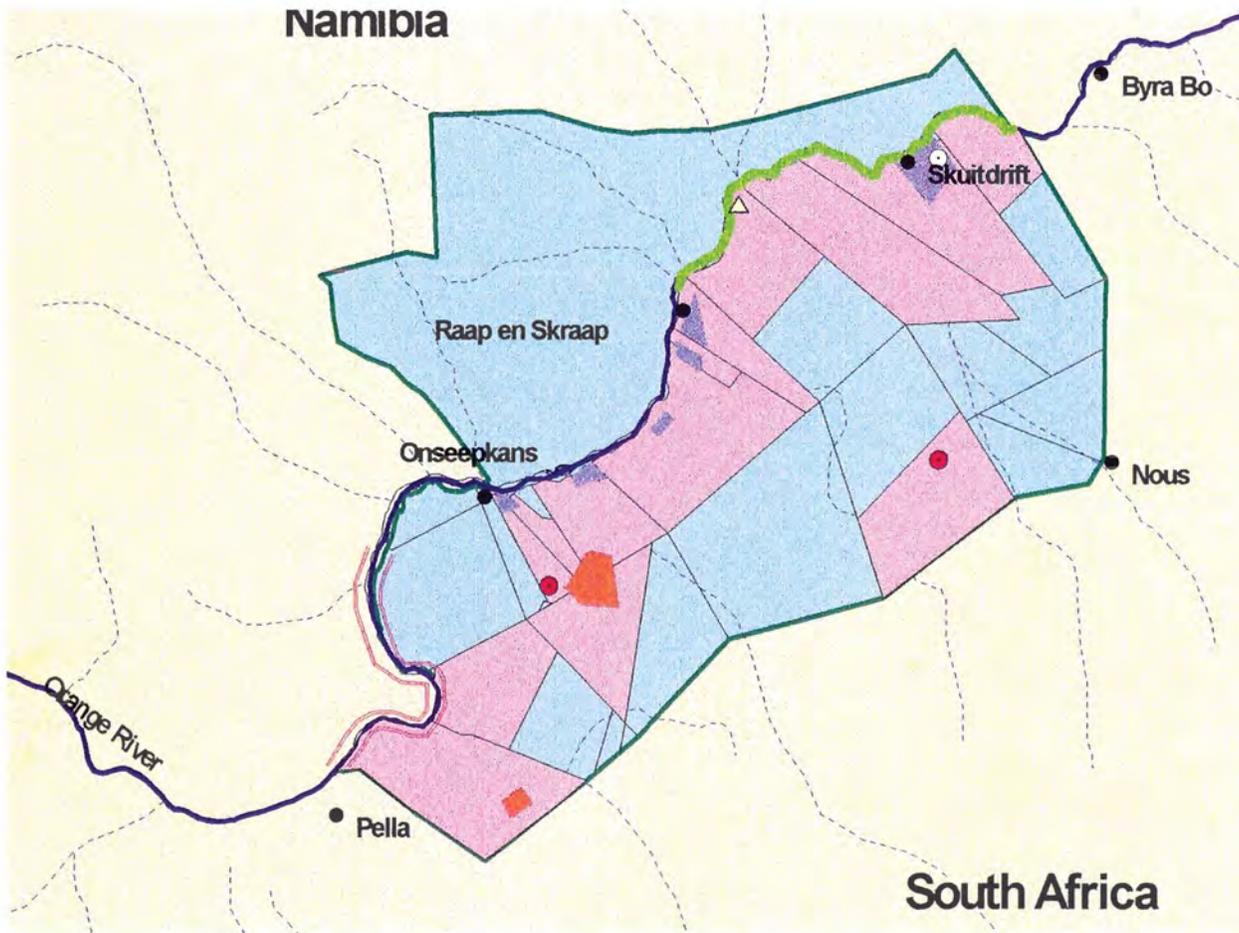
With regard to mining; extensive surveys in the past have assessed the potential of this area and no large finds were found. Since small-scale granite mining is done on the basis of a concession from the land owner (most potential mines are situated on stock farming land), and since the nature of the granite mining market makes mining a spasmodic activity, this type of land use can be disregarded because the land value will predominantly be determined by its use for stock farming and not mining.

It would appear that the costs of purchasing all the land within the proposed area will only be restricted by farmers willingness to sell and the cost of that land already under viticulture. However there are options, both long term and in the short to medium term, as to how best to approach conserving the whole area which are discussed in the Feasibility Report. The most favourable option was considered to be a compromise which would combine the purchase of core areas, which include those areas that are of particular conservation importance, with an inclusion of land on a contractual basis (MAP 5). The benefits from this approach would include the conserving of the area in the short to medium term as opposed to the long term by which time the conservation value may have deteriorated too far. In addition, the contractual element would provide an avenue for landowner participation at the beginning of the process of creating the conserved area with the assistance of conservation authorities.

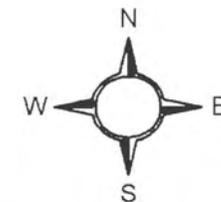
MAP 5

Core Areas

PROPOSED GARIEP TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)



- Settlements
- △ Hotspring
- Pre-Colonial sites
- Colonial sites
- Kokerboom forest
- ⚡ Indigenous vegetation
- Alluvial fans
- ⚡ Gorge
- Properties containing core areas
- Orange river
- - - Ephemeral rivers
- TFCA boundary
- Farm boundaries



Traditionally, staffing costs have taken a large percentage of direct running costs. For SANP in 1994 staffing costs constituted 54% of total expenditure (Wells, 1995). This figure has most probably increased since the introduction of a national minimum wage. In addition, lodges and commercial operations generate a substantial amount of a parks income. This is retained to help finance conservation programs within the designated area, but fails to cover all costs and historically, government grants have been used to cover remaining expenditure. Grants covered roughly 29% of costs in 1994 (Ibid.) put the long term objective is to phase these out over the next ten years. Therefore conserved areas are going to have to find new approaches to economic viability in order to substantiate their existence.

2. Indirect Costs - are difficult to identify before the conserved area is established. When wildlife is reintroduced there is the possibility of them escaping and doing damage to surrounding areas. Research in Caprivi, Namibia of wildlife damage (1991-1994) concluded that most communities, out of thirteen surveyed, lost an average of N\$3,000 per year. This loss, however, can be considered insignificant given the fact that local residents already earn around N\$300,000 per year from tourists in the form of craft sales and wages, four times the estimated agricultural losses from wildlife (Ashley, 1995). Although this provides strong evidence in support of wildlife, the perception that benefits exceed costs will only be held by the majority of people as long as the benefits are not held by a few but rather distributed amongst the communities. In other words, the benefits of tourism must be seen locally to be believed. In addition, it is unrealistic to compare agricultural loss in Caprivi to the potential loss to a highly capitalised and intensive form of agriculture such as viticulture.

3. Opportunity Costs - are represented by the loss of potential benefits associated with protecting this area rather than harvesting the resources it contains or converting it to another use. One of the advantages of tourism as a land use option is that it can coexist with conservation. In contrast, the present land uses appear to be inconsistent with

conservation, certainly within the context of a protected area. The previous discussion has made it clear that while the lost potential from stock farming and mining would probably be minimal since they support only a few people and profits are small, it may not be possible to ignore the loss of the potential benefits from viticulture. The suitable locations these operations require are limited by, the need for alluvial soils and close proximity to large amounts of water. This means that the total area taken up by these operations and the potential future development areas is comparatively small. In total this has been estimated to be 3,000 hectares (Unifruco). It may be possible to incorporate these developments within the protected area in a way that the consumptive benefits of both types of land use are mutually beneficial to conservation, tourism and viticulture. The benefits to the viticulture operations may include reducing the reliance on table grapes to support the settlements and spreading the economic base by encouraging on-site tourism such as farm tours and lodging.

These added attractions could also benefit conservation and, at the same time, an understanding between the viticulture operators and conservationists could be reached on the use and protection of the river and on mitigating the negative impacts of viticulture. In other words, it would be better to include and cooperate rather than exclude and conflict.

2.6. Comparing the Benefits and Costs

This assessment of the benefits and costs of conservation has shown that a conserved area generates many more benefits other than tourism. However many of these benefits are not captured locally or even nationally but rather serve the global community, whilst many of the costs are borne by the surrounding rural area. This is an international problem and has often proved to be a powerful disincentive to conservation (Wells 1992).

The proposed area shows a similar imbalance in the distribution of the benefits of the conservation option as a study carried out for the Land and Agriculture Policy Centre (Wells, 1995). In this study the distribution of benefits of protected areas/wildlife tourism

was assessed on three scales: local, national and global. The local scale includes both the conserved area and the local rural poor communities rather than private landowners.

The overall picture is that conserved areas benefits appear at least broadly comparable, and much larger than the costs. This also appears to be true specifically at a national level. But there are significant imbalances at local levels, where costs exceed benefits, and at global levels, where benefits exceed costs.

To reach the objectives of the Peace Parks Foundation, the National Government (White Paper on Tourism and Biodiversity, GEAR), and international conservation agents of using conservation as a tool for development, strategies need to be adopted to try and retain conservation benefits as close to a protected area as possible.

This creates a dilemma in that to prove the benefits of conservation needs a degree of awareness and to create awareness needs proof of conservation's benefits. This problem is compounded by the fact that the Gariep TFCA is still at the proposal stage and it takes time before tourism within a conserved area reaches a level that can begin to deliver tangible benefits to the people of the area. It is claimed that reaching viability can take ten to fifteen years (Fernhead, pers. comms.). However, it is possible that this time lag can be reduced if a compatible tourism structure is already in place in the surrounding region.

Another issue to be considered is that whilst the Feasibility Report established that the proposed area does have a conservation value based on its biodiversity importance and bio-physical features, a tourism product based purely on these qualities will not be sufficient to compete in the increasingly competitive nature-based tourism market. Unless it is incorporated within tourism development in the surrounding area conservation of this area will not have the capacity to compensate for the loss of present land uses let alone contribute to local development.

Options for responding to the local benefit-cost imbalance and creating a competitive tourism package by adopting an approach to forming an integrated, supportive tourism structure are discussed in the chapters that follow.

The next chapter discusses the trends taking place in tourism which is recognised as the best land use option at the moment and potentially the major contributor towards the economic viability of conserved areas. It provides evidence of the size of and potential contained within nature-based tourism and provides an argument for ecotourism, as an approach to integrated tourism development. The question is, does the Lower Orange District Council have the capacity to harness this potential?

CHAPTER 3

Tourism

Trends Towards Nature-based Tourism and Ecotourism

3 TOURISM TRENDS TOWARDS NATURE-BASED TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to show the growth and trends within global tourism, and specifically nature-based tourism. This will highlight the opportunity which exists for a tourism development strategy in the Green Kalahari region that actively tries to harness the nature-based tourism potential.

3.2. A Tourist

The *White Paper* (Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, 1996) definition of a tourist echoes international thinking and states that a tourist is:

“a person who travels away from home, staying away for at least one night. A tourist can be a domestic tourist; a regional tourist or an overseas tourist. A tourist travels for different purposes including business, leisure, conference and incentive.”

3.3. Tourism

Frequent mention is made in tourism literature of the tourism “industry” but there is no universally accepted definition because of the diversity of interests in tourism. No other form of economic activity transects so many sectors, levels and interests as tourism. Tourism embraces various trades and industries including transport, accommodation food services, and construction. It also involves tour wholesalers, retailers and a variety of attractions, as well as a wide range of other private and public services and facilities.

Some of these services are crucial to tourism, while others are supportive. In addition, many services required for tourism, such as those associated with transport and catering are also used by non-tourists.

As a result of this diversity, collecting and collating data produces fairly arbitrary estimates. In addition, many countries do not include tourism receipts in their national accounts, South Africa is no exception, and so tourism's financial impact cannot be estimated properly.

Tourism also requires a wide range of non-industrial resources which provide an input to tourism products. Such 'free' resources include climate, scenery, wildlife and the culture of the host community.

Tourism is therefore a nebulous phenomenon characterised by an amalgam of fragmented trades, organisations and activities. Some authors suggest that tourism cannot be properly described as a single industry because it does not produce a single, distinct product.

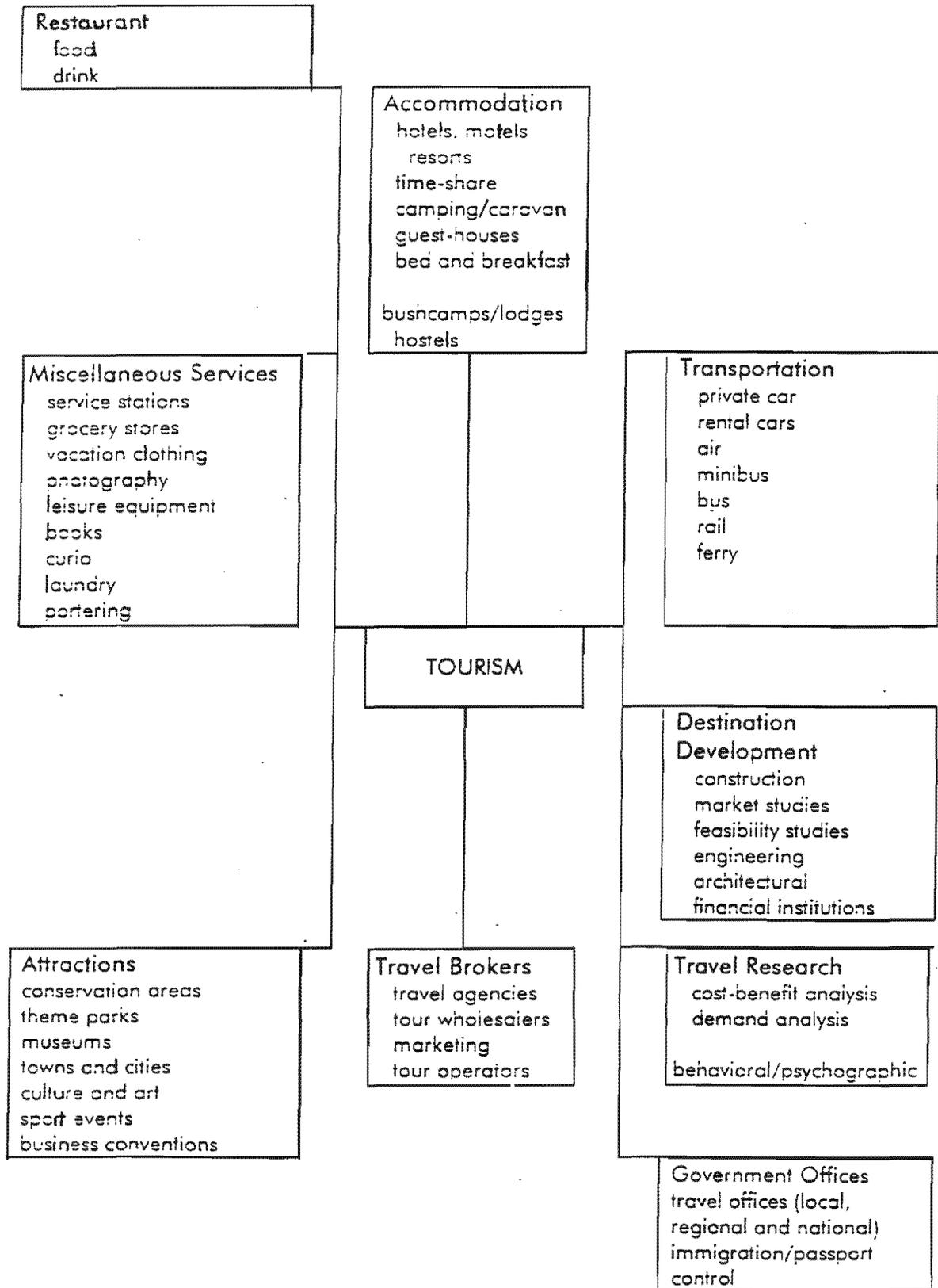
However tourism can be viewed as an industry in itself. This study acknowledges the limitations involved but accepts the definitions put forward in the words of Gilbert (1990):

“Tourism while having no clear boundary delineations or concise conceptual clarification does, due to the overall size and impact of spatial and temporal movements of people with varying service needs for shelter, sustenance, entertainment and travel, produce the basis for an industry.”

This broad definition is also applied to the South African tourism industry by the *White Paper* (1996):-

“all recipients of direct spend incurred by tourists. This includes pre-trip expenditure on travel and booking, travel and en-route expenditure, and all spending at the destination.”

Figure 2. Business Structure of Tourism



Source: Lundberg et al. (1995) cited in DRA Development

The fact that the industry is so diverse means that there is a high probability of competing interests that could create adverse effects. Therefore, what is clearly required for a successful tourism industry is integrated planning approaches to coordinate all those involved and to ensure that the maximum sustainable benefits can be attained.

Figure 2 demonstrates how the tourism industry comprises many components, which interact through horizontal and vertical integration to deliver the final tourism product.

3.4. Global Tourism

The tourism industry is experiencing continued growth and with its impacts on so many sectors of the world economy has become one of the largest global economic activities. Already, in terms of direct and indirect employment generation, tourism is the largest industry in the world, employing nearly 11% of the global work force, and could become the largest single sector of world trade early in the next century (IUCN 1996).

The global tourism industry today has matured to such an extent that it has become highly fragmented. It includes many different participants, ranging in size of operation, degree of sophistication and provides a wide spectrum of services and attractions.

The potential gains from tourism in rural areas are now well known. These include the potential of increasing foreign exchange, supporting development and slowing rural-urban migration, and the employment opportunities especially because of the low barriers to entry. These opportunities have endeared the tourism industry to governments and development agencies for decades but have only recently been acknowledged by South Africa. Today, this belief also carries caution since tourism can cause significant social and environmental disturbances. Countless studies around the world have highlighted the negative impacts that can occur from tourism led development that is uncontrolled, insensitive and purely based on financial gain. African examples include the Kenyan

coastline from Malindi to Mombasa where the rapid growth in tourism has been 'unplanned', 'haphazard' and 'ad hoc':

"The environmental pollution has to a large extent been aggravated by a lack of a co-ordinated and integrated programme that would ensure a controlled and planned growth of tourism in Kenya. There is uneven distribution and development of infrastructure, facilities, amenities....." (Ndege, 1992, cited from de Beer, G., et al., 1997)

The lessons learnt have brought the realisation that the natural and manmade environment of an area constitute some of the basic "ingredients" of the tourism product offered and, naturally, the quality of this product depends critically on the quality of these basic ingredients. In addition to this is the heightened awareness of environmental issues, which has created tourists who are more discerning, seeking activities, arrangements and experiences that depend on a high-quality physical and cultural environment. The combination of these two factors means that host countries will have to become less complacent to the possibility of environmental degradation, even if tourism brings substantial economic and social benefits. It can therefore be argued that only an ecologically-minded tourism industry will safeguard its prospects for growth into the next century. In South Africa, an awareness of this situation has been realised at national policy level:

"it is not simply the stock of natural resources of South Africa that will determine her competitiveness in tourism, but rather, how these resources are managed and to what extent they are complemented with man-made innovations" (White Paper 1996).

The current trends in the global tourism industry reflect this and the trends of particular interest to this study are now discussed:

- **Increased interest in natural settings and less disturbed areas:** As a result of an increase in environmental awareness, the traditional tourism destinations of Europe, in particular, are becoming less significant as tourists search for the 'road less travelled'.

This is increasing visitor numbers, both domestic and international, to conserved areas and national parks in Less Developed Countries (LDCs). While nearly every country in the world receives and exports tourists, there is a net outflow of tourists from the 'North' to the 'South'.

- **Continued tourism growth:** According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) (cited in IUCN, 1996), tourism is currently the fastest growing sector of the world economy with an average annual growth rate of 7%. However, although the African region as a whole is expected to increase its share of arrivals from 3.8% to 5%, it is predicted that its share of global tourism receipts will fall from 3.2% to 2.7% (WTO 1990 cited in IUCN 1996).

These trends indicate that international tourism could become a means of redistributing global wealth if strategies are implemented that attempt to capture more tourism expenditure. In addition, the type of tourist travelling to LDCs are attracted predominantly by relatively unspoilt natural landscapes and cultures which are both limited in their supply and their carrying capacity. This means that planning for tourism growth needs to be conscious not to overdevelop the attractions that bring the tourists in the first place.

3.5. Nature-based tourism

Conserved areas, such as the proposed Gariep TFCA, lend themselves to "nature-based" tourism which is the term given to all tourism directly dependent on the use of natural resources in a relatively undeveloped state, such as scenery, topography, water features, vegetation and wildlife. Nature-based tourism, which includes ecotourism, is the fastest growing sector of tourism world-wide (IUCN, 1996) and is the major source of income in certain developing countries such as Kenya, Ecuador, Costa Rica and Nepal (Cowling, 1993). Its global value for 1988 was estimated to have been as high as US\$1 trillion (IUCN, 1996). Ecotourism on its own is estimated to be growing at an average rate of 25% per annum (WTO cited in IUCN, 1996).

The popularity of nature-based tourism has often been used as proof that this type of tourism is a powerful incentive for conservation around the world. This is because it has the potential to create a double dividend. Nature-based tourism has the potential to contribute towards the conservation of ecologically unique areas through offering an economic rationale for doing so. At the same time, harnessing conservation value has the potential to provide positive socio-economic contributions locally, regionally and nationally.

But, uncontrolled nature-based tourism has in the past and continues to contribute to the degradation of many areas of natural and cultural importance, resulting in the loss of biological and cultural diversity. This is the very resource upon which tourism's income depends. Such nature-based tourist activities can include safaris, rafting, 4x4 routes, hiking and other outward-bound activities such as hunting.

Increasing concern of this fact has also run parallel with the increasing awareness of environmental issues leading to a call for a responsible approach to tourism so that it is appropriate and sustainable. The trend is moving away from mass tourism towards smaller groups, participating in authentic tourism experiences that are environmentally and socially correct.

Ecotourism Afrika, part of the Centre for Ecotourism at the University of Pretoria, has put forward a summary of some of the reasons for this shift in tourism. These include:

- growth and awareness of environmental issues in both developed and developing countries;
- growth in the proportion of relatively well-educated people with significant disposable income and the ability to travel;
- new demographic groups such as two income households who have more earning potential;
- increasing exposure to new and remote places through the media;
- increased attention to indigenous cultures and culturally correct tourism;

- improved scientific knowledge associated with ecological and cultural interests, combined with a belief that many natural and cultural environments are being permanently altered or destroyed;
- increased desire for experiences that are authentic and incorporate enlightenment, rather than contrived entertainment; and
- increased concern about crowding at existing destinations.

(Ecotourism Afrika, 1997)

3.6. Ecotourism

These trends indicate the changing values amongst tourists and the tourism industry, which provide the foundation for a more sustainable approach to tourism development. The growth in this market has stimulated many countries in South America to institute Ministries of Ecotourism, for example Costa Rica (IUCN, 1996). “Ecotourism”, as a specific category of nature-based tourism, is now being hailed internationally as the solution to incorporating sustainability with development objectives, especially in developing countries, but not exclusively, as it merits as an approach to all types of tourism generally.

As a destination, Africa is experiencing above average growth relative to other ecotourism destinations (Ibed, 1996). Diverse groups from rural communities and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), to economists, politicians and conservationists, are professing tourism and particularly ecotourism as the answer to rural economic ills. Ecotourism is being endorsed as the solution to sustainable tourism as its principles of minimum impacts on the social and natural environment are in keeping with those of sustainable development. Numerous documents, both international and local, have recognised the trends within the tourism industry (The Reconstruction and Development Programme; Reconstruction and Development Strategy for the Tourism Industry, for the period 1994-1999; White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, 1996; Tourism in GEAR 1998-2000, 1997; The Ecotourism Society, Ecotourism: A Guide for

Planners and Managers, 1993; Tourism, ecotourism and Protected Areas, IUCN, 1996; Kalahari Gemsbok National Park: An Ecotourism Development Strategy, 1997). The common message from these documents is that all tourism should try, as much as is practically possible to:

- Be based on the principles of sustainability - ecologically, ethically, economically and socially;
- Integrate the natural, cultural and human environment;
- Consider its effects on cultural heritage and traditional elements within local communities;
- Actively contribute to sustainable development;
- Lead to the conservation, protection and appreciation of natural and cultural resources;
- Improve the quality of life of local communities and must entail a positive effect and interrelation with regard to cultural identity;
- Be approached in new and alternative manners that are compatible with the principles of sustainable development; and
- Be based on codes of conduct and ethics, to the context of sustainable development.

Since the phrase 'ecotourism' was first coined by Hector Ceballos-Lascurain in 1983, ecotourism has become a broad term, and open to complex interpretation. According to Ziffer (1989), ecotourism *"has eluded firm definition because it ambitiously attempts to describe an activity, set forth a philosophy and espouse a model of development"*. Consequently, as Urquhart points out (1995) *".....ecotourism rather like sustainable development, means many things to different people."*

Definitions have now taken on a normative element and The Centre for Ecotourism (1996) defines ecotourism as *"....an enlightening, interpretative, participatory travel experience to environments, both natural and cultural, that ensures the sustainable use, at an appropriate level, of environmental resources, whilst producing viable economic opportunities for the tourism industry and host communities, making the use of these resources through conservation beneficial to all tourism role players."*

The situation in South Africa is different in that the major challenges, namely harnessing tourism market growth, environmental management and raising socio-economic welfare, will not be adequately addressed by merely adopting the principles of ecotourism promoted internationally. What is required is a form of ecotourism that challenges the country's specific needs (Fabricius, 1995). Specifically, ecotourism needs to act as a catalyst to realigning the imbalances of the past, as mentioned in section 1.8.

It is of particular importance to this study that a South African model of ecotourism incorporates conserved areas, such as the proposed Gariep TFCA. This will, for the first time, provide the surrounding region with the possibility to retain a larger portion of the benefits from tourism and consequently be able to see the opportunities from conservation, which was denied local communities in the past.

The major problem facing ecotourism implementation in South Africa is the basic lack of awareness, at ground level, of environmental matters and of tourism's potential in rural areas. Therefore, as an approach to tourism development it must contain a large element of education. Only then, can an understanding be instilled that ecotourism, as a component of development, has the potential to encourage the protection of resources it depends on, while, at the same time, make sure that the benefits accrue locally and regionally. This problem was addressed in Namaqualand (Archer, F. 1998) where, during tourism development workshops, an integrated community approach was used to create an understanding of the positive and negative effects of tourism. It was acknowledged that the workshops stimulated awareness and that communities felt empowered.

A successful ecotourism strategy could also have the potential to encourage, and even push, tourism associated industry, both vertically and horizontally, towards ecologically and socially sustainable practises. These could include the agricultural industry and others to look at implementing environmental management systems such as ISO 14000.

3.7. The Advantages of an Ecotourism approach to development in the Green Kalahari and the proposed GTFCA

As an approach to the development of tourism in the Green Kalahari region, surrounding the proposed Gariiep TFCA, ecotourism will provide a framework for the sustainable utilisation of the whole areas conservation value, creating a unique tourism “product” which is specific and authentic. Successful marketing of this “product”, in a highly competitive tourism market, could generate foreign and inter-regional exchange earnings, employment, and broaden the economic base, and correlate with the aspirations of the PPF and Afrikatourism.

There are a number of important advantages of an ecotourism approach to the proposed GTFCA. Firstly, the boundaries of the proposed area do not follow any ecologically defined limits and the ecosystems contained within the boundaries are not completely understood. Therefore the area required to maintain the stability of these ecosystems is unknown and attempts to protect the “buffer zone” surrounding the GTFCA is important. Any development on the periphery, which is not appropriate, will damage this area, possibly, irreversibly and impact negatively on the natural balance within the conserved area. Secondly, having a compatible rather than antagonistic tourism structure already in place in the vicinity will enable the GTFCA to reduce the lag time towards becoming economically viable. Thirdly, most international funding for conservation demands, as a prerequisite, a participatory, interactive approach, with the surrounding area and its people. Having an ecotourism approach to development in the district should encourage international support for the GTFCA.

The idea of sustainable tourism has received considerable coverage in both academic and political literature in recent years. However, the vast majority of researchers on sustainable tourism have concentrated on the relationship between tourism and the biophysical environment whilst the questions about sustainable tourism development in rural areas are rarely asked or answered (Butler and Hall, 1997).

Tourism has often been thought to be compatible with principles of sustainable development which has endeared it to academics and policy makers alike who have introduced the concept into policy-making for tourism, especially in rural areas and natural areas. Nevertheless, there remains a massive 'implementation gap' between the policy idea and its application. One of the major errors which policy makers and academics have made with respect to tourism is to treat the industry in isolation from the other factors, which constitute the social, environmental, and economic fabric of rural regions. Tourism, therefore, needs to be appropriately embedded within the particular set of linkages and relationships which comprise a particular rural location and this should be recognised in a regional development plan.

Consequently, in order to implement true sustainable development for the Green Kalahari, tourism must be seen as just one component of a policy mix which government and the private sector have endorsed. Tourism needs to be in harmony with the multiplicity of uses, needs and demands which characterise this area in order for it to be deemed as appropriate and potentially sustainable. The following chapters will look at this by reviewing current tourism policy and discussing the implications for the Green Kalahari, the proposed Gariiep TFCA and the potential of introducing an ecotourism strategy for tourism development. In order to do this it is necessary to first review the current status of the tourism industry in the Northern Cape and how it compares within the South African context.

CHAPTER 4

**Tourism in South Africa, the Northern Cape and
the Lower Orange District – ‘The Green Kalahari’**

4. TOURISM IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE NORTHERN CAPE AND THE LOWER ORANGE DISTRICT – ‘THE GREEN KALAHARI’

4.1 Introduction

The trends in global tourism have put South Africa in an enviable position given the nature of her tourism products and the country has been portrayed as one of the world’s fastest-growing tourist destinations by a wide variety of media sources. This growth is also a result of the country’s more visible role in the international community and global awareness of its peaceful transition to democracy. These factors have opened up new avenues for tourism, and have boosted growth from its previously limited base.

South Africa is blessed with a variety of ecosystems, abundant wildlife and plant species, as well as a multi-cultural society. These assets provide a firm foundation for ‘ecotourism’ in particular. Ecotourism is increasingly been viewed as an approach to development which can act as a vehicle for redistributing wealth to rural areas and as a catalyst for social change and healing in South Africa by the state, the private sector, and community organisations.

“South Africa has the potential to become the greatest eco-destination in the world” (SATOURL); *“forex earnings will in future exceed those from gold mining”* (Conservation Corporation); *“tourism is nature’s way of redistributing wealth”* (Open Africa Initiative). These are just a few examples of the views held and the organisations who espouse a confidence about tourism in South Africa (Fabricius, 1995).

This section provides estimates of visitor numbers and the scale and distribution of the economic benefits of tourism in South Africa and the Northern Cape in particular. All statistics are sourced from SATOUR unless otherwise stated. 1997 figures had not been released at the time of writing.

4.2. Global Tourism in relation to South Africa

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) estimates that tourism has a global turnover of at least \$420 billion per year (IUCN, 1996). However, according to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), Africa presently draws in only 3.3% of the world's tourists and takes a mere 1.8% of the income from world tourism.

The fact that tourists to Africa spend proportionately less than tourists to other destinations indicates that given the richness of Africa's natural and cultural assets, its true tourism potential is clearly not being realised. In fact, the share of tourism receipts captured by Africa remained relatively constant from 1990 and 1996 when the WTO predicted average annual global growth to be 7%.

The figures for South Africa, however, are far more favourable. South Africa received just over 30% of all arrivals to the African continent in 1995 (revised from WTO by SATOUR, 1996a) and this figure has increased substantially since then, as the following section will substantiate.

4.3. Foreign Tourism to South Africa.

4.3.1. Market Trends

Foreign tourism in South Africa has been growing at an increasing rate since the introduction of political reform and is the driving force behind the overall growth in tourism. In 1995, 4.7 million foreign tourists visited South Africa, compared to 310,000 in 1986. The compounded annual growth rate for overseas arrivals during this period amounted to 17% (Kessel Feinstein, cited by SATOUR, 1996a).

Foreign tourists include overseas tourists and tourists from other African countries. In 1995, overseas tourists accounted for 75% (3.6 million) of all foreign arrivals (SATOUR, 1996a). While the size of both categories increased between 1992 and 1995, the increase in arrivals from other African countries showed signs of slowing, from a growth rate of 19% in 1994 to 12% in 1995. Whereas the percentage growth rate for overseas arrivals increased from 14% to 52%. However, the growth rate of overseas tourists has shown signs of slowing and was only 9.4% from 1995 to 1996. The total increase in foreign tourists between 1995 and 1996 was 10.2%. This may suggest that since 1994 tourism growth in South Africa has been in a honeymoon period and this is now coming to an end. In 1994 tourism in South Africa had a limited base and the substantial growth experienced was due to South Africa becoming a 'fashionable' destination. The advantages from this meant that growth was happening on its own. The fact that this period may be coming to an end does not suggest that tourism growth will stagnate but rather that tourism in South Africa now needs to compete and therefore needs to work harder to capitalise on its comparative advantages (Ecotourism Afrika, 1997).

Europe is currently South Africa's most important source market for overseas visitors, making up 55%, mainly from the UK and Germany. Although Europe has been largely responsible for the growth in overseas arrivals, other source markets have also grown substantially. The importance of spreading the source markets as wide as possible is witnessed by the recent economic downturn in South East Asia.

The growth in overseas tourists is expected to continue and reach 2.6 million by 2000 and the number of visitors from African countries is forecast to reach 5.4 million by the year 2000. (SATOUR, 1996a). These predictions are based on the following assumption:

- The perception of personnel safety improves;
- The momentum and focus of overseas marketing and promotion campaigns is substantially expanded and intensified;
- The current positive international market climate for South Africa remains stable, and;

- The current socio-political and economic situation in South Africa remains stable. (SATOUR, 1996c)

Since these assumptions were made there has been a 30% decline in the value of the Rand just in 1998. It is highly possible that this may play a role in increasing the expected growth in overseas arrivals in the short to medium term.

4.3.2. Purpose of Visit of Foreign Tourists

Of the foreign visitors visiting South Africa, almost half were on holiday, one third on business and one third VFR (Visiting Family and Friends). This shows that visitors come to South Africa for more than one purpose since the sum totals to over 100%.

Table 2. Percentage Breakdown of Purpose of Visit by Country of Origin

| | Holiday | VFR | Business/ Conference |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| Africa | 21 | 22.5 | 50 |
| UK | 47 | 46.5 | 30.5 |
| Germany | 67 | 36.5 | 21.5 |
| North America | 43 | 32 | 45.5 |
| Far East | 55 | 20 | 33 |
| All Foreign Visitors | 45.5 | 32 | 34 |

Source: Satour 1996a and 1996c

However, these figures also hide some interesting details:-

- Percentages vary significantly by province visited,
- Percentages vary significantly between the tourists from different origins. For example, the main purpose of travel for 50% of Africans is business, 66% of Germans are on holiday, and a large proportion of UK arrivals are VFR visitor.
- There is considerable seasonal variation. There are higher proportions of holidaymakers and VFRs in winter.
- Relatively high proportions of foreign visitors (50%) have visited South Africa at least once before, especially those from other African countries and the UK. This fact is important since it could be used to stimulate tourism in less accessible areas of the country, such as the Northern Cape. Many of these tourists may be looking for more unique experiences than those tourists on their first visit.

Surveys of tourists leaving South Africa provide quantitative proof of the global trends and in particular the move towards nature-based tourism. While the main attractions differ between nationalities, the key attractions are the landscapes and scenery, the wildlife, and to a lesser extent, the climate. Of particular interest to this study is that the surveys of international visitors show that respectively, 46% and 19% of visitors mentioned scenic and wildlife resources as their major reasons for visiting South Africa (Satour, 1996c). Although the wildlife category, and consequently conserved areas, is rated as a major attraction, it does not usually form the primary attraction, but is often a 2 or 3 day 'add-on' to the rest of the trip (SATOUR, 1996a). However this may not be the case for tourists primarily interested in ecotourism experiences. But it does provide evidence that wildlife is just one part of a tourism experience and that there is a need to create a more complete tourism product if visitors are going to spend longer in conserved areas, especially the less accessible ones.

4.3.3. Economic Contribution of Foreign Tourism to South Africa

The economic contribution of foreign tourism to South Africa, as calculated through foreign exchange receipts, was estimated at R8.9 billion in 1995 (Table 2.). This is expected to rise to R29.7 billion in 2000, allowing for an annual inflation rate of 7.5% per annum (Kessel Feinstein, 1996 based on South African Reserve Bank figures and cited by SATOUR, 1996a). The proportion of foreign tourism relative to domestic tourism has increased from 34% of the total economic value of tourism in 1992 to 39% in 1995. The three dominant provinces benefiting from foreign tourism receipts are Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, which account for 83% of the foreign tourism market, while the Northern Cape accounts for only 1.64% (R0.175 billion, 1995).

In terms of spending within the country, the accommodation sector is the greatest beneficiary from foreign tourism followed by restaurants and food outlets, curios and local transport. Such a breakdown provides a useful indication of the sectors most benefiting from tourism and the areas in which most employment will be generated.

4.4. Domestic Tourism in South Africa

Estimations of the domestic market are complex because domestic movements are difficult to monitor, and it consists largely of day-trippers and VFR. SATOUR last undertook two domestic tourism market surveys in 1994. However these surveys are limited by the fact that they are based on a sample of only 2000 households, and excluded 'day-trippers', and are now out of date.

Since 1994 there has been a dramatic change in the composition and nature of domestic tourism attributable to the end of apartheid and an increase in prosperity among the non-white populace. A study undertaken by Durban Metropolitan Council's Urban Strategy Department in 1996 (LAPC, 1997) claimed that total growth in the domestic tourism

market between 1986 and 2000 would be 83%. A large percentage of which has taken place in the last 6 years. The survey reflected that the rapid change in the nature of domestic tourism, with a large increase in black South African tourism, in some cases over 400%, will be characterised by a higher proportion of 'day-trippers' and VFRs, but carrying lower spending power. Existing tourism facilities are not geared for this type of tourism. Therefore there is potential for new employment opportunities in both construction and operation of new facilities to cater for this market. This situation will require careful attention with regard to the positive and negative impacts on conserved areas.

4.4.1. Economic Contribution of Domestic Holiday Tourism to South Africa.

Based on the findings of the 1994 Domestic Tourism Survey, the LAPC estimated that some 12.1 million domestic holiday trips were undertaken in 1994, generating around R14.3 billion in domestic expenditure (adjusted to 1997 price levels). Actual figures for 1997 are likely to be greater than those given due to the perception that domestic tourism is increasing.

In a breakdown of the percentage of domestic tourists visiting each province relative to their respective share of the national population the Northern Cape is only one of a handful of provinces which experiences a net influx. KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape account for 56.2% of total expenditure while they only account for 37.5% of all trips. This shows that they attract a larger percentage of wealthier tourists. Similarly, the Northern Cape, which accounts for 2% of all trips and 2.3% of total expenditure also attracts a relatively large percentage of wealthier tourists.

Whilst the percentage of domestic tourism expenditure is fairly evenly dispersed across different socio-economic groups for accommodation, food transport, and spending money, domestic holiday makers spend a lot less than foreign tourists on accommodation but a lot more on transport.

Table 3, provides an estimation of the contribution of tourism to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in South Africa from 1992 to 1995 and predicts its contribution to 2000. In 1995, tourism was estimated to contribute around R22.8 billion, constituting 4.9% of GDP. The value of tourism has increased since then and it is estimated that its contribution to GDP will reach 7% by 2000.

Table 3. Estimated Economic Contribution of South Africa's Tourism Industry

| | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 2000 forecast |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| Foreign Tourism | 4.4 | 5.4 | 6.9 | 8.9 | 29.7 |
| Domestic Tourism | 8.4 | 10.3 | 12.4 | 13.9 | |
| Estimated Total | 12.8 | 15.7 | 19.3 | 22.8 | |
| Ratio of GDP | 3.75 | 4.09 | 4.45 | 4.9 | |

Notes: Includes inflation at an average of 7.5% per annum.

4.5. Tourism in the Northern Cape

The core sectors of the tourism industry in the Northern Cape are dominated by a large number of SMME's (Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises), a relatively small number of major interests such as hotel chains and car rental companies and by major attractions such as the two existing National Parks.

Historically, tourism in the Northern Cape has been an underdeveloped sector. Holiday tourism has traditionally been limited to 'through traffic' and a limited number of tourists to the four key attractions, namely the Namaqualand flowers, Augrabies Falls National Park, the Big Hole and the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (DRA Development, 1998).

To understand the reasons why the Northern Cape has not developed its tourism in the past it is necessary to look at the characteristics of the region.

4.5.1 Regional Profile

The Northern Cape is the largest province in South Africa covering 29%. It has the smallest population (1.9%) and economy, and in 1991 it contributed 2.2% of all national value added as measured by the Gross Geographical Product, employing 2.2% of total South African population. This shows that the province has a proportionately larger share of national economic activity and employment than the population, which is a feature of its mining and agricultural sectors.

The province is however experiencing a decline in these traditional sectors and consequently real growth has been very low in comparison to the other provinces. This situation has increased the importance being placed on developing the tourism industry, which is considered to be one of only a very few potential growth generators in the province. Importantly, well-managed tourism could play a vital role in diversifying and boost the economy, and create the opportunities for upliftment. In the past, tourism enterprises and investment has been dominated by the white population, while the racial composition of the Northern Cape is dominated by the Coloured population (52%) with Blacks comprising 31%, Whites 17% and Asians 1% and the predominant language is Afrikaans.

4.5.2. Foreign Tourism in the Northern Cape

The Satour research of 1995 indicated that the Northern Cape hosted approximately 60,000 or 6% of all overseas visitors for at least one night. This is the smallest proportion of any province of the total number of foreign visitors to the country but this should be compared to the province's proportion of the nation's population of 1.9%. This suggests

that tourism could contain the capacity to have a greater impact on the provincial economy than in many of the other provinces.

Although the Northern Cape is traditionally viewed as capturing transit tourists travelling between Gauteng and Cape Town, the length of stay of foreign tourists in the province increased by 30% when August 1995 is compared to August 1996. Assuming that visitors spend the same amount daily, this effectively represents an increase of 30% in foreign tourism expenditure in the Northern Cape. However figures for January 1995 and 1996 show a drop from 7.5 days to 4.4, which shows that there is a seasonal variation with visitors staying longer in winter than in summer.

Table 4. Foreign Tourists to the Northern Cape

| | % of Tourists who visit | Number of Tourists per annum | Average Number of Nights | Economic Value of Foreign Tourists |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Northern Cape (population 1.9 m) | 6% (smallest) | 60,000 | 6 | R 0.175bn South African Total, R10.69bn |

Current statistics show that the most important foreign markets for the Northern Cape are Germany 21%, Africa 15%, the UK 14%, North America 9% and the Far East 9% mainly for holiday purposes. The majority of foreign tourists visit the province in winter (70%) for the flowers and the cooler temperatures, apart from the Germans who are often VFR in Namibia and seem to prefer the festive season during summer (SATOUR 1996b).

Only 8% of foreign visitors to the Northern Cape during August 1996 were VFR, which is lower than any other province. In contrast, the percentage of tourists in the province on holiday during the same period was 66%, which was higher than any other province. This

is significant since it appears that of the 6% of foreign tourists that the Northern Cape attracts more are purely holidaymakers as opposed to VFR or on business.

4.5.3. Economic Contribution of Foreign Tourism in the Northern Cape

The average number of nights spent in the Northern Cape by overseas visitors for 1995 was 6 nights and they spent an average of R486 per day. On this basis, the overseas market in the Northern Cape was estimated to be worth R175 million in 1995.

4.5.4. Domestic Tourism in the Northern Cape

The Northern Cape captures 2% of the domestic tourism market and 2.3% of total expenditure by domestic tourists, constituting R284 million in 1994. The socio-economic breakdown of domestic tourism to the province is dominated by the higher living standard categories. The Northern Cape's most important source markets are the Western Cape (34%), 'itself' (27%) and the North West (21%).

In addition, the Satour survey of 1994 indicated that the Northern Cape receives 2% of all business trips, which represents 15,660 travellers annually. Domestic business travellers are the highest spending category at R1,073 per day. Therefore Domestic business travel was worth R16 million to the province.

4.6. Employment

Globally, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) estimates that in employment terms, tourism is the world's largest industry, providing 255 million jobs (1 in 9), and 10.7% of global wages in 1996. In the Middle East/Africa tourism category employment was estimate to be 11.2% (19.9 million jobs) of total employment in 1996 (These figures

represent direct and indirect jobs in the formal and informal sectors).

Table 5, shows a breakdown of global estimates for the economic impact of tourism in 1996. As a result of tourism growth, the number of jobs is expected to increase to around 385 million by 2006. WTTC claims that due to the high levels of personnel service required limits the potential for labour to be replaced by technological advancement, thus ensuring continued employment creation.

Table 5. Travel and Tourism's Economic Impact – Global & Middle East/ Africa Estimates.

| | 1996 | | 2006 | | Growth |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| | Tourism-related employment | Percentage of total employment | Tourism-related employment | Percentage of total employment | |
| Global | 255 million | 10.7% | 385 million | 11.1% | 50.1% |
| Middle East/Africa | 19.9 million | 11.2% | 24.4 million | 10.6% | 22.6% |

Note: Business travel is not included in these estimates since it is an 'intermediate input' which is factored into the GDP contribution of other industries which are driving the travel.

Source: WTTC, 1996

4.6.1. Contribution of Tourism to Employment in South Africa

Estimates claim that 810,000 jobs are directly or indirectly attributable to tourism in South Africa (SATOUR 1996a). This represents one in 20 economically active people in both the direct and indirect sectors. If the expected growth in tourism takes place, this figure could reach 350,000 new jobs by the year 2000. Table 6 shows how this compares to employment in other major industrial sectors.

Table 6. Tourism's contribution to Employment, 1994

| Industrial Sector | Employment Figures | % of Total Employment |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Manufactured Goods | 1, 399 513 | 9.8% |
| Tourism | 810 000 | 5.6% |
| Mining | 613 584 | 4.3% |
| Agriculture | 982 616 | 6.9% |

Source: LAPC, Northern Cape Tourism Sector Study, 1997

In comparison to the percentage of total employment held by tourism internationally South Africa lags behind. This suggests that there is much more employment capacity within the industry than is currently been utilised. This potential is also reflected in the difference between South Africa and comparable tourism nations in regard to tourism receipts. Therefore, spare capacity exists to creating more jobs will bring in more tourism receipts.

4.6.2. The Contribution to Employment by Tourism in the Northern Cape

Table 7. The amount of Tourism-related employment generated in each province.

| | Total tourism-related employment | Percentage of total employment |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Gauteng | 58, 000 | 2.4% |
| Western Cape | 155, 000 | 10.9% |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 213, 000 | 11.5% |
| Northern Cape | 11, 000 | 6.0% |
| Eastern Cape | 62, 000 | 6.4% |
| Free State | 28, 000 | 3.8% |
| Mpumalanga | 26,000 | 4.3% |
| Northern Transvaal | 44, 000 | 6.8% |
| North West | 42, 000 | 5.6% |

Source: LAPC, 1997

The LAPC gives a rough estimate of tourism employment figures, both direct and indirect, in the Northern Cape. This represents 6% (11, 000) of total employment in the province. In comparison to the other provinces, the numbers employed are the smallest by a large margin, but the importance of tourism is reflected by the percentage of employment.

Although no comprehensive study has been carried out to estimate tourism in the Province, the Green Kalahari (LODC) recently (February 1997 and February 1998) undertook a study of direct tourism employment in the Lower Orange District. It provides a broad estimate of the levels of employment and the recent changes in the tourism industry. The results are as follows:

Table 8. Tourism Employment estimates for the Green Kalahari

| <u>Tourism establishments</u> | <u>Number of Establishments</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Tourism Departments | 6 |
| Accommodation Establishments | 62 |
| Restaurants (seating) | 8 |
| Car Hire | 8 |
| Bus operator | 1 |
| National Parks | 2 |
| Tour operators | 3 |
| River operators | 2 |

The results of the survey indicated that:

- 865 people are employed by tourism in the Green Kalahari District;
- 126 of these are in managerial positions;
- employment is increasing - 126 additional jobs were created in 1996;

- operators were confident they would employ more staff during 1997, and;
- believed that tourism in the Green Kalahari will continue its growth.

These figures do not include those employed in complimentary tourism-related activities such as agriculture or retail outlets since it is difficult to separate the income and employment generated purely by tourism in other industrial sectors. In addition, many people in the Northern Cape use tourism as a form of generating a second income, part-time rather than deriving full time employment from the tourism industry.

It is clear that a more thorough study of tourism needs to be carried out, similar to that carried out in Namaqualand (Archer, F. 1997).

4.6.3. Skill Levels

It is perceived that the tourism industry employs a higher proportion of part-time and seasonal workers and offers mainly low skilled jobs and consequently is a low and easy entry point into the labour market. To some extent this is true and thus demonstrates the importance of tourism to reducing unemployment. However a broad range of skills are needed by tourism as Hotman (1993) indicates, (cited LAPC, 1997):

- managerial 3%
- skilled 4%
- technical 9%
- unskilled 48%

However, in National Parks and conserved areas, there are a higher degree of skilled and technical workers than these figures suggest (LAPC, 1997).

4.7. Conclusions

South Africa has experienced some of the fastest tourism growth of any country over the past five years. This growth has been driven mainly by a huge expansion in foreign tourist arrivals, who contribute more financially per head than most types of tourism. This growth is in keeping with global trends towards nature-based tourism, but recent indications suggest that whilst tourism is expected to grow further, although this is not assured, South Africa will need to compete more vigorously if tourism is to attract the expected 7 million foreign visitors by 2006.

It is clear that the Northern Cape, and consequently the Green Kalahari Region, has the potential to attract many more tourists. The province seems to be failing to take advantage of the foreign tourism growth in South Africa but it is not too late to target this higher spending market. Since a large percentage of foreign visitors have visited South Africa before, the Northern Cape has the opportunity to attract those visitors looking for a more unique experience, if it can create the right tourism products.

The success of tourism will be determined by the extent to which it can expand and increase participation, and reduce seasonal variation; thus creating permanent employment and making it a serious generator of income. Tourism is already an important employer in the province and could play a larger role in the Northern Cape economy by becoming an important income generator. In the Green Kalahari the opportunity exists to capitalise on the 2-3 day 'add-on' wildlife trips, as the catalyst for attracting tourists in the first place and to create tourism products around them to entice them to stay longer and help reduce the seasonal variation. The Green Kalahari is blessed with two National Parks, which should play an important role in this relatively isolated part of the country.

Domestic tourism has also experienced growth, but more fundamentally, it is experiencing a significant change in structure. Domestic tourism is now characterised by a much larger proportion of 'day-trippers' and VFRs. Whilst this creates opportunities, current tourism infrastructure is not geared to take advantage and careful consideration will need to be

given to the potential positive and negative impacts of this type of tourism on conserved areas.

Investment is required to broaden the appeal of the province and improve the infrastructure conducive to tourism. Different groups, such as the backpacker market, and 'day-trippers', have been identified as uncaptured, niche markets (LAPC 1997) and more upmarket facilities as well as improved communications will be needed. More importantly, a committed, coordinated and informed approach will be needed to focus attention on the tourism sector so that it is sustainable.

Historically, tourism in the Northern Cape has been underdeveloped. Tourism enterprises and investment have been dominated by the white population, which makes up only 17% of the population. However, as a result of political change and a decline in traditional economic sectors, the development of tourism is gaining increased attention as one a limited number of potential growth stimulators and economic diversifiers.

In order to capture more market share the province will need to create different strategies for foreign tourists from different origins and for domestic tourists of different socio-economic strategies.

A successful strategy to drive tourism development should aim to establish the tourism industry as a permanent sector of the economy rather than, as is the current situation, a seasonal contributor to employment and the GGP of the Northern Cape.

Hopefully, the new Northern Cape Development Strategy and the subsequent Tourism Policy can provide the necessary direction and structures to enable tourism development to succeed in engendering a belief in the benefits of tourism and the ability to create genuine and unique tourism products.

The following chapters will show the situation facing the Green Kalahari region and puts forward the suggestion that the adoption of an ecotourism approach to tourism

development could be a successful way forward. In order to implement an ecotourism strategy for tourism development in the Green Kalahari requires the appropriate institutional structures. The next chapter will discuss whether these structures are in place or planned at a national, provincial and local level.

CHAPTER 5

Policy Environment and the Institutional Structures for Tourism

5. THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR TOURISM

5.1. Introduction

Government intervention in tourism is widespread internationally. Tourism, like any other industry, has problems, which stem from market failures, imperfections and public/ social concerns about market outcomes. Market failures take many forms but of concern to this study is that tourism often fails to protect adequately the environment on which it depends and the 'tragedy of the commons' can occur (Hardin, 1968). This is the inability of individuals or groups to coordinate a strategy to protect the environment because they consider it as a 'free' resource.

Market imperfections can be found where tourism fails to include the needs of individuals. Many instances have been reported where big tourism projects, which invest large amounts of capital, have disrupted, even destroyed, access to environmental resources by alienating local people and wildlife.

In the past, some these problems have been aggravated, rather than cured, by government responses to them. This is because tourism, as an industry, is poorly understood, as are its various impacts. Hard to define, tourism is consequently beset by problems of analysis, monitoring, coordination and policy making. For example, the understanding of the following is minimal:

- the dynamics of the tourism destination system in terms of the most appropriate set of supply-side linkages to maximise the returns from visitor expenditure,
- the long-term effects of tourism on the socio-cultural and physical environment, and
- the relationship of tourism to other industries.

Globally, rural economies have experienced stagnation and even a downturn for decades. Tourism development has therefore received increasing recognition as a regional and national development tool, although this has only recently been acknowledged in South Africa. Tourism has been promoted as a source of rural economic growth and employment generation at all levels of government internationally. For example, The Australian Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994) argued that “Tourism creates jobs, stimulates regional development and diversifies the regional economic base. With the decline in many traditional industries in rural and regional areas, tourism offers an opportunity to revitalise regional Australia and spread the benefits of tourism”, (cited Hall, M. *et al* in Butler, R. and Hall, M. 1997)

Despite the focus on tourism as a tool for regional development, rarely is there a clear concept on policy or planning of rural tourism, or of the role of tourism in rural regions and its potential impacts. The fact that tourism is a complex, dynamic, highly competitive and fragmented industry makes it difficult to control and set appropriate policy for. Consequently, the chances of conflict between tourism, other industries and social activities are extremely high.

Nevertheless, it is crucial that control of tourism is kept local. If not, the chances of development not being compatible with local preferences and needs are much greater. However, local control will not necessarily guarantee appropriate tourism or its permanency. But, if tourism policy for development in rural areas is to help local communities in achieving sustainable futures, full participation by local people should be an explicit objective of policy making and planning.

In light of the difficulties discussed above in policy-making for tourism this discussion now moves to look at the approach being taken to tourism development in the Northern Cape. It is intended that tourism development will follow the directives put forward by national and provincial policies and the most important of these are as follows.

5.2. National Policy

The competitive advantage of South African tourism and its growth potential was only embraced by National Government in 1994. Since then, tourism has been attracting increasing attention because, as a form of development, it can be used as a tool for empowerment, economic diversification and upliftment. As such, it is intended that tourism will play an important role in the national Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP).

5.2.1 National Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR)

GEAR builds on the RDP by setting out an integrated economic strategy for rebuilding and restructuring the national economy. The key objectives that are of concern to this study are:

- A competitive fast growing economy which creates jobs;
- A redistribution of income and opportunities towards the poor; and
- A society in which the health, education and other services are available to all.

(DEAT, 1998)

The GEAR strategy aims for a target growth rate of 6% per annum and job creation of 400,000 per annum by the year 2000. Several inter-related developments underpin the realisation of these targets, which include:

- A brisk expansion in private sector capital formation;
- an acceleration in public sector investment
- An increase in infrastructure development and services delivery; and
- Making intensive use of labour-based techniques.

GEAR provides foundation and gives direction to all economic policy initiatives. This study will now look at the South African tourism policy.

5.2.2. National Tourism Policy

A White Paper, put forward by the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism, dealing with the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa was adopted in 1996. This paper recognises the country's tourism potential for the first time and claims tourism, more than any other economic sector, can now play a major role in achieving the objectives of the RDP. It also notes the internationally competitive nature of tourism and the focus on the growing nature-based tourism market. The White Paper identifies the need to realise this latent market potential in a manner that derives the greatest benefits and avoids the repetition of mistakes that have been made in promoting tourism development in other countries.

As such the Tourism White Paper proposes the concept of 'responsible tourism' - an approach to tourism development so that it will "*contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of every South African*". 'Responsible tourism' implies a proactive approach to develop, market and manage the tourism industry, to create competitive advantage. Within this, it is implicit that there is also environmental responsibility by promoting balanced and sustainable tourism and environmentally based tourism activities. In addition, there should be active support given to the involvement of local communities who also have a responsibility to become involved in a sustainable fashion as well as protection from over-commercialisation and over-exploitation, by government and business. In all, the concept of 'responsible tourism' encapsulates responsible government.

The White Paper lists the following as the guiding principles for the development of responsible tourism:

- Tourism development will be private sector driven;
- Government will provide the enabling framework for tourism development;
- Effective community involvement will form the basis for growth;
- Sustainable environmental practises will be adopted;
- The creation of partnerships between key stakeholders;

- Empowerment of previously neglected communities, particularly women;
- Cooperation with other states in Southern Africa; and
- Tourism development will support the economic, social and environmental goals and policies of the government.

5.2.3. *Tourism in GEAR - Tourism Development Strategy 1998-2000*

Tourism in GEAR (DEAT, 1998) is complimentary to the White Paper on Tourism and provides a cohesive tourism strategy so that the tourism sector can become a major GEAR stimulus, concentrating on the:

- Comparative advantage of the tourism asset base;
- Complimentarity of the country's tourist asset base with global trends;
- Ability of the sector to attract substantial private sector investment;
- Ability of the sector to accommodate SMME development;
- Labour intensity of the sector;
- Tourism sector's potential to act as a catalyst for major infrastructure investment;
- Ability to stimulate the development and broadening of the economic base; and
- Tourism's value as a non-primary export earner.

The strategy commits the government to creating an adequate funding base, a new institutional structure to manage and guide tourism development, and to promote principles of responsible tourism. It also suggests that a new public sector agency, called Tourism South Africa (TSA), be established as a "*private sector orientated statutory promotion agency*" that will devise, implement and monitor the principles of sustainable development.

National government also wants the Department of Environment and Tourism (DEAT) to set up a tourism incentives workshop that will coordinate at interdepartmental level, and will including as many organisations as possible. The intention is that they can provide

input to developing packages of incentives to stimulate private sector and foreign investment in the tourism industry such as levy systems and donor funds. At the same time, a lobby group should be created that will lobby government to increase its contribution to tourism.

In order to achieve the goal of increasing the contribution of the national tourism sector from 4.7% to 8% of Gross Domestic Product by 2000 the strategy proposes the following:

- Promotion and marketing targeted at the growing high yield international markets and the emerging domestic market;
- Focusing investment, infrastructure and development programmes on underdeveloped areas with proven potential;
- Broadening and diversifying the products offered to highlight the real African culture of the destination;
- Aggressively promoting entrepreneurship and community shareholding in tourism;
- Establishing a tourist friendly workforce and population; and
- Promoting and ensuring excellent and sustainable management of natural and cultural resources.

The White Paper, while trying to create an environment for 'responsible' tourism development, states that the driving force for tourism development will come from provincial tourism organisations.

5.3. Northern Cape Provincial Initiatives

5.3.1. Introduction

Since 1994 the institutional framework in which tourism in the Northern Cape operates has undergone major reconstruction. During this time the development of tourism has been severely hampered by being regularly shunted into different portfolios and no

provincial, district or local directives or policies are formally in place.

The fact that no district, or local tourism directives have been established has resulted in tourism development taking place in a vacuum, and little or no coordination of tourism has taken place. This situation is highlighted by the fact that many district initiatives are being enacted without consultation with local government or local communities. In addition, the Northern Cape Tourism Association, which was funded through Satour, has been disbanded and Satour has closed down its provincial functions, although it still carries out international promotion of South African tourism. Clearly this situation has culminated in a very confused state of affairs.

The Provincial government is now responsible for tourism promotion and in March 1998 established the Northern Cape Tourism Authority (NCTA), a permanent Section 21 company, with the aim of creating a generic marketing plan for all six districts of the Northern Cape. These are Namaqualand, Hantam Karoo, Upper Karoo, Diamond Fields, Kalahari and the largest of the six, Green Kalahari, which is the focus of this study. The responsibility for tourism development will be divided between these six district councils, in collaboration with the NCTA, which will fulfil the following functions:

- Facilitate the development and management of all tourists ventures;
- provide access to loan capital and sponsorship;
- develop community-based tourism;
- develop an ecotourism operation in reserves;
- develop a data base on tourism in the province

(DRA Development, 1998)

Unfortunately the Board of the company, which includes both public and private representation has not included the South African National Parks. It appears that an opportunity has been missed to involve an important constituent of the provinces tourism industry.

The National Government has shown the importance it puts on the tourism sector and recommends 'responsible tourism' development that is sustainable, integrated and participatory as the way forward. This does not appear to have happened at provincial and local levels in the Northern Cape, as yet, and certain vital components have been overlooked. The Land and Agricultural Policy Centre (LAPC) concluded in its Northern Cape Tourism Sector Study (1997) that in the Northern Cape:

- Cooperation and communication between government departments regarding tourism development can be vastly improved;
- There is a lack of a comprehensive tourism data base;
- Lack of capacity regarding tourism development - particularly for development of community based ecotourism and the development of small, medium and micro sized enterprises (SMMEs).

It appears that there has also been a failure to comprehend the importance of planning for a strategy towards tourism development in the province and this has manifested itself in uncontrolled and disjointed tourism development since 1994. What is needed is an approach that creates a theme for tourism development based on sustainable principles and participatory practises. This should provide the focus and direction for integrating and coordinating the tourism industry towards the creation of a unique competitive product. This situation is now getting attention and a Draft Tourism Policy for the Northern Cape has already been published (DRA development, 1998).

To understand the context, within which this Draft Tourism Policy will function, it is necessary to first review the Northern Cape Provincial Development Strategy.

5.3.2. Provincial Policy for Development

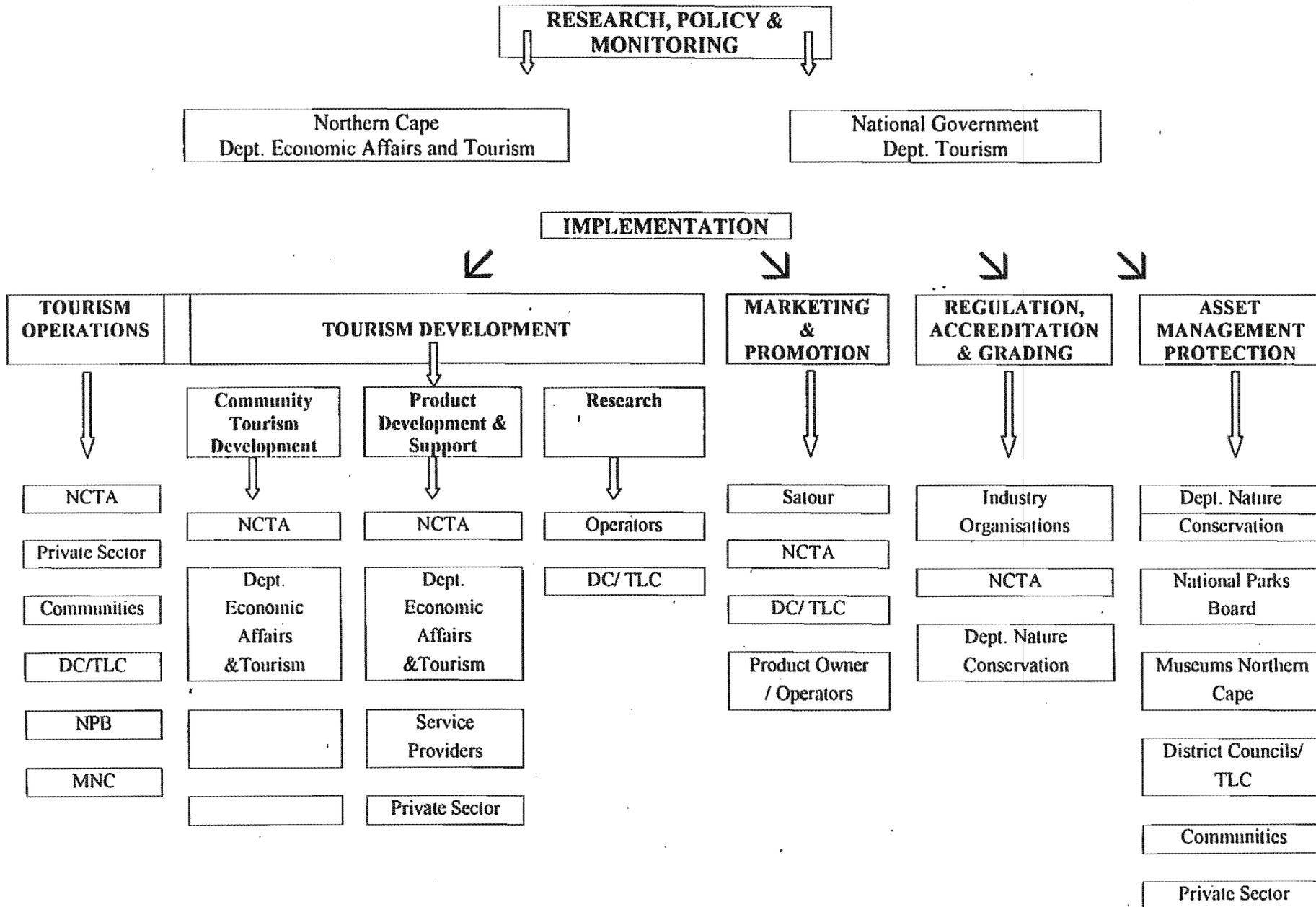
In early 1998 the Provincial Development Strategy was adopted which provides an integrated planning framework for the Northern Cape in response to and in support of

national development initiatives. Amongst the key areas of support by the province for a provincial spatial strategy of interest to this study includes:

- *The promotion of investment and economic growth so as to realise the province's growth potential;*
- *The protection of the environment from further damage from present land uses and to establish clear environmental guidelines for investors;*
- *Emerging growth centres, where the natural resource base has been the leading comparative advantage.* Whilst economic output has been increasing, employment has been declining. Centres like Upington, the strategy claims, need improved transport networks so that they can play an increased role as distribution centres, which will aid tourism development and encourage expansion of the economic base. This will support redistribution which is of critical importance, and;
- *Special Resource Areas, which include the Orange River.* This could conflict with the tourism potential of this area. Careful consideration will have to be taken in regard to expansion of irrigation farming so that it does not preclude utilisation of the Orange River and its vicinity for alternative land uses such as the proposed Gariep TFCA.

This development strategy recognises the considerable potential of tourism and has consequently made provision for investment in tourism infrastructural support. Tourism is recognised to have the potential to provide opportunities for the development and growth of small, medium and micro enterprises both within the industry and in associated support activities. The Provincial Development Strategy intends to actively encourage SMME development through tourism, as one of its strategies. However it fails to recognise that the National Parks in themselves could be categorised as "Special Resource Areas" that could act as catalysts for the support and enhancement of surrounding tourism activities. The Parks could act as major components within a tourism strategy that aims to create a unique product based on sustainable principles.

The Provincial Development Strategy forms the basis upon which the Northern Cape Tourism Policy is being formulated which is now discussed.



5.3.3. *The Tourism Strategy for the Northern Cape Province*

The Provincial Government wants to promote and develop tourism in an economically effective, environmentally sustainable and socially acceptable manner, whilst developing the Province as a lead '*niche market*' destination. In so doing, the Province aims to ensure that;

"the tourism sector makes a significant contribution to the economic diversification of the Provincial economy and social development while ensuring an equitable distribution of benefits across its constituent population".

(DRA development, 1998)

According to the National White Paper (1996), the provincial tourism organisations will ultimately be the driving force for the tourism industry's development. An effective institutional environment is a baseline requirement for facilitating private sector led, yet government driven tourism development. This requires a partnership approach at all levels where functions and responsibilities are clarified, where duplication and wasting resources is minimised, and there is a free flow of information on trends and activities in the tourism market. In addition, a dynamic and multi-dimensional institutional network of role players is needed to ensure that activities are complimentary and co-ordinated, and provide the necessary support for tourism development (Fig.3). The provincial development strategy acknowledges that the provincial government has limited scope for economic management in the province as virtually all the tools of economic policy are in the hands of the national government (NCDS, 1998). However it also recognises that economic growth is primarily a direct result of institutional structures that support investment and service delivery, and therefore an institutional focus is essential in any attempt to develop the potential of the province. This means that the province needs to establish the appropriate institutional environment that drives development forward and can enable the province to gain organisational superiority over the other competing provinces and international nature-based tourism destinations.

5.3.3.1. Funding the Development of the Tourism Industry

Large amounts of funding will be required and although the Provincial Government will make budgetary allocation for tourism development this will be insufficient to finance all the requirements. Therefore, target funding and funding the promotion of tourism generally will need to be justified in order to access financing sources, such as the National Government, donor funding programmes, the private sector and Non Government Organisations (NGO's).

5.3.3.2. Product Development

As the Northern Cape is competing in the global and South African tourist market, product development should focus on the unique selling features and niche markets of the province (DRA development, 1998).

Of particular interest to this study are the features of the Green Kalahari, which include its unique cultural and historical heritage, its ecology and the Orange River. Niche marketing should be adopted as the mechanism to attract international and domestic tourists. These niches include historical, educational, archaeological, geological, cultural and other forms of nature-based tourism. The existing two National Parks and the proposed Gariep TFCA have the potential to be marketed as unique features on their own, but also acting as catalysts for other tourism ventures which do not necessarily have the capacity to initially draw visitors to this area.

Another form of niche marketing could include the development of tourism products based on themes, such as missionaries (e.g. Pella, Onseepkans, Kakamas and Keimos). Many of these attractions are currently underdeveloped while others may not have the capacity to serve as attractions in their own right. These could be packaged with other attractions either within the same niche or with another, in South Africa or with Namibia. There are numerous examples, such as the Anglo-Boer War sites in the Northern Cape, which could be linked to those in KwaZulu-Natal, or hiking trails could cross the border

into Namibia. The proposed Gariep TFCA could also act as a catalyst for the development of numerous tourism ventures combining South Africa and Namibia.

The Green Kalahari should also endeavour to market the district and the tourism activities within it as a complete package of attractions and available accommodation. This will ensure that perspective tourists are exposed to and informed of the full range of activities available within the district and allow many people involved in tourism to benefit. National Parks could play a participating and important role in this regard since it already has an established marketing network.

5.3.3.3. Linkages and Leakage

The development of the Northern Cape's tourism industry should include improving the linkages within tourism, between tourism and other sectors and with other development initiatives. This will go some way towards reducing the amount of leakage from the local economy, which is highly prevalent in rural communities (as suggested in Chapter 2). Inter-sectoral linkages could, for example, enable small-scale accommodation facilities to develop co-operatives for negotiating contractual supply arrangements with manufacturing and agricultural suppliers. Intra-sectoral linkages should be encouraged between product owners such as tour operators, National Parks and accommodation facilities. A successful arrangement already exists between Augrabies Falls National Park and 'Walker's on the Wildside', a canoeing operation, which uses the National Park's facilities. Linkages with other development initiatives could allow the Northern Cape to develop a higher profile within the tourism market, both domestically and internationally. Nature-based packages offered in Namibia, for example, would provide a beneficial collaboration if linked with the Green Kalahari. This is presently being looked at by the Trans-Gariep Joint Management Committee (TGJMC). The development of the proposed Gariep TFCA will also play a major role in creating cross border initiatives for tourism development.

5.3.3.4. Broader Participation, Awareness and Education

In the past there has been little participation by disadvantaged communities in the tourism industry, either as tourists or entrepreneurs. The Provincial draft tourism policy paper stresses that participation must be broadened by promoting awareness of the Northern Cape and the potential opportunities from tourism. Without an appreciation for 'your own province' there will never be a firm foundation for tourism, based on pride and awareness. In combination with this, opportunities for tourism-related activities should be identified so as to provide entry into the tourism sector and support for community based tourism. There is also a need to raise national and international awareness of the Northern Cape.

This will require training and education within the province which should focus on:

- Informing the local residents of the potential benefits of tourism;
- Illustrating the economic links between the ownership of natural resources, conservation and tourism; and
- Equipping local residents, especially the previously disadvantaged communities, with the tools and skills to become involved in tourism. This will also require training accreditation in order to aspire to international levels of service.

(DRA development, 1998)

Creating national and international awareness will require targeted and aggressive marketing at all levels. But it is important that tourists have some means to ensure they receive value for money and an acceptable minimum standard of service. This will be achieved through provincial and local government support for the national accreditation schemes for accommodation providers (currently under discussion), tour operators, guides, restaurants, information officers and travel agents. Once these are established only accredited attractions and institutions at all levels should be promoted.

5.3.3.5. Environmental Protection and Management

The tourism industry is dependent on the natural, the cultural and the man-made environment. Consequently protection and management of this tourism asset is vital to the success and sustainability of tourism development in the whole province. Strategic environmental frameworks are being formulated for the province in addition to fulfilling the requirements of Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. These require tourism developers and operators to coordinate with environmental agencies who provide advise and perform regulatory functions. These functions include ensuring that development and activities are within the carrying capacity of the environment and that the environmental integrity of the province is protected. In addition, developments should follow the Integrated Environmental Management approach so that mandatory community involvement is included at the earliest possible stage.

5.4. Conclusions

The New Provincial Tourism Policy, presently at the draft stage, goes a long way to fulfilling the national objectives contained within responsible tourism. It provides direction for tourism development and highlights particular objectives to maximise the benefits to the local and regional communities, and takes cognisance of the need for a sustainable approach.

However, the policy fails to recognise the importance of conserved areas to attract tourists in this less accessible part of the country, where nature-based tourism is the largest tourism category in the province. Whilst visiting conserved areas is considered an “add-on” to many holiday itineraries they do bring tourists into the area and this gives them a reason to stay initially. Therefore they can be considered as catalysts to which further tourist attractions can attach themselves, leading to a mutually beneficial situation for the conserved areas and tourism in the surrounding area. If these conserved areas did not exist

the job of encouraging tourists to come and stay in the Northern Cape would be extremely difficult.

Consequently there is a need to put together a strategy for tourism development around the conserved areas that is complimentary and thus provides benefits both to conservation and to the surrounding area. This is crucial to the viability and sustainability of tourism and conservation, and will play a major role in the success of the proposed Gariep TFCA. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that all conserved areas should be considered as 'Special Resource Areas'.

The Draft Policy suggests creating ecotourism enterprises within the conserved areas but puts forward no suggestions as to how this should take place or what definition of ecotourism it wants to adopt. This study suggests that ecotourism is not a type of tourism but rather an approach to tourism development and that it should be incorporated into the tourism development strategy using conserved areas as nodes of tourism development. A report putting forward a strategy for ecotourism development has already been produced by Ecotourism Afrika & the Centre for Ecotourism, University of Pretoria for the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park. This report provides the basis for the ecotourism development strategy for the Green Kalahari region surrounding the proposed Gariep TFCA discussed in the following chapter.

An ecotourism approach contains most, if not all the objectives of the tourism policies at national level and provincial level. As an approach it concentrates on generic tourism development, which lends itself to the creation of niche tourism products, based on the unique features of an area. Consequently, it is an approach that meets the objectives of 'responsible tourism'.

The benefits of this approach, to conserved areas and the proposed Gariep TFCA in particular, were discussed in section 3.6 of this study but can also be reiterated here. Firstly, the fact that protecting the surrounding 'buffer zone' of the proposed Gariep TFCA is important to the environmental maintenance of the area within the boundaries. In the

case of the proposed area, the designated boundaries follow man-made farm boundaries and not ecological ones. Since a full understanding of the functioning of the ecosystems in this area is still unknown committed protection of the buffer zone will play an essential precautionary role.

Secondly, an ecotourism approach will integrate a conserved area into the surrounding region through participation, rather than creating an island of exclusivity, which is now considered to be a vital component of any protected area's viability and sustainability. Participation and incorporation of conserved areas with local communities provides a framework to capture the benefits from conservation locally and is now a prerequisite for many international conservation funding agencies. Therefore, this approach could be a successful way of attracting funding for both conservation and tourism development.

Thirdly, a successful compatible tourism structure surrounding the proposed Gariep TFCA should make the establishment and reaching of economic viability that much easier.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY

An Ecotourism Approach to Tourism Development and its Implementation in the Green Kalahari

6. AN ECOTOURISM APPROACH TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN THE GREEN KALAHARI

6.1 Introduction

It needs to be stressed that an ecotourism approach will only be successful if it is a component within a broader provincial development plan, which endorses sustainability and best practise principles. Tourism development and provincial planning do seem to be endorsing these objectives, as was shown in the previous chapter. But conserved areas could play a galvanising role in enabling these planning and policy initiatives to succeed. Therefore, this chapter aims to show how tourism development in the Green Kalahari region could be implemented using the principles of ecotourism, which includes conserved areas as one of the major driving forces for ecotourism's success.

6.2. The Green Kalahari District

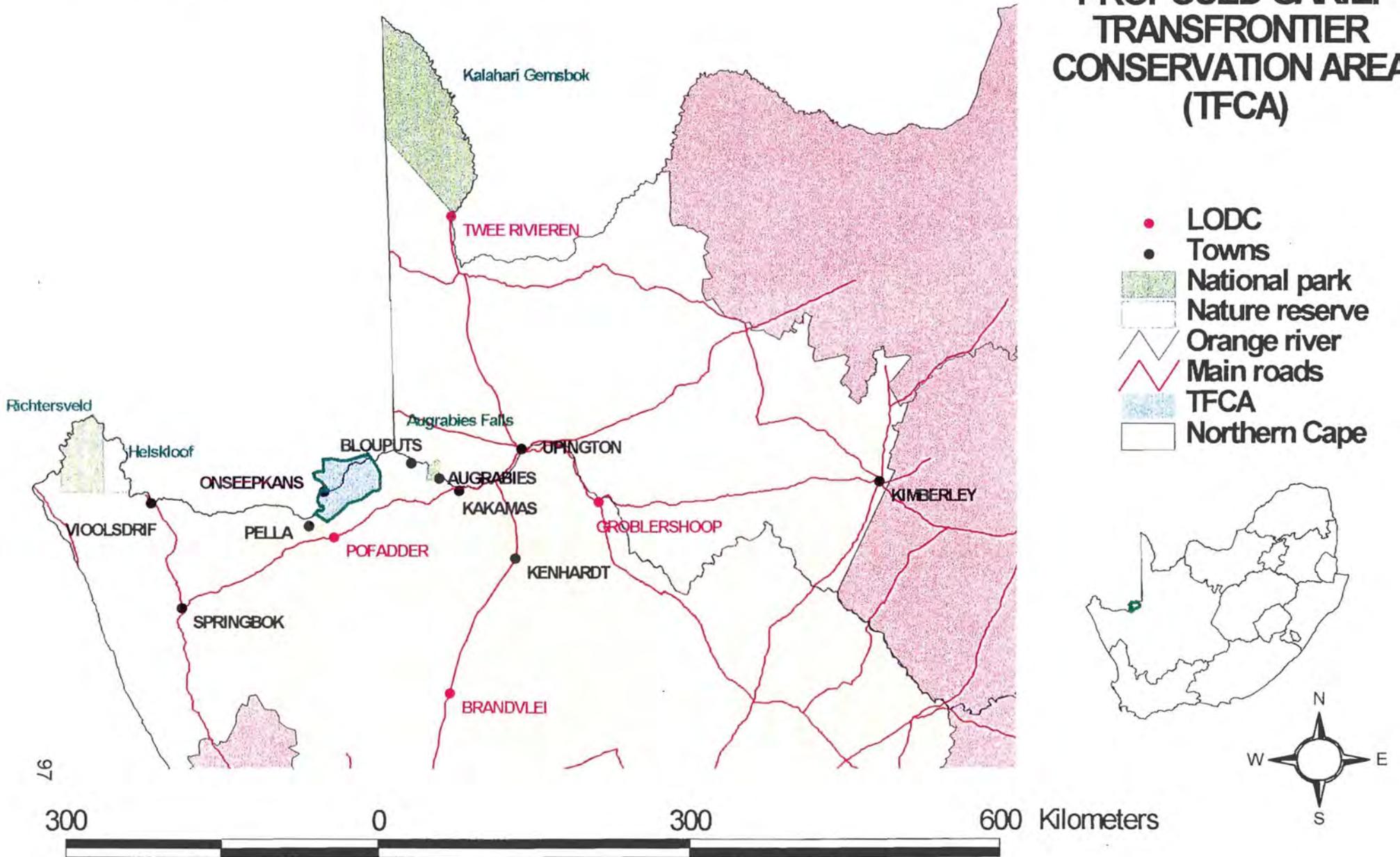
The Lower Orange District Council, based in Upington administers the Green Kalahari. This region has the second largest population (140,334) in the Northern Cape province and covers an area of 90,746 km², extending from the Kalahari in the north to Brandvlei in the south, and from Pofadder in the west to Groblershoop in the east (Map 6).

Upington has been experiencing economic growth recently, largely due to the rapid increase in grape farming on irrigated land along the Orange River. At the same time the more traditional industries, such as mining, are in decline and so a shift is taking place in the structure of employment. Historically, the district carries a legacy of underemployment and tourism development is being viewed as having the potential to broaden the economic base as well as empower many previously disadvantaged communities (PDC).

MAP 6

Surrounding Region

PROPOSED GARIEP TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)



Chapter 4 showed how South Africa's scenic beauty and wildlife resources play a major role in attracting tourists. Since the vast majority of attractions in the Green Kalahari and the other provincial districts fall into this category, it can be assumed that nature-based tourism plays a much larger role in the Northern Cape than the statistical averages for South Africa suggest.

6.3. The Green Kalahari District Tourism and Nature-Based Tourism Attractions

The Green Kalahari regional tourism office is run by the Lower Orange District Council (LODC) and was established in 1995. It is responsible for marketing, collecting and disseminating information and assisting new tourism ventures. Under the auspices of the Green Kalahari is a tourism forum, which meets once a month. The forum is made up of representatives from South African National Parks, Northern Cape Conservation, six main towns in the district and other interested and affected parties.

Since the Green Kalahari's inception the district has experienced tourism growth. There has been an increase in guesthouse numbers, a new hotel and new tour operators. The forum has recognised that there is still a lot of room for development and the LODC is well aware of this but feels that this must take into consideration:

- The integrity of the sensitive desert ecosystem; and
- The integrity of local communities.

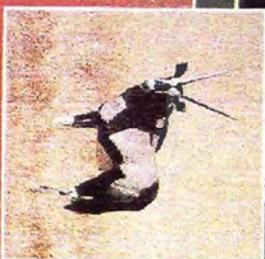
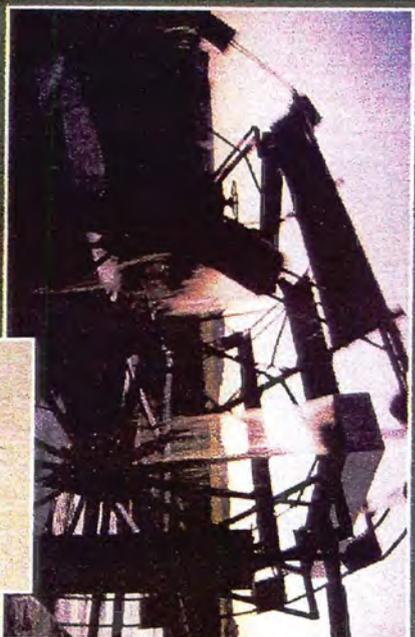
(K. van Zyl, pers comms. Lower Orange District Council)

The Lower Orange District Council, through the Green Kalahari Tourism Committee, recently assigned JVS Marketing to prepare a new plan to develop and promote tourism in the region. A document describing current tourism and an investigation into the potential for tourism development, with an eye on empowerment and the participation of previously disadvantaged communities has been produced. This is a discussion document and forms part of the consultation process.

Welcome to the land of contrasts...



... where lush green vineyards stand proud in the valley, bearing the fruit that makes the nectar of the gods - not far from where the Orange River thunders into a deep granite gorge to create the mighty Au-granbles Falls...



... where lion and leopard, gemsbok, springbok, black rhino, cheetah and hyena roam free through waving bushman grass, canethorn and shepherd trees. In the clear blue skies above black, batelaur and fish eagles soar timelessly.

...the land we call the Green Kalahari

Where the desert comes alive!

For brochures and further information about this fascinating destination, write to:
PO Box 2856, URNINGTON 8800 South Africa or phone (+27)54) 27064



It involved intensive consultations in June 1998 with all sectors of the local tourism industry in six towns, SANP, Provincial Government representatives from the Department of Tourism and Economic Affairs. A follow-up report will include actions to implement these recommendations in a sustainable fashion and a marketing approach. It is hoped that the suggestions put forward in this dissertation for an ecotourism approach can be used to support the creation of a sustainable tourism strategy for the Green Kalahari.

In summary, this project has so far concluded that the majority of tourism activities and future potential of the district is nature-based and there is a need to improve the current attractions as well as develop new ones. Of note is the fact that most tourism activity takes place near the Orange River and that there are a large number of tourism ventures that are within a fifty-kilometre radius of the proposed Gariep TFCA. Hopefully, the importance of the Orange River to tourism is noted by the Provincial Government, since the river has been highlighted as a 'Special Resource Area' (5.3.2).

The project review of current activities and the future potential results were as follows:

- *The Northern Cape wine route already exists and includes warehouse tours. There is a need for more promotion especially at harvesting time;*
- *The Fauna and Flora attractions are mainly catered for by the National Parks. However there is still capacity for new product development such as bird watching tours, educational tours;*
- *The Orange River has potential to be further utilised for fishing, and water sports but needs to be more accessible. This situation is one of the major limiting factors to growth of the present activities taking place on the river (2.4.1). The river also needs a management plan of its own to preserve and not exceed the carrying capacity (2.4.2).*

- *The improvement and promotion of current adventure tourism such as the Pofadder walking trails and existing 4x4 trails. The development of new adventure trails including mountain bike trails.* Adventure tourism is undoubtedly one of the strongest attractions to the Northern Cape. The wide open spaces and contrasting landscapes, provide the ideal opportunity for the development of adventure tourism which not only utilises the natural resources but also plays a role in increasing awareness of the fragility of this semi-arid region by adopting sustainable practises to this not always environmental-friendly activity. The following adventure tourism experiences also take place in the Green Kalahari District:

- Water sports - canoeing and rafting on the Orange River, e.g. 'Walkers on the Wildside'; and,
- Game drives - including bird watching, raptor trails, and rhino trails e.g. Augrabies Falls National Park.

All these activities should take place within the limits of the areas carrying capacity. Therefore, it is highly probable that many of them will need to be grouped together since one trail will not be able to stand on its own economically;

- *The development of indigenous cultural activities such as Nama walking trails and traditional food dishes and 'feasts', using traditional cooking techniques such as ash cake baking.*
- *The development of cultural tours, concentrating on pre-colonial and colonial history. These would require the improvement of the existing museum in Upington and the possible development of new ones. Pofadder has been suggested as a potential location.* SATOUR recently launched an international campaign marketing South Africa's cultural diversity as the theme. This focus will be on national and international cultural events, cultural conferences and exhibitions.

The Green Kalahari is richly endowed with cultural and historical sites and the Northern Cape is the focal point for rock carving and archaeological sites. The Feasibility Report provided evidence that the proposed Gariep TFCA has a wealth of cultural sites, which need to be conserved, such as gravesites, historically significant hot-springs, and Anglo-Boer War sites. There is still a lot of research that needs to be done on pre-colonial and colonial history and this could take place from the proposed area. This could serve the dual role of attracting and educating tourists and stimulating interest among the local community at large. In addition there are a number of cultural and historical sites within close proximity to the proposed area; and,

- *The potential exists to develop theme routes such as the mission towns which would include Kakamas, Augrabies, Keimos and Pella. Other theme routes could include war graves and battle sites, museums, Bushman art, and original irrigation canal systems. The number of sites shows the potential of coordinating cultural tourism and archeo-tourism specifically in line with SATOUR's marketing theme and the centenary of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 taking place in 1999. Many of these are in close proximity to the proposed area.*

The potential clients for all these attractions were seen to be the local community, through traffic, families and nature-based tourists. Developing tourism, the project findings claimed, could play a key upliftment role for PDC's by providing a means of economic growth and consequently improve welfare and living standards. This would take place through job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities as well as training and skills development.

The project findings have highlighted that in order to develop tourism successfully there is a need to overcome certain barriers. These include:

- *The need to increase awareness amongst all the local people of the opportunities and potential of tourism. Some of these groups attitudes to tourists, in particular the farmers, are not what they should be and need to change;*

- *Skills training is required, to stimulate entrepreneurship and maximise opportunities from tourism, and the creation of a 'hard work' ethic.* There is a general lack of skills and training in the region and efforts should concentrate on languages, client services, marketing skills, guide and handcraft training, and business development. However there is limited interest in tourism amongst some groups, especially PDCs, due to a lack of initiative, motivation and community pride. Sadly politics and racism have been singled out as being particular barriers as well as a loss of trust in consultative processes and the limited ownership of tourism products;
- *Integration and coordination of tourism products,* especially to encourage small ventures which would not be viable on their own;
- *Inward investment and financial support.* This should include funding for projects and access to no risk capital;
- *Increased awareness amongst tourists of what the area has to offer.* This will require increased promotion and marketing to visitors and the local community of what the Green Kalahari is trying to achieve through tourism to make visitors aware of their contribution.
- *Small scale facilities development.* These should contribute to creating greater access to and opportunity for tourism product ownership by PDCs; and,
- *Improvements in infrastructure to reduce the isolation of this region from the South African tourism market and to make the attractions more accessible within the area.* This will require upgrading roads and communications, and providing more flights into Upington Airport, which has recently been given international status and thus can attract direct flights from foreign countries.

The results also showed that the Lower Orange District Council responsibilities for tourism development should include:

- Sourcing funds for investment in infrastructural support and tourism development projects especially improving the access to risk capital;
- Create training programmes concentrating on tourism skills, entrepreneurship and business development; and,
- Develop marketing and promotion material for the region in general but also include specific promotion of individual areas and tourism activities.

6.3.1. Creating a Theme for Tourism Development

Overall the results not only show that there are numerous opportunities but there is a need to involve other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, financial services and tour operators. By increasing local participation in tourism the amount of benefits leakage out of the district could be reduced. In addition, the inclusion of as many different economic sectors as possible could provide an opportunity to create an authentic Lower Orange District tourism product that is unique. This could enhance the name ‘The Green Kalahari’ - and could be target marketed domestically, nationally and internationally. This will require the adoption of a theme for development that provides a focus on key issues and objectives for the district. These focus areas would include those incorporated in the Provincial Development Strategy (5.3.2) and Tourism Development Policy (5.3.3)

Adopting an ecotourism approach to tourism development could create such a theme. An ecotourism approach will create guidelines for tourism and give its development focus. The characteristics of this area lend itself to adopting such an approach since tourism is predominantly nature-based. Such an approach will also be looked upon favourably by outside investors and funding agents as well as take advantage of the trends taking place

within the tourism industry. Most importantly to this study, the implementation of an ecotourism approach will provide a framework into which the proposed Gariep TFCA, and other conserved areas, can benefit from as well as enhance.

One of the problems with tourism in this area is the fact that the present and potential future attractions do/will not have the capacity to draw enough tourists, whether they be local, regional, national or international tourists, to make many of them economically viable in their own right. In addition, the Green Kalahari is not taking full advantage of its conserved areas, even though the National Parks are recognised as a major tourism asset to the province and the district in particular (LAPC, 1997). Nor is the district taking advantage of the increase in foreign tourists coming to South Africa who have a higher per head spend ratio than domestic tourists (4.4.2).

Whilst conserved areas are often considered as an “add-on” to foreign tourists holiday itineraries, they, in particular large National Parks, have the capacity to draw tourists as an initial destination. A concerted effort should be made to integrate these conserved areas into the tourism development plan and implement projects to encourage people to stay longer in the parks or in their vicinity by using the parks as catalysts from which add-on tourism activities can be generated. This will benefit both the parks and the surrounding areas.

6.4. National Parks

The Northern Cape contains 11 of the 240 conserved areas designated in South Africa of which two, the Augrabies Falls National Park and the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park are situated in the Green Kalahari District. There are also a number of municipal and privately owned conservation areas:

- **Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (KGNP)** - was established in 1931 and along with the Section in Botswana forms one of the largest parks in Southern Africa. The park is managed as a single unit employing 89 staff, and contains 3 rest camps. It is hoped that this park will become the first official Transfrontier National Park in the near future. The KGNP is primarily attractive as a wildlife-rich area, and average length of stay in each of the three camps is 2 nights. Hut occupancy increased from 75.6% in 1995 to 93.2% in 1997 and camping occupancy from 39.1% to 69% in the same period.
- **Augrabies Falls National Park (AFNP)** - was established in 1966 to protect the Augrabies Falls and is primarily a scenic destination. It records the largest number of visitors of all the parks in the Northern Cape, and visitor numbers have increased nearly three times since 1993/4. On average, one night is spent in AFNP, which illustrates that it is a “passing-through” overnight stop rather than a destination in its own right (PPF Feasibility Report). The major attraction of the park is the waterfall and it is conveniently situated on the Namaqualand flower route. In terms of activities, the Park offers hiking and nature trails, swimming facilities, canoe trips, night drives and black rhino excursions. The Park employed 60 staff in 1995 and contains accommodation units and camping facilities. Due to the Park’s size, it has a very limited wildlife carrying capacity, and this is major reason for the SANP’s interest in enlargement. There are possibilities of enlarging the park through a contractual arrangement with neighbouring communities, similar to that which is taking place with the Riemvasmaak community, which subsequently broadens the economic base for the community. In addition, there is a possibility in the future of creating a Transfrontier Conservation Area with Namibia, with the help of the Peace Parks Foundation to form the Gariiep TFCA; the focus of the feasibility study. Consequently, Augrabies Falls National Park is of particular interest to this study due to its close proximity (40 kilometres) and similarities to the proposed GTFCA and because of its role in the objectives of developing a TFCA.

The increase in the number of people visiting the parks, provides a good indication of the number of people visiting other parts of the province since the vast majority of visitors must pass through the rest of the province to access the parks. The fact that National Parks are often considered as an 'add-on' to a visitor's itinerary shows that there is potential to use the Parks as catalysts for the development of a more comprehensive holiday experience in the Northern Cape.

Despite the recent growth in visitors to the Parks, which shows their growing appeal, there is still considerable existing capacity for the parks to expand. Augrabies Falls, for example achieves only 43% occupancy rate for camping and 64% for accommodation (Momborg, *D. pers. comms.*). Of particular interest is the fact that overseas visitors accounted for only 6% of visitors to Augrabies Falls in 1996. The main nationalities are North Americans, Germans, Japanese and Benelux, with only a few UK visitors. This means that the growth in visitors to the Park is largely made up of domestic tourists as opposed to the overall increase in tourism generally in the country which has been attributed to the increase in foreign tourists (see Chapter 4). As much as this is encouraging from a domestic tourism point of view, it also suggest, that this area is failing to attract foreign visitors and to capitalise on their increasing numbers.

6.4.1 National Parks Potential

It is generally felt that the National Parks in the Northern Cape, as in the rest of South Africa, have greater potential and could be more profitably operated than is currently the case (LAPC, 1997), Private sector involvement through investment or management of tourism facilities within protected areas is an alternative which has been receiving attention (Van Der Walt, *N. pers. comms.*).

Suggestions have been made that investment within protected areas and buffer zones around these areas needs to increase but the public sector is not prepared to commit itself and in fact does not have the funds to do so (LAPC, 1997). It is interesting to note that public grants to subsidise protected areas are expected to decline over the next decade to

possibly a situation in which no public sector support is given at all (Fernhead, pers. comms.). This situation needs to be seriously questioned. Rather than reducing financial support these areas need more capital since they are the backbone of tourism in many rural areas, like the Green Kalahari. If these areas lose their appeal to tourists then not only will tourism suffer but so will conservation. In spite of this it is true that partnerships need to be increased between the Parks and the private sector so that the opportunities to develop nature-based tourism can be realised to their full potential.

Whilst this seems to be a logical answer, the full potential will not be realised, and could in fact create negative impacts, if private sector involvement is not given a guiding hand under a development plan. Such a plan may bring to light the fact that more, large-scale investment within the national parks could be avoided by successfully integrating the conserved areas into the surrounding regional tourism development plans.

A number of initiatives have been started around the country to integrate nature-based tourism with the public and private sectors. These include the SANP themselves, the Conservation Corporation, The Mazda Wildlife Fund, and the WWF-SA, which now, according to media sources, attracts over R21 million annually from the corporate sector. In the Northern Cape, important nature-based tourism initiatives include those put forward by the PPF. The proposed Gariiep TFCA, as one of these PPF initiatives, aims to ensure the sustainable development of the common boundary region between South Africa and Namibia not just for the benefit of tourists but also for the benefit of the local and regional people, through conservation and sustainable land use.

However, the current situation regarding conserved areas involvement, principally the SANP, in regional development in the Northern Cape does appear to have its weaknesses. SANP representatives sit on the Provincial Tourism Association Committees, which consists of the Regional Council, Municipalities and various NGOs. In addition, Augrabies Falls National Park is dealing very closely with The Green Kalahari Tourism Authority and Northern Cape Tourism, in terms of developing a marketing strategy but as yet, does not deal with the new NCTA (Van der Walt, pers. comm.) and there appears to

be no moves to include them in the NCTA's centralised function for tourism development in the whole province. This seems peculiar, considering how important the province believes conserved areas are to tourism and its future development.

Another weakness is that SANP marketing is based on a national strategy and at an individual park level, but is exclusive to the SANP. If potential visitors to this remote part of South Africa are going to be convinced to stay longer, they need to be made aware of what is taking place in the vicinity of the parks. Successfully incorporating these other tourism activities into National Park marketing will provide information to tourists before they fix their itineraries, benefiting the Parks and preventing duplication of marketing initiatives by others. One entrepreneur in a Namaqualand survey felt he was advertising the Richtersveld National Park more actively than even the SANP (Archer, F. 1998).

6.4.2 Community involvement in Nature-Based Tourism with National Parks

Historically, local community involvement in nature-based tourism has been limited to low wage jobs and informal trading activities in the SANP. The legacy of SANP still looms large in some quarters, which included the displacement of people and conserved areas isolating themselves from the local area. This led to the perception that SANP were the "playgrounds for the rich".

SANP are now adopting an approach with the aim of playing a larger role within the community in which they are situated through Integrated Community Development Programmes. (ICDPs). These have so far had mixed results, such as Riemvasmaak, but the hope is that over time these programmes can have a positive impact. The goal is to provide these rural communities with some of the benefits of the Parks so that an appreciation of their value can be built up and a cooperative relationship established.

6.5. An Integrated Approach to future Tourism Development

The National Parks already have national and international marketing strength and this should be used to the benefit of tourism in the Green Kalahari by promoting the region as a single nature-based tourism destination which supplies a number of different activities but which is also unique. This uniqueness could be established by using an ecotourism approach, which will enable the conserved areas not only to be integrated into the regional tourism strategy but also to act as one of the driving forces behind tourism development.

An ecotourism approach to all tourism development is quite different to what has been proposed by the Draft Tourism Policy Paper (DRA Development, 1998) which proposed that ecotourism ventures be created within conserved areas. If future tourism development is going to include harnessing the potential that conserved areas can provide then they should be seen as the engines for this growth.

6.6. The Goals of Ecotourism Development

Ecotourism Afrika (1997) has stated that there are four broad goals which need to be addressed so that the tourism industry can be guided towards a more balanced development approach in South Africa, in which the local population benefit and the tourism resource base is protected. These goals function interdependently and provide the foundation for an ecotourism strategy. Each situation has different social, economic and environmental imperatives so it is critical that a balanced approach be adopted to achieve these mutually dependent goals.

1. **Environmental Goal:** Ecotourism, like other types of tourism, will always have an environmental impact since tourism is consumptive. Therefore ecotourism, by definition, should aim to minimise impacts on the tourism resource base. It is even possible that ecotourism development could play a role in reversing negative impacts by preventing further degradation as well as improving or restoring elements of the

resource base.

In order to provide a strategy for sustainable tourism development, responsible planning and management practises that adhere to government regulations regarding conservation and cultural environmental resources will need to take place. The government regulations are included in The Environmental Conservation Act 1989; White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity 1997, and the White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa 1996.

2. **Economic Goal:** To maximise the potential economic, employment and income contribution of tourism, a supportive economic environment for tourism development and local involvement needs to be established.
3. **Social Goals:** To make sure that visitors can experience authentic, quality tourism products while ensuring positive social benefits by diversifying the economic base in the area, protecting public interests and respecting the integrity of the local population.
4. **Support Goal:** To assist the tourism industry's development by creating awareness, improve standards, encouraging promotion, planning, co-ordination, research, education, and training.

Although the WTO predicts sustained tourism growth over the next couple of decades, there are contrary predictions. There are indications that demand for nature-based tourism and its subset, 'ecotourism' may be beginning to slow down; and others projecting increased demand for nature destinations (Fabricius 1995). Whatever the scenario, on a global scale, nature-based tourism destinations are believed to be plentiful relative to demand and, as a result, the international and national market is becoming increasingly more competitive. Consequently, it is imperative that nature-based tourism projects differentiate themselves from competitors both locally and internationally. This will require target marketing, market niche specialisation, value for money and competitive pricing, and high standards of service excellence in order to remain competitive.

The ultimate aims of all ecotourism developments should be:

- **To integrate the local resource base as much as possible.**

Local knowledge is a valuable resource that can be used not only to develop ecotourism products but also puts the development initiative into their hands. This can be done by developing forums and networking facilities which can also be used to identify local needs so that the benefits of ecotourism can be more than just employment;

- **To secure sustainable utilisation of resources.**

By using the proper planning, development, management and monitoring of resource impacts, based on the requirements of the local people and of the tourism industry so that conflicts are prevented or at least minimised;

- **To enhance existing cultural and natural features by translating them into tourism resources.**

Using environmental resources for tourism products is one of the most effective ways of conserving them. Tourism can attach a value to these resources more completely, without negatively affecting their inherent characteristics, than any other land use option. Within the proposed GTFCA mining was shown by the Feasibility Report to negatively impacting on granite outcrops which show evidence of pre-colonial activity;

- **To ensure a positive enlightening experience by the tourist.**

With the correct marketing approaches tourists can be provided with a unique tourism experience, knowing in advance that as a tourist they are making a positive contribution the development of the local area and to conservation; and,

- **To foster sustainable economic development for the individual entrepreneur, as well as the community at large.**

Through the access and creation of investment opportunities, awareness education, training and other development opportunities as guarantees for local development.

This makes it clear that ecotourism should not be seen as a tourism product, a brand name or a marketing ploy but rather as a type of responsible approach to tourism development. The nature of this approach makes ecotourism complementary to sustainable development and is a development that provides benefits to the environment, the tourism industry, the tourists and the host community. A tourism development, therefore, can only be termed as ecotourism if all the components inherent in this concept are incorporated.

6.7. Hierarchy of Needs for Ecotourism Implementation

To ensure that tourism development in the Green Kalahari does fulfil the requirements of the ecotourism concept it is necessary for a hierarchy of needs to be addressed. These are the same for all ecotourism destinations and consist of:

- firstly, protecting the environment;
- secondly, addressing the needs of the visitor;
- thirdly, identifying appropriate materials and technologies; and
- developing products, programmes services and facilities that will benefit the environment, local community and the tourism industry.

6.7.1. Protecting the Environment

The Green Kalahari Tourism Authority must make sure that no tourism development takes place that has the potential to negatively impact on the uniqueness and authenticity of the area's natural and cultural resource base. Support for this could come from the SANP who realise that the successful long term management of protected areas depends on the cooperation and support of local people and that it is no-longer politically correct or ethically justifiable to exclude local communities, especially those with limited means. This has led to increasing efforts by all those involved in conservation to strive for Integrated Conservation Development Projects (ICDP).

Most ICDPs aim to increase local incomes, emphasising local participation and conservation education (Wells and Brandon 1992). Local participation is now recognised by most, if not all agencies involved in rural development, as a prerequisite for international funding. The Global Environmental Facility, which has emerged since 1991 as the single largest funding source for biodiversity conservation in developing countries, requires all conservation projects it funds to include local participation (Wells 1995). Therefore, for the proposed area to get the attention it deserves and the funding for its establishment will automatically require local participation.

In order to protect the environment, focus will have to be directed towards a number of key areas. These include:

- **creating a tourism culture within the region.**

Only by understanding, internalising and accepting tourism as an important part of the conservation effort, as well as a method of improving welfare, will an atmosphere of awareness and cooperation be instilled. This will require education so that the Green Kalahari can be competitive in the provision of unique and authentic tourism products based on international standards of service, community involvement and resource management principles.

- **facilitate the application of sustainable resource utilisation principles and practises across the tourism industry.**

Ecotourism must, by definition, have greater resource implications for the maintenance of biodiversity and the integrity of cultural resources than conventional tourism activities. The success of ecotourism planning, development and management will be evaluated by its success in providing a high quality visitor experience and at the same time, maintaining the resource base in the name of inter-generational equity.

- **collect data on the impacts of ecotourism to provide an information base for planning and decision-making.**

The success of ecotourism development requires a high degree of quality information. Ecotourism development has developed with very little quantitative data and knowledge to effectively guide decisions. This is a problem for the whole tourism industry in South Africa (Fabricius 1995). Information is needed on immediate visitor impacts and the cumulative impacts of ecotourism on the natural and cultural environments.

- **encouraging community driven tourism projects within the region.**

The Government White Paper (1996) expects local communities *"to play a vital role in the development of tourism"* especially previously neglected groups in rural areas.

6 7.2. Visitor Needs

It is important that products are developed based on addressing the needs of the visitors and at the same time based on the environmental constraints. This will ensure that the economic and social benefits promised by ecotourism also encompass the sustainable use and protection of the resource base. The objective should be to provide the visitor with a high quality, unique and authentic, interactive, enlightening, participatory, and enjoyable experience whilst in the region.

The areas of focus to establish this visitor experience will include:

- **establishing and applying high-quality industry standards, accreditation systems and to encourage industry self-regulation.**

There is a need for accreditation systems for tour guides, field operations and services ensuring that environmental impacts are minimised and the benefits to local people are maximised. This will enable products to be considered ecotourist, which will enhance their desirability and marketability. International accreditation systems have been

developed which could provide the foundation for national standards for the training and licensing of all those participating in ecotourism in the Green Kalahari.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will play a role in tourism regulation through Integrated Environmental Management (IEM). Whilst this provides an approach to assessing the potential negative impacts on the environment by certain listed activities it has not been so successful in creating a list of sensitive environments. A new concept in IEM has recently been tabled by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (1998) which aims to provide a framework of spatially represented information connected to parameters which are determined by the sensitivity of the environment. As well as being based on environmental information, socio-economic priorities will be incorporated creating an Environmental Management Framework within which development activities can take place. The purpose of the EMFs is to identify areas of potential conflict between developments and sensitive environments and therefore will support IEM by allowing a more focused approach to EIAs. The parameters used will hopefully include standards, and criteria for determining both environmentally sensitive zones and strategic management zones relevant to the development of ecotourism and provide substantial support to the planning and development of ecotourism across South Africa.

- **Examine the needs of business operators to attain viability**

Whether there is a niche in the market for a particular tourism product is not necessarily the main question. What needs to be asked is whether there is a market in that niche. Economic viability is critical to the success of the ecotourism industry. Therefore concern should be shown for improving the possibilities for success through training and collective ventures.

6.7.3. Appropriate Materials and Technology

The objective here should be to source, as much as possible, all materials, technology and labour locally and the best practises are employed to minimise impacts. This will ensure local involvement and thus benefit development financially and socially.

Often the most environmentally sensitive areas are the most sought after locations which complicates management since ecotourism often involves a wilderness experience. Therefore the type of development must suit the goal of the ecotourism destination, and the management plans of the area.

6.7.4. Programmes and Product Development

Ecotourism is based on the delivery of an experience. These experiences need to be planned, developed, packaged, promoted and managed to ensure that the quality and authenticity can be maintained.

This will require training to provide the necessary skills and understanding of the principles of ecotourism. Since tourism products must lead to the protection of the natural and cultural environment, whilst satisfying the needs of tourists, they must be designed, planned and packaged to the highest standards possible whilst maintaining their regional integrity. The focus of attention should include:

- **encouragement and promotion of the development of ecotourism products to meet visitor expectations and match levels of supply and demand.**

Sadly, the term 'ecotourism' has been abused internationally and has created problems for operators, planners and marketers. If products and programmes are to be considered truly examples of ecotourism they need to have practises, procedures and operating principles which are appropriate and sustainable, and create products that are unique and authentic in this increasingly discerning market.

As a responsible approach to development, ecotourism ventures will need structural support. This requires national and provincial government to assess how best they can encourage ecotourism through financial incentives such as favourable business loans, interest rates, business development advice and taxes in coordination with the banking sector. Issues that the Green Kalahari and LODC will need to focus on include:

- **Education, to improve the level and delivery of ecotourism awareness and the capacity for active participation in the ecotourism industry.**

Behaviour that is appropriate contributes to high-quality tourism. This brings the best benefits to all those involved - tourists, the host community, resource managers, and the tourism industry, by preventing unacceptable ecological, cultural and social damage. Ecotourism education, training and awareness can influence tourists, the local community and tourism industry behaviour. This can only support the long-term sustainability of tourist activities, facilities and services. This will require the provision of interpretative services for ecotourism and planning for training.

6.8. The Implementation of an Ecotourism Approach in the Green Kalahari by the Lower Orange District Council.

If an ecotourism approach is adopted the LODC will need to follow the guidelines outlined by following the hierarchy of needs discussed above. The following discussion outlines some of the specific actions the LODC will need to take.

Firstly, the LODC will need to develop a tourism culture in the region by introducing tourism awareness programmes in schools, colleges, and in the business community. The aim should be to develop a sense of pride amongst local people of 'their' region, 'their' role in tourism, the importance of tourism to the region and an awareness of the negative impacts of tourism. This will include making people aware of the career potential within tourism, the investment opportunities and the environmental considerations that will need to be incorporated into tourism development decision making so that conservation of the

resource base is seriously understood and the benefits can be retained locally.

To facilitate this, the LODC will first need to develop its own code of ethics and environmental management principles, which can be easily illustrated. Then, the LODC could develop a series of workshops to introduce the elements of ecotourism, conservation and resource management. This could take a multi-disciplinary approach incorporating environmental technologies and management practises for waste management, effluent and emissions control, energy and water conservation and other best practise principles. In addition, introductions to environmental auditing and monitoring programmes should be implemented so that all tourism operations can carry out their own monitoring rather than feel they are being policed.

To improve the information base for planning and decision-making the LODC will need to put in place systems for monitoring immediate and cumulative impacts of ecotourism on the natural and cultural environments. These systems should be understood by the tourism industry and their participation in monitoring is central to the sustained success of tourism in the region. The development of a system of monitoring should include a programme that focuses on the limits of acceptable change and carrying capacities for different activities services and facilities. This should also include a simple data collection programme to improve the knowledge base on tourism in the region.

To enlighten tourists of the regions activities and goals different forms of promotion can be used including brochures, maps, trails and signs. These will need to be based on the specific requirements of the tourists but will provide a way to enhance visitors experiences and to make them feel they are contributing directly to the regions economic growth and conservation. In this way, promotional material can also be used to educate visitors in responsible tourism.

The LODC should, whether an ecotourism approach is adopted or not, encourage self-regulation and implement a form of accreditation based on industry standards. The Green Kalahari is already in the process of implementing an accreditation policy for guesthouses.

This should be extended in the future for all facilities, activities, service providers and operators. All participants should be made aware of these standards so that the tourism industry can function sustainably and can be successfully marketed internationally. However the overall objective should be to provide a framework for the development of a productive and efficient industry rather than impede growth by excessive regulation.

6.8.1. Financial Support for Ecotourism

The financial viability of any tourism operation is critical to the success of the industry as a whole. The introduction of an ecotourism approach will possibly increase the costs of these operations as a result of:

- the implementation of minimal impact practices such as recycling and waste management. Whilst they can reduce costs in the long run the initial start up costs can be expensive and may deter future entrants into the tourism industry;
- the economies of scale of which most ecotourism operations do not benefit from may limit their capacity to fulfil some of the requirements of an ecotourism approach such as market research, and monitoring;
- public liability insurance has proven to be expensive for many ecotourism operators; and
- small operators need to have a range of skills ranging to remain viable from guiding, office management and marketing. This does not allow capital to be used on employing specialists for specific studies.

(Ecotourism Afrika, 1997)

The LODC will need to address these issues so that ecotourism can be economically viable. This will require strong lobbying by the LODC for the benefits of ecotourism approach to tourism development to provincial government and to potential investors and national and international funding agents so that many of these functions can be financially supported. The fact that many funding agents, whether national or

international, now require some form of environmental consideration and a participatory approach to development means that the adoption of ecotourism should receive greater interest than many other proposals for tourism development.

6.9. Conclusion

It is unlikely that an ecotourism strategy can be developed immediately. It may not even be possible to build a complete ecotourism strategy, but as an approach to tourism development, and in particular responsible tourism, which incorporates conserved areas into a sustainable framework for economic growth, it should be viewed as an option which suites the Green Kalahari region. Ecotourism could then provide an answer to the two inextricably related vulnerabilities of conservation by creating a foundation for retaining many of the tourism benefits in the region as well as providing a good argument for conservation as a land use option.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this dissertation was to review the current status regarding tourism development in the region surrounding the proposed Gariep TFCA and to provide an approach to tourism development that integrates the proposed Gariep TFCA in a way that accords with provincial and national aspirations, and the objectives of the Peace Parks Foundation.

The objectives of this study included an analysis of the land use options within the proposed GTFCA in order to assess the potential benefits and costs of conservation. The analysis showed that, just like many conserved areas, unless an integrated local development strategy is endorsed a large portion of the benefits would not accrue to the local area. What is more, unless a method can be found to capture these benefits locally and regionally then the argument for conservation as an appropriate land use could fail. Such a situation will be detrimental to conservation in the long term and will benefit the present land use options, especially viticulture, which can generate large profits and jobs but is unsustainable and highly exposed to the vagaries of a single market.

This provides the rationale for the necessity to adopt a strategy for tourism development that captures the benefits of conservation in the local region. If such an approach is successful, it will endorse conservation as a preferable land use and the potential positive impacts could surpass those of the present land uses in the proposed area. Although, it may not be possible to replace viticulture, it could be possible to curtail its expansion and incorporate it in a way that is mutually beneficial to both conservation and the two existing table grape operations.

To capture the benefits of conservation will require conserved areas in the Green Kalahari District to be integrated within a tourism development plan for the surrounding region in which future tourism growth takes place in a complimentary and sustainable fashion. This

situation requires plans and management techniques which utilise the natural resource base in a sustainable manner and also spreads the benefits of conservation, of which tourism is the largest benefit category, amongst as much of the local community as possible. Whilst 'sustainable development' is claimed internationally as the mechanism to ensure the integration of environment and development, it is yet to formulate an effective implementation strategy at the global scale. Such a strategy would need to transform existing global political and economic systems. However, local-level sustainable development initiatives, such as an ecotourism approach to tourism development in the Green Kalahari region surrounding the proposed Gariep TFCA could be more attainable and a specific application of 'responsible' tourism'.

The review of national and international trends and current thinking on tourism development supports such an approach and national policy aims to capitalise on and direct tourism to become a responsible sector of the economy. This study postulates that a strategy for implementing a responsible approach to tourism in the Green Kalahari could be based on the principles of ecotourism, which has the potential to provide a direction to tourism development that integrates conserved areas. The benefits of an ecotourism approach will accrue to both the local area and conserved areas forming a symbiotic relationship. This is currently not evident in the relationship between national parks and their surrounding areas in the Green Kalahari.

The principles of ecotourism should enable tourism development to have a focus; combining the goals of national and provincial tourism policy and particular local requirements. These requirements include capacity building amongst previously disadvantaged groups, education to create an awareness of tourism and environmental issues, and initiatives to prevent leakage from the local economy. The principles of ecotourism are underpinned by a hierarchy of needs, which include protecting the environment, providing for tourist's needs, using appropriate technology and developing products that create benefits for the local community and the environment. Ultimately, it provides a framework for tourism development in which compatibility is maximised, antagonism minimised, and is mutually beneficial for both conservation and development.

The benefits of an ecotourism approach to the proposed Gariep TFCA will include:

- Protection for the Buffer Zone. Like many conserved areas the boundaries are not based on complete scientific understanding of the extent of the ecosystems involved but rather on man-made limits. In the case of the proposed Gariep TFCA the boundaries are based on farm boundaries;
- The opportunity to work together with the local community in order to retain as many of the benefits of conservation as possible in the region. This will create a cumulative effect by increasing awareness of the benefits of conservation, increase environmental education and create a sense of pride and ownership of the regions natural beauty;
- The opportunity to capitalise on global trends in tourism by providing a complete, unique and authentic holiday experience for visitors; and
- Improving the chances of the proposed area becoming economically viable and hopefully reduce the time needed to attain this situation. The Proposed TFCA could be used, as could the present National Parks, as nodes for other tourism ventures to feed off. The conserved areas are the main reason why visitors stay overnight in the area and this asset should be utilised more fully and thereby encourage visitors to stay longer.

The investigation into tourism development in the Green Kalahari revealed that tourism development has been taking place since 1994, contrary to a decline in most of the Northern Cape. The Northern Cape, in general, is experiencing a decline in many of its traditional industries and tourism is being viewed as having the potential to reverse the decline in economic welfare by diversifying the economic base of the province. However, there has been a lack of progress at provincial level to devise a tourism strategy that can direct local district tourism development. Consequently the Green Kalahari has experienced unplanned and *ad hoc* tourism development.

This situation is set to change. The provincial government has recently published a Development Strategy in which tourism is acknowledged to have the capacity and potential to play a much larger role within the provincial economy than it currently holds. In order to facilitate this potential the province is at the draft stage of producing a tourism policy for the Northern Cape, which will create a partnership approach as an effective institutional environment for tourism development.

Whilst there is a general understanding at council level that tourism development in the Lower Orange District Council needs a strategy which provides for sustainability and empowerment. There is a lack of awareness in certain quarters at ground level of the role tourism, in particular sustainable nature-based tourism, can play in the region, in such areas as employment, education and capacity building. This is a limitation to the application of any tourism development approach let alone ecotourism. It means that before any of the real benefits of tourism can be harnessed education is required. The study put forward that as the LODC is responsible for tourism, through the Green Kalahari, the duty lies with them to put in place programmes to engender an understanding of tourism and the role it can play amongst local communities. These programmes will also need to create awareness of the negative impacts of tourism so that responsibility is shared amongst all those involved in the tourism industry for mitigation and prevention of environmental impacts.

As an approach to tourism development for the Green Kalahari, ecotourism is well suited since a large portion of tourism in the area is already nature-based and small in scale. There is also the potential to create authentic tourism products that encapsulate the character of the Green Kalahari. This could have strong marketing appeal while at the same time contribute to conservation and the local community.

However, the investment required to implement ecotourism, the capacity of the Green Kalahari and the responsibilities that every participant will have to carry might make it difficult to develop a complete ecotourism strategy. This does not mean that this approach is impossible. Ecotourism could be implemented in stages when the capacity is in place to

move forward.

As an approach to development that is responsible and integrates conserved areas into a sustainable framework for economic growth, ecotourism will be viewed by potential funding agents as fulfilling many more of their prerequisites than many other types of development strategies. In addition ecotourism has the potential to go some way towards generating popular support for conservation and enabling conserved areas to become economically viable at a local and regional level.

It is hoped that this study can be used to support tourism development in the Green Kalahari by providing a set of principles, which can act as guidelines for a sustainable approach to nature-based tourism development in the future, which accords with the unique development imperatives facing South Africa and supports the objectives of the Peace Parks Foundation.

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APPENDIX 1

**WHITE PAPER: The Conservation and Sustainable Use of
South Africa's Biological Diversity. Government Gazette
No.18163. Notice 1095, 28 July 1997: Policy Objective 1.4**

1.4. ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO PROTECTED AREAS

See also: Sections 2.1 (Sectoral and Cross-sectoral Approaches), 2.2 (Using Biological Resources Sustainably and Avoiding or Minimising Adverse Impacts on Biological Diversity), 2.3 (Land-use Planning and Environmental Assessment), and 2.4 (Adopting Sustainable Lifestyles).

Policy objective 1.4.

Promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in areas adjacent to or within protected areas, with a view to furthering protection of these areas

(The promotion of sustainable development throughout the landscape is considered in Goal 2).

Policy and Strategy

Urgent attention is required to ensure that biodiversity is conserved not only within protected areas, but across the landscape, and that sustainable development is promoted throughout South Africa. This is a fundamental component of Goal 2, which articulates the manner in which sustainable development is to be promoted throughout the whole country.

However, a special case can be made for paying attention to areas adjacent to or within protected areas, given that activities occurring in such areas may be critical to the protected area's success. Furthermore, the ecological landscape is often a continuum between designated protected areas and surrounding regions. The viability of protected areas is thus dependent upon the extent to which such areas are socially, economically, and ecologically integrated into the surrounding region. This fact is also recognised by the Convention, which has a specific provision aimed at promoting sustainable development in areas adjacent to protected areas. }

These issues are especially pertinent to protected areas in South Africa, several of which fall within some of the most populous and poverty-stricken parts of the country. As protected areas are often centres of economic activity, social and economic conditions within and outside of these areas contrast starkly. These discrepancies are aggravated by the fact that in the past some protected areas were established at severe cost to communities. In the creation of protected areas, many communities were forcibly removed without adequate compensation. Furthermore, a "fences and fines" approach resulted in people being denied access to resources upon which they depended. Aggravating these circumstances is the fact that protected areas have remained inaccessible to the majority of South Africa's people, and are perceived to be playgrounds for a privileged elite, from which few benefits are derived. These imbalances are well recognised, and are in some instances being redressed by conservation and other agencies.

Government will bolster such initiatives, and in collaboration with interested and affected groups will:

1. Develop and introduce appropriate strategies, mechanisms and incentives to integrate protected areas within the broader ecological and social landscape, and encourage conservation in adjacent private and communal areas. This may include the establishment of biosphere reserves; buffer zones; community-based wildlife management schemes; multiple use areas; tourism plans; development projects; or the introduction of conservation grants and other economic incentives.
2. Support and promote activities adjacent to protected areas that are compatible with and which complement the objectives of the protected area (see also Objectives 2.2 and 2.3).
3. Support the development of community-based wildlife management initiatives as part of a broader set of approaches to land-use planning and developing local sustainable development strategies.
4. Promote the development of partnerships between conservation agencies, community organisations, NGOs, and private entrepreneurs for purposes of planning and managing the use of resources within and outside of protected areas, and optimising benefits for local people.
5. Enhance the capacity of communities residing in or adjacent to protected areas to participate in protected area management through providing appropriate training and education, and through recognising local expertise and traditional institutions.
6. Take steps to avoid or minimise damage caused to people and property by wildlife (see also Objective 1.2).
7. Seek innovative ways of improving benefit flows to people in and around protected areas through:
 - (a) promoting local and social development (e.g. using local producers and labour as far as possible, facilitating joint venture schemes, providing community services, providing environmental education and opportunities within protected areas, promoting community management and co-management of protected areas);
 - (b) designating areas for sustainable resource use; and
 - (c) facilitating where appropriate the development of compensation agreements with those who have lost access to resources or who have suffered damage caused by wildlife.
8. Through the Land Restitution Programme, and in accordance with the Constitution of South Africa and the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, facilitate the settlement of land claims, taking into account the intrinsic biodiversity value of the land, and seeking outcomes which will combine the objectives of restitution with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.