An analysis of the perceptions surrounding the re-zoning of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area

By

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Abstract

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are an increasingly important tool for sustainable marine governance. However, their effectiveness is improved if designed to consider how people value and interact with coasts and marine resources designated for protection. This research critically examines the different perceptions of stakeholders towards the rezoning of Africa's oldest MPA, the Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP) MPA. In South Africa, MPAs created prior to 1994 under the Apartheid regime disregarded local communities' rights to the coast and in some cases removed or restricted access, with no consultation. In December 2016 the TNP MPA was rezoned from a 'no-take' MPA to a partially open protected area with the aim of re-addressing historical exclusion and to provide managed access and benefits to adjacent communities. This thesis explores the perceptions of different stakeholders to the rezoning process and the underlying values, worldviews and beliefs that influence these perceptions. The research also examines the nature of participation in the rezoning process, including issues of representation, trust and legitimacy. Data collection is based primarily on 55 semi-structured key informant interviews from the nine different communities adjacent to the Tsitsikamma MPA, scientists, NGO and government officials, as well as a focus group with eight representatives from South African National Parks. Data sources are supplemented with census and mapping information, field observations and a participatory film project. Findings from this research identified and examined the diverse perceptions of stakeholders about the re-zoning and highlighted how different groups have very different perceptions about the benefits of the rezoning for either marine conservation objectives or community economic, livelihood and wellbeing aspirations. What emerged clearly was that perceptions are influenced by values, worldviews and beliefs and that failure to recognize and incorporate these perceptions in planning, discussions and decision-making leads to ongoing contestation and conflict. The research thus highlights the challenge of balancing community rights and needs with conservation goals in a rapidly changing marine context, and highlights that understanding different perceptions and values that underlie these perceptions and providing the space to allow these different views to be shared is important for collaborative governance of MPAs in South Africa. Based on an enhanced understanding of perceptions, recommendations are made regarding the importance of recognizing and incorporating perceptions in planning and decision-making and promoting greater participation in governance.

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List of Acronyms and abbreviations

ANC African National Congress

BRUVs Baited Remote Underwater Video System

CBD Convention on Biological Diversity

CCRN Community Conservation research Network

CCZ Coastal Control Zone

DAFF Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

DEA Department of Environmental Affairs

DEAT Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

FAO Food and Agricultural Organization

FSREC Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee

GRNP Garden Route National Park

ICMA Integrated Coastal Management Act

ICSF International Collective in Support of Fishworkers

IPBES Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature

MLRA Marine Living Resources Act

MPA Marine Protected Area

NBA National Biodiversity Assessment

NBF National Biodiversity Framework

NEM: BA National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act

NEM: PAA National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act

NEMA National Environmental Management Act

NDP National Development Plan

NGI National Geo-spatial Information

NGO Non-governmental organization

SANBI South African National Biodiversity Institute

SANParks South African National Parks

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SSF Small-Scale Fisher

SSFP Small-Scale Fisheries Policy

Stats SA Statistics South Africa

TAF Tsitsikamma Angling Forum

TNP Tsitsikamma National Park

UCT University of Cape Town

UN United Nations

UNEP United Nations Environment Program

UNEP-WCMC – United Nations Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WPC World Parks Congress

WWF World Wildlife Fund

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Chapter One: Introduction

The protection of marine ecosystems and biodiversity is necessary with the increasing risk of anthropogenic impacts that threaten the integrity of marine species, habitats and ecosystems (Worm et al, 2006). Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) have emerged as one strategy to promote long-term protection of endemic species, biodiversity conservation and habitat protection. However, the use of MPAs as a conservation measure, and then later as a tool for fisheries management is hotly contested in the literature and has led to variable results (Hilborn, et al, 2004; Kolding, 2006; Sowman et al, 2011; Ballantine, 2014; Charles et al, 2016). Numerous studies show that MPAs must be created with both the biophysical and social context in mind (Pollnac et al., 2001; McClanahan et al., 2006; Jentoft et al., 2012; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Oldekop et al., 2016; Christie et al., 2017; McNeil et al., 2018; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). Further research has shown that in order to be effective once established, MPAs must be governed and managed in ways that take into account the social, cultural, ecological, political, legal and economic dimensions (UNEP, 2011; Hanlon, 2013; Ahmadia et al, 2015; Berkes, 2015; Pressey et al, 2015; Bennett et al, 2017; Jones et al., 2018).

This thesis critically examines the perceptions of different stakeholders regarding the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area (MPA) in South Africa from a 'no-take' MPA to allow managed access for recreational fishing in three designated zones. The Tsitsikamma MPA has been an area of contestation since its creation in 1964. Community members adjacent to the Tsitsikamma MPA have reported a lack of consultation in the decision-making process surrounding its establishment in various studies (Faasen, 2006; Williams, 2013). Community representatives formally petitioned for the MPA to be re-zoned to allow for access in 1978, 1995, 2006 and 2015 (Hanekom et al., 1997; Faasen, 2006; Muhl., 2016). The MPA was declared a strict 'no-take' zone in 2000 following the collapse of certain South African line fishery stocks (Chadwick et al, 2014). However, the community views the area as being closed from 1978 when most of the coastal area was zoned as closed for fishing and physical access, except for a small section of 3 km, located in the center of the 80km long stretch of coastline under protection (Muhl, 2016). The implications of the loss of access to the coast for adjacent communities has been profound (Faasen and Watts., 2007). For example, many community members have experienced a loss in identity and culture and perceive the rise in crime and substance-abuse to be associated with a lack of access to the coastline (Faasen, 2006; Williams, 2013; Muhl, 2016). There is a strong perception within the community that their identity is tied to the sea, and that the subsequent loss of access to the sea is akin to undermining their history as people of the sea (Williams, 2013; Muhl, 2016).

The recent re-zoning of sections the MPA for fishing by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) aims to address the rights of formerly marginalized community fishers while balancing conservation goals. Specifically, the plan aimed to re-zone 20% of the Tsitsikamma MPA for fishing within three designated coastal control zones (DEAT, Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003. Regulation, 2016:40511). According to DEA, the rezoning aims to provide fishing for subsistence use and promote equitable access to local community members through a recreational permit for local residents. The recreational permit can be used by local residents to access the three designated coastal control zones (CCZs) (DEA; 2016).

The communities adjacent to Tsitsikamma are reported to have more than 50% of their economically active population unemployed, and these changes in access to the MPA are potentially significant (Gosling, 2015; Brophy, 2016). Low levels of economic opportunity combined with a lack of food security and sustainable livelihoods was revealed in Faasen's (2006) research and was linked to a lack of access to coastal resources. The new re-zoning regulations aim to open angling to local fishers from the adjacent areas by issuing recreational permits which stipulate species size limits, bag restrictions, and seasonal restrictions on certain species to allow for subsistence fishing. However, the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP) for local anglers has raised concerns amongst various stakeholders regarding the potential environmental and social impacts and the sustainability of the rezoning.

A better understanding of the perceptions of different stakeholders on these issues is needed to inform planning and management decisions going forward, as well as to understand how decisions were taken with regard to the 'open' zones. Furthermore, understanding the underlying reasons for different perceptions among stakeholders involved in an MPA will help to facilitate discussions and inform policy and management recommendations, and improve the governance of marine protected areas. Specifically, an improved understanding of perceptions of the rezoning may help to reduce conflict among the key stakeholder groups in the Tsitsikamma MPA: communities, scientists, conservation agencies and other government agencies. These groups are often operating in silos with limited opportunities to engage with one another, and to build the trust needed for effective MPA governance. Improving the governance of MPAs is becoming increasingly necessary in view of the tensions and conflicts amongst local communities, other stakeholders and management agencies regarding access to and management of these areas.

In South Africa, there is an increasing emphasis on incorporating historically marginalized fishers and coastal communities in resource management and conservation planning through

new policies and legislation, including the new Small-Scale Fisheries Policy (SSFP) (DAFF, 2012), the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) of 1998 and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA) (DEAT., 1998a and 2003). MPAs that exclude coastal communities have resulted in significant hardship, and thus there is a growing recognition that the declaration and governance of MPAs should account for the political, social and economic contexts within which coastal communities are situated (UNEP-WPC and IUCN, 2016). This is especially poignant in developing countries such as South Africa where many rural communities rely on coastal resources for food, livelihoods and cultural purposes. These issues have been increasingly highlighted at various global gatherings including the fourth and sixth World Parks Congresses (WPC), held in Durban (2003) and Sydney (2014) respectively. The rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA is one step towards allowing access for local anglers who have historically been able to access to the coast and its resources prior to the establishment of the MPA (SANParks, 2016). However, as this research reveals, there are significant differences in perceptions among local users and other key stakeholders – local community members, scientists, conservation agencies and other government agencies – with respect to the need for the rezoning, how it was planned and implemented, and the implications for both coastal communities and coastal ecosystems.

1.2 Rationale, Aims and Objectives

Research into different perceptions of stakeholders contributes crucial knowledge for management and governance of MPAs (Webb et al, 2004; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Hanson, 2014; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). In South Africa, the views of scientists have largely informed conservation planning and management decisions (Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Sowman et al., 2011; Hushlak., 2012). In many South African protected area contexts (as elsewhere in the world), top-down and science-driven approaches to MPA management often excludes the perceptions and involvement of local communities.

This research aims to address this gap by examining the perceptions of local community members and other stakeholders concerning the re-zoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA. These groups include the nine adjacent coastal communities, local anglers, the regulating authorities, local scientists, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other interest groups. Past research has focused on how to improve governance of marine resources by better incorporating the views of coastal communities in management and decision-making in South Africa (Hauck and Sowman, 2001; Nielsen et al., 2004; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008). In practice, however, due to the fact that coastal resource governance involves a variety of stakeholders

representing different ideas and interests, it is necessary to understand the perceptions and underlying values and worldviews of these stakeholders when amending policy and legislation. This study therefore seeks to understand the perceptions of local communities and other stakeholder groups to various issues surrounding the re-zoning of the TNP MPA, as well as their views regarding the processes followed, and the nature of interactions among key groups (e.g., scientists, managing authorities and the implications for access to resources by adjacent communities.)

Given this context and the current contestation surrounding the rezoning in the Tsitsikamma MPA, the following six objectives have guided this research:

1. To identify the relevant resource users and stakeholders in the Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning process;
2. To investigate the perceptions of key stakeholders with regard to opening up sections of the Tsitsikamma coast to local user groups;
3. To examine the underlying values, worldviews and images that influence and inform perceptions about the rezoning of the MPA;
4. To examine the potential socio-economic implications of this decision for local coastal communities;
5. Based on an understanding of different perceptions, consider how the interactions, relationships and levels of trust among different stakeholders and user groups may have influenced the potential for positive or negative outcomes in the Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning process;
   and
6. In collaboration with research participants, develop recommendations that address the key issues and concerns raised by different stakeholder groups.

The South African government is increasingly aware of the disadvantages associated with 'no-take' MPAs for local communities, and managing authorities are seeking ways to redress this history (Sowman and Sunde, 2018; see also Pomeroy et al., 2006a; Sutton and Tobin, 2009; Voyer et al., 2012; Martin et al., 2016). Re-zoning MPAs has the potential to allow greater access, promote trust between user groups, and increase protection and care for marine and coastal resources if all user groups are consulted and considered in the planning and decision-making process. Enhancing understanding and facilitating engagement across these groups (communities, managing authorities, scientists and the environment) is critical, and my research contributes towards improved understand amongst these groups. Specifically, this

research will broaden the knowledge and understanding surrounding the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA and assist in developing (potential) recommendations in collaboration with research participants that address the key issues and concerns raised by these different stakeholder groups.

1.3 Research Context

South Africa is a global biodiversity hotspot with high rates of species endemism and ecosystem diversity (Driver et al., 2011; South Africa's Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, March 2014). These diverse ecosystems provide multiple benefits to local communities, such as cultural heritage, social wellbeing and livelihoods based on natural resources (Shackleton, 2004; Van Wilgen et al., 2008; Collings, 2009; Coulthard, 2017). Pressure exerted by climate change, loss of natural habitat, pollution and unsustainable harvest methods all impact South African biodiversity, and therefore, it is crucial these ecosystems are protected to maintain their resilience.

In South Africa, natural resources have directly benefitted the poor, with the previously marginalized and less economically active members of the population, who are dependent on natural resources, often bearing the brunt of biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse (Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Isaacs and Hara, 2015; South Africa's Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, March 2014). Marine resources are important for coastal communities for material prosperity, socioeconomic development, cultural practice and psychological well-being (Coulthard, 2012). The National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act ICMA (Act No. 24 of 2008) (DEAT, 2008) and the National Coastal Management Programme state that the goal of integrated coastal management is to unite government, communities, science, management and public interest to protect and develop the coast, and "to improve the quality of life of human communities who depend on coastal resources while maintaining the biological diversity and productivity of coastal ecosystems" (DEA, 2014: 2).

The right to a healthy environment that protects the well-being of present and future generations is also enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996). Section 24 of the Constitution stipulates that legislation must not only promote sustainable conservation but must also account for the social and economic development of the nation. This principle is enshrined in the NEMA (No.107 of 1998) and further developed in the ICMA (DEAT, 2008) to ensure that natural resource use is ecologically sustainable and does not

exclude historically marginalized communities that rely on natural resources for their livelihoods. Furthermore, South Africa is a signatory to several global agreements that include provisions on access and benefit sharing of natural resources, respecting rights of indigenous and local peoples and requiring their involvement in decisions that affect them. Additionally, article 15 and 8(j) of the CBD recognizes the dependency of indigenous people on natural resources and their reciprocal relationship with the environment. The full involvement of indigenous and local communities was adopted in line with the "Akwé: Kon Guidelines" (CBD, 2004) which acknowledge that traditional knowledge, practices and cultural use of an area by indigenous people needs to be incorporated before any development or changes are carried out that may affect the land or natural resources used by these communities. These guidelines have been adopted since 2003 and are consistent with agreements signed at the 2003 World Parks Congress (WPC) in Durban. International obligations to protect biodiversity through the Aichi Target 11 resulting from the 10th United Nations Convention of Biological Diversity Conference of Parties (COP 10); the WPC in 2014, and Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations in 2015, have become an important concern for international societies. In South Africa, draft legislation to expand two MPAs and create an additional twenty MPAs (through operation Phakisa, designed to fast track South Africa's 'blue' economy) was published in 2016 and approved by the Cabinet in October 2018. The MPA network expansion will protect 10% of South African coasts. However, for successful conservation outcomes, it needs to ensure legitimate protection and sustainable use of marine resources by incorporating local communities into co-governance procedures (Christie et al., 2003; Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2014; Jones, 2014).

However, the South African approach to MPA declaration in South Africa during colonial and then Apartheid times resulted in the exclusion and displacement of communities. Decisions surrounding the locality of MPAs and their management were largely informed by scientists with little public and community involvement (Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). This has led to contestations between conservation authorities and local communities. Research suggests that when an MPA is created in ways that exclude the needs of local coastal communities, this can lead to contestation with the managing authority and other stakeholders. Therefore, conservation managers should consider the impact that an MPA can have on coastal communities' livelihoods, food security, social wellbeing and customary practices (Christie, 2004; Pomeroy et al., 2006a, 2007; West et al., 2006; Jones, 2009; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Mascia and Claus, 2009; ICSF, 2010; Sowman et al., 2011; Jentoft et al., 2012; Williams, 2013; Sunde, 2014; Sowman et al., 2014; Sowman., 2015; Christie et al., 2017; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). In South Africa, the government is seeking to address the impacts and

injustices associated with ‘no-take’ MPAs that have marginalized communities. In Tsitsikamma, a better understanding of the perceptions of key stakeholders’ groups – communities, scientists, conservation agencies and other government agencies – will provide a foundation for more effective MPA governance.

1.4 Structure of dissertation

The first chapter has outlined the main purpose of the dissertation and introduced the topic of MPAs in South Africa, along with their history in regard to management. The chapter highlights the importance of understanding how different perceptions of MPA governance can foster support or provoke contestation. An overview of the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma National Park MPA was provided, as well as the overall aim and objectives of this research.

In the next chapter, the literature and theoretical ideas relevant to this dissertation are reviewed and synthesized. The concepts and theories addressed include governance of MPAs in general terms and in the context of South Africa; understanding perceptions and why they matter; debates concerning access and resource rights; the concepts of participation, representation and issues of ‘trust’ among different stakeholders.

Chapter three introduces the research design and methods adopted in this study. It introduces the case-study approach used and the qualitative methods employed to analyze the data. The methods used to guide the research and to analyze the information are outlined. Limitations and challenges of the research are outlined, along with an overview of ethical considerations taken into account when undertaking the study.

Chapter four provides the findings of the study. The chapter focuses on perceptions of different stakeholder groups and how underlying values, images and worldviews inform perceptions of the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA. Participation and consultation in the process of rezoning and its effect on trust between stakeholder groups are described. Perceptions regarding the history of the Tsitsikamma MPA and the changes in access are also examined.

Chapter five discusses the key findings and their implications for MPA governance. Key findings regarding perceptions of the rezoning process in relation to the literature are explored to understand the material and non-material consequences of loss of access, and issues of participation, legitimacy and trust associated with the rezoning. Recommendations for taking account of perceptions of stakeholders in planning and decision-making for the Tsitsikamma

MPA are also discussed.

Lastly, Chapter six provides a brief conclusion of this thesis and emphasizes key insights and contributions. In particular, it highlights the importance of considering perceptions of different stakeholder groups in the process of rezoning for more collaborative governance to allow for inclusivity and transparency in its process.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Marine protected areas are complex, challenging and can potentially provoke difficult social impacts (Mascia et al., 2010). As MPAs share characteristics with wicked problems, often technical or compartmentalized solutions are ineffective and can result in a failure to achieve conservation objectives (Christie, 2004). Numerous studies have determined that a significant majority of MPAs fail to accomplish their conservation goals (Kelleher et al., 1995; Pomeroy et al., 2006a; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). The lack of effectiveness in MPA management has been linked to poor governance that ignores the fact that MPAs are socio-ecological systems and that too often disregards the views and concerns of stakeholders in the planning process (Harding et al., 2012; Jentoft et al., 2012; Voyer et al., 2012; Abecasis et al., 2013; Carcamo et al., 2014; Christie et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2019). For MPAs to be supported, they need to be viewed as legitimate by stakeholders (Christie et al., 2003; Hard et al., 2012; Hoelting et al., 2013; Kelly et al., 2017; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). Fostering support from local communities is particularly important if protected areas are to be equitably and effectively managed, and thus sustainable (Salomon et al., 2007; Berkes and Berkes, 2009; Cullen-Unsworth et al., 2012; Ban et al., 2018; Bennett et al., 2018).

In this chapter, four main concepts relevant to my research objectives are reviewed and discussed : 1) governance of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs); 2) community access and rights to coastal and marine resources; 3) participation (or lack of) and issues of 'trust' among different stakeholders involved in the use and management of marine protected areas, and 4) underlying values, worldviews and images that influence and inform perceptions.

2.2 Marine Protected Areas

An MPA is defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as "a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values" (IUCN, 2008). By 2016, more than 14,000 MPAs had been designated globally, and 10.2% of coastal areas and 4.1% of the oceans were protected under national law (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, 2016). MPAs are a conservation tool that are used internationally to protect vulnerable ecosystems and habitats (Helvey, 2004; Jentoft et al., 2007, Agardy et al., 2011; Gotz et al., 2013; Garcia et al, 2014; Jones et al., 2018). Protected

areas can act as a defence against proposed industrial development, pollution, mining and property development (Sowman et al, 2014). MPAs have also been promulgated as a method to increase fish stocks, promote increased fishery returns and provide protection against the collapse of fish populations (Attwood et al, 1997; Beukes-Stewart et al., 2005; Gaines et al., 2010; Russ and Alcala, 2011; Yates et al., 2019). However, some studies have contested the use of MPAs as a fisheries management tool (Kolding, 2006; Kearney et al., 2012; Hilborn 2017).

The need for human dimensions to be incorporated in MPA governance is also being realised as crucial to effectively manage MPAs (Christie et al., 2003; ICSF, 2008, 2010; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Mascia et al., 2010; Bennett et al., 2017; McNeill et al., 2018; Sowman and Sunde, 2018; Yates, 2019). Globally, marine resources, coastal ecosystems and local communities are being recognized as interdependent (Berkes, 2003; Glaser, 2006; Kotchen and Young, 2007). Fifty percent of the global population live adjacent to the coast, with over eighty percent of coastal communities' support coming directly from marine resources (UN Atlas of the Oceans, 2010; Small and Nichols, 2003). The contribution that coastal resources make to community livelihoods is well established (Sowman, 2006; Glacovic and Boonzaier, 2007**;** IUCN, 2008; Borrini-Feyerabend et al, 2011; Bennett et al., 2018). However, there have often been negative effects on local people associated with MPAs, along with an unequal distribution of benefits (Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Berkes, 2015; Sowman; 2015).

The original biological focus of MPAs has shifted to include a more 'human dimensions' perspective as increasing awareness of the impacts that MPAs can have on local communities' livelihoods and well-being is being recognised (Jentoft et al., 2012; Voyer et al., 2012; Abescasis et al., 2013; Carcamo et al., 2014; Christie et al., 2017; Dehens and Fanning, 2018; Sowman and Sunde, 2018; Eriksson et al., 2019). This was supported and advocated in the 2003 and 2014 World Parks Congress (WPC), the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) programme of work on governance, participation, equity and benefit-sharing (CBD, 2004). For example, the recognition of socio-economic issues and their relation to MPAs and the interaction between MPAs and livelihoods and cultural practices are crucial to achieve ecological and social sustainability (Sowman et al, 2014; Charles et al, 2016). Therefore, to reconcile marine conservation goals and promote sustainability, governance of coastal areas must incorporate consideration of the human dimensions, especially considering the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015) and Aichi targets of the CBD (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2010) to which South Africa is a signatory.

For MPAs to achieve positive social and ecological outcomes they need to be perceived as legitimate and recognise the socio-economic and cultural needs and perceptions of local resource users. Incorporating local perceptions into planning and management can lead to an inclusive and effective management plan that ensures a resilient and adaptable ecosystem that benefits stakeholders (Dehens and Fanning, 2018; Glaser et al., 2018). Local resource users and other stakeholders will need to be consulted if areas that have been historically accessed and used are under consideration for MPA status. A positive perception of the governance of an area can foster trust between different parties and ensure that decisions and MPA activities aligns with local vulnerabilities and needs. Incorporating a broad variance in perspective can enhance implementation and prevent contestation from arising.

2.3 Governance

Governance is defined by Jones (2014: 63) as "steering human behaviour through combinations of state, market and civil society approaches in order to achieve strategic objectives." Governance is not only about the role of 'government' but includes other actors in the governance process. Jentoft and Chuenpagdee (2009:554) define governance as the "shared, collective effort of government, private business, civic organizations, communities, political parties, universities, the media and the general public." Jentoft and Chuenpagdee (209) define governance as a horizontal process rather than as a top-down and state-centered process. Governance is thus the system that steers decision-making and through interactions across a range of actors. Governance helps to direct and regulate the way people interact, produce and manage their food, goods, waste, health, and to generate systems of knowledge, culture and freedom (IPBES, 2018). Governance processes are influenced by many groups, such as civil society, various institutions, organizations and trade networks (McCay and Jones, 2011). As governance manages the way in which individuals and groups work collaboratively to address societal problems in nature, it is relevant to biodiversity and ecosystem issues.

The effectiveness of governance and what is good governance is mediated and evaluated differently by stakeholders depending on their world views. Good governance needs to address values and principles or 'meta-governance' (Kooiman et al., 2008). Kooiman et al (2008) proposed that governance operates at different levels and has 'orders' and tiers of action. Within these orders are principles that guide good governance. For example, first-order governance is concerned with addressing problems in the daily management of an MPA and is solution-based. Second-order governance comprises the institutional arrangements within governance systems and considers goals set and directives required to solve issues and

contestations necessary for public well-being. Second-order and first-order governance are guided by what Kooiman et al (2008) defines as 'meta-governance' or third-order governance, which is concerned with the underlying values, images and worldviews that are required for legitimate management.

Meta-governance attributes such as values, worldviews and images are shaped by history and power relations. Multi-faceted histories of domination and power between stakeholders, international goals and political mandates can also frame and shape governance processes (Bourdieu, 1990; Ratner and Allison, 2012; Sowman and Wynberg, 2014). Effective governance is linked to values, and those values are often constrained by power, for example international norms and sustainability may not be in line with the losses local community members may experience when a protected area is declared. It is therefore important for good governance to consider different stakeholders and foster consultation in the process of making management decisions. Legitimate governance should include diverse stakeholders across multiple levels and is reflective of the different power dynamics (Sowman and Wynberg, 2014).

Politics shapes the way a resource is accessed and managed. Voß and Bournemann (2011:9) refer to politics as the "processing of a diversity of ideas and interests with regard to public affairs. Politics comprise interactions by which individual and collective actors struggle for the definition and the provision of the common good". Multi-level governance includes interactions across different levels (local, regional, national and international) and policies that derive from these politics in turn structure the decision-making processes associated with natural resource use (Kooiman et al., 2008; Hill and Varone, 2014; Duit, 2016; Orach and Schlüter, 2016).

The dynamics of power are essential to comprehend the practices and organisation associated with conservation (Scott 2001; Raik et al. 2008; Ratner et al., 2013). Power is shaped by and shapes social processes and institutions through which decisions are made, and that can be affected by or affecting local communities (Oakerson, 1992). This is particularly relevant when considering the case of community conservation, which has a complex shifting dynamic social, cultural, economic, political and historical system (Nayak et al, 2016). A lack of acknowledgement and analysis of power is also evident in fisheries and coastal governance, leading to challenging issues in governance when it comes to community conservation (Sinclair and Ommer, 2006; Jentoft et al, 2007; Nayak et al, 2015). Power structures can be 'invisible' and embedded in social and cultural practices, around norms, values, images,

worldviews and perceptions that influence groups' or individuals' exercise of power (Njaya et al, 2012). Power and politics are important considerations for governance in conservation, especially when the area is connected to the customary practices and cultural values of adjacent communities and can also affect trust. Participation can build power and power leads to greater control in governance and who can access what resources (Ward et al., 2018).

Nuemann (2005:1) argues that, "The environment and how we acquire, disseminate, and legitimate knowledge about it are highly politicized, reflective of relations of power, and contested.". These power dynamics are created by inclusion and exclusion from management decisions. Participation in processes builds trust. However, when excluded, certain actors can use power and connections through trusted parties to influence the outcomes of management decisions. For example, in 2015, and as addressed in my findings below, when the initial pilot phase occurred to rezone four areas of the Tsitsikamma MPA and to open them to recreational fishers, there was an outcry. A group of marine scientists, who named themselves the "Friends of the Tsitsikamma" challenged the rezoning. They perceived the re-zoning as unlawful as it had occurred before the public participation process had ended. They won the court case and the MPA was once again declared a 'no-take' zone in 2015 (Friends of Tsitsikamma Association v South African National Parks, Minister of Environmental Affairs and The Tsitsikamma Anglers Forum, 2016; Venter., 2017).

Effective governance typically emphasizes the role of society as a stakeholder. As a result, there has been considerable academic attention towards finding processes that could foster a transparent and dynamic link between politics, policy, science and people (Kates et al., 2001; Cash et al., 2003; Dilling and Lemos, 2011; Miller et al., 2014; Reed et al., 2014; Wyborn, 2015; Clark et al., 2016; Cvitanovic et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2017; Bednarek et al., 2018; Fazey et al., 2018). Governance of environmental resources is ideally flexible in its response to environmental dynamics in a manner that reflects the social and political complexity of the system to be governed (Jentoft et al., 2007; Song et al., 2013). As policy making increasingly becomes more democratic, attention needs to be given to who represents whom, and what, as well as issues of equal and fair stakeholder representation (Linke and Jentoft, 2015). However, the complexity of multi-scale dynamics between people and natural resource use, make systems, like fisheries, difficult to govern (Ludwig et al., 1993; Cochrane, 2000; Pauly et al., 2002; Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009; Song et al., 2013). Popular policy initiatives that focus on a technical solution often do not produce the desired results and therefore many resource issues can be classed as problems which are overly complex and require flexible and ongoing resolutions, these are referred to as 'wicked problems' (Ludwig et al., 2001; Jentoft and

Chuenpagdee, 2009; Boyd, 2010; Khan and Neis, 2010; Berkes, 2012).

A wicked problem is defined as having "no definite formulation and no well-described set of potential solutions. They depend on the perspective, i.e. how the problems are looked upon, and that may vary from one person to the next, conditioning on the extent to which the person in question is affected by it." (Jentoft and Chuenpagdee, 2009:554). For wicked problems, governance is needed rather than management, as governance is interactive, involves all relevant actors and requires context relevant solutions. In the case of wicked problems, there can be a conflict of interest between different user and stakeholder groups (Rittel and Webber, 1973; Jentoft and Chuengpagdee, 2009). Problems that arise in coastal areas are often linked to poverty and social conflict and require interaction and communication among stakeholders (Gilmore and Camilius, 1996). The values, norms and principles underpinning goals and priorities therefore have to be formed with diverse stakeholders (Jentoft and Chuenpagdee, 2009). Interactive governance theory as proposed by Kooiman (2008) proposes that governance exists on three intersecting levels, the governing system, the system-to-be-governed and governing interactions (as seen in Fig 1, below).

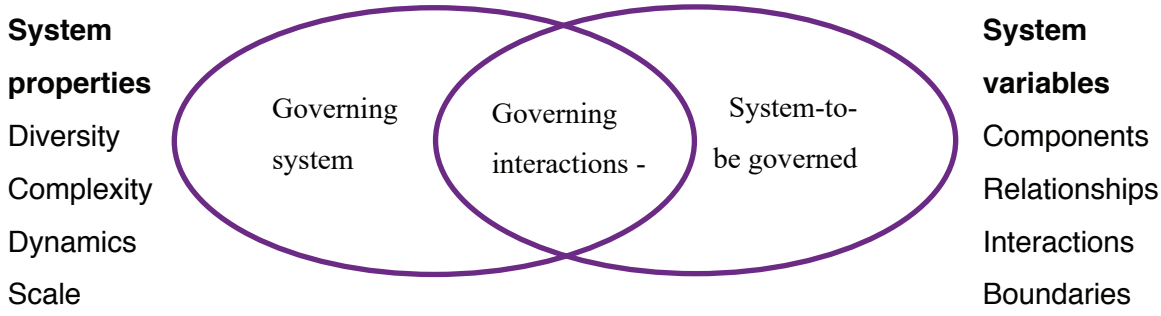

Figure 1: Interactive Governance Model, Source: Jentoft and Chuenpagdee, 2009

Interactive governance theory emphasizes three intersecting levels as shown in Figure 1. Interactive governance is defined as "the whole of public as well as private interactions taken to solve societal problems and create societal opportunities" (Kooiman and Bavinck, 2009: 820). As seen in Figure 1 the governing system and system-to-be governed affect one another through governance interactions, as they are prone to change so do their effects on one another. Good governance therefore can also be expressed in a systems capacity to change and respond to external and internal demands. In the context of protected areas and natural resource management, an interactive governance approach would examine the system from a socio-ecological perspective and promote engagement of all stakeholders (governance actors) to

address ‘wicked problems’ collaboratively (Jentoft, 2007; Chuenpagdee, 2011).

2.4 Governance of MPAs

Marine Protected Areas in themselves are “wicked problems” because of the complex interactions between components in the system, as well as the diverse interests and views of stakeholders involved in the MPA and its governance (Jentoft and Chuenpagdee, 2013). Yet, protected areas need to have clear governance structures for compliance and to ensure effective and sustainable management (Campbell et al., 2012; Buglass et al. 2018). Participation and transparency are key principles of good governance and are necessary to ensure legitimacy of management and legislative decisions affecting MPAs. Thus, it is important to include different stakeholders in processes such as proposals for rezoning an MPA to ensure understanding of different subjective realities surrounding the perceived impacts of a rezoning process to various users. The governance interactions between different stakeholders and the associated power dynamics need to be considered for effective management and compliance (Biermann et al., 2010; Brewer and Moon, 2015; Glaser et al., 2018). If there is a lack of perceived legitimacy, there will be a failure of trust between different role-players that could negatively impact the management and ultimately the sustainability of an area.

International research has recognised that social factors often are greater determinants than biological or physical factors for successful marine protection, as shown in the establishment of locally managed marine protected areas (LMMAs), which work with the community to take ownership and protect their natural resources (Mascia., 2003; Pomeroy et al., 2007; Bennett et al., 2017). The utilization of community support structures has been recognised as a successful method of conservation in areas such as Fiji, Pacific island states, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Palau, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia (Tawake, 2007; Govan et al, 2008; Rocliffe et al, 2014). Positive outcomes in MPA management are produced when human dimensions are incorporated in conjunction with environmental considerations (Brosius et al., 2005; West et al., 2006**;** Buscher and Wolmer, 2007; Poe et al., 2014; Sowman et al., 2014; Charles et al., 2016; Pomeroy, 2016).

Governance in the context of MPAs is the way in which societies and organizations organize themselves by choice in order to make decisions regarding protected area use and management. This includes “the way power is distributed, between different actors in society, and the way it can be used to leverage or constrain action.” (Armitage et al., 2017:2). MPA governance is often place-based but in order to function effectively, it also needs to take into

account the interconnected human and environmental dimensions outside of the zoned area (Jones, 2014; IPBES, 2018). This means that national and provincial institutions must be included in MPA management without exerting a top-down exclusive form of governance that does not account for local users. Government systems have traditionally operated in an exclusionary top down approach with legislation and authority imposed on community members (Sunde and Isaacs 2008; Sowman et al., 2011, 2014; Emdon 2013; MDT 2013; Sunde 2014; Williams 2013; Jentoft and Bavinck, 2014). Ostrom (2010) found that local level decision-making whilst maintaining a national level strategy is a successful way of managing natural resources. For MPAs to be supported it is important that governance reconciles top-down, and bottom-up approaches to achieve MPAs objectives (Wilson, 2009; Jones, 2014).

Interactive governance (see above) emphasizes the relationships between the governing systems and systems to be governed, and it is the interactions that occur at the meta-governance level which will determine how top-down and bottom-up approaches to MPA governance are reconciled (McGoodwin, 2007; Kooiman et al., 2008; Song, 2018). As seen in Figure 2 the meta-governance process is dynamic and classifies values as leading to norms, which in turn shape principles and result in choice. In governance, these choices need to be transparent, accountable and effective, to foster respect other user groups and stakeholders, by holding equity as a principle and allow for inclusion (Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009).

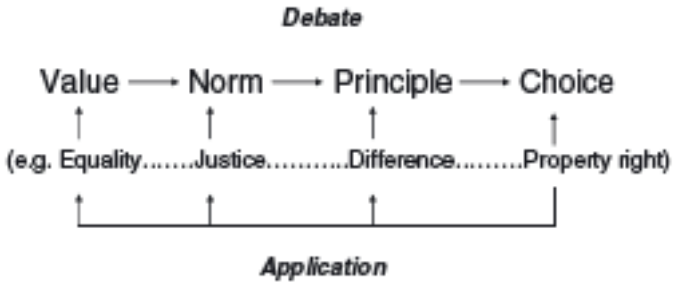

Figure 2: Meta -governance process. Source: Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009

2.5 MPAs and their Governance in South Africa

In South Africa, the manifesto of The African National Congress (ANC) states that "marine resources must be managed and controlled for the benefit of all South Africans, especially those communities whose livelihood depends on resources from the sea" (ANC, 1994:104). The ICMA (2009), which is informed by the principles of the NEMA of 1998, has designated that coastal areas should promote public access to the coast and managed access to resources

for civil societies benefit (clause 13). The Marine Living Resources Act (MLRA) is guided by the principle of co-operative governance through the concept of integrated coastal zone management (DEAT, 2006). The ICMA seeks to address the colonial and Apartheid past of South Africa, by enhancing public access to the coast through the declaration of coastal public property and coastal access land (Glacovic and Boonzaier, 2007; Sowman and Malan, 2018). The result of colonial and Apartheid legislation placed black communities in disadvantaged positions and lead to a reliance on natural resources for livelihood strategies (Mbatha, 2011). The South African Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa (1996) promotes the balance of environmental sustainability with socio-economic needs and rights. It also recognizes customary law as an equal source of law as long as it is consistent with the Bill of Rights. This means that where customary systems of marine resource use and governance are still operating, these systems need to respect and taken into account in decision-making.

In South Africa, coastal MPAs have historically ignored the rights, interests and needs of adjacent communities and these communities have been subjected to exclusionary government-based control (Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). Many fishers from these communities are unable to access resources and are excluded from 'no-take' MPAs under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA) (2003). In these areas, local communities are not recognized as relying on the ocean for subsistence purposes or requiring access to the coast for cultural practices, such as in the former 'no-take' Tsitsikamma MPA. This marginalization places social and financial strain on poor communities, especially in sustaining their livelihoods (Sowman, 2006; Isaacs, 2011; Sunde, 2014). The rezoning of sections of the Tsitsikamma MPA in 2016, has been highly contested by various user groups and other stakeholders. Thus, this dissertation will strive to better understand the intentions of the managing authority, namely South African National Parks (SANParks) acting under DEA when promulgating regulations to open up parts of the MPA. It will also seek to better understand the different perceptions of various stakeholders and users regarding the processes, decisions and outcomes associated with the rezoning process.

A key challenge for MPAs is to balance human rights with conservation objectives. South Africa is a signatory to a host of multilateral agreements including the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as national policies, strategies and laws including the Marine Living Resources Act (MLRA) of 1998 (DEAT, 1998a), National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) of 1998 (DEAT, 1998b), NEM: Protected Areas Act (NEM:PAA) of 2003 and the 2014 amendment (DEAT, 2003; DEA, 2014), NEM: Biodiversity Act of 2004 (DEAT; 2004), as well as the Biodiversity Assessments (2004 and 2008) and the National

Protected Area Expansion Strategy (RSA 2008). Target 2.2 of the CBD calls for full participation of local communities and relevant stakeholders in the management of new, protected areas. As reflected in these agreements and policies, human rights need to be considered and perceptions of the different stakeholders need to be integrated in to management and decision-making processes. These considerations are important in order to understand the effects of rezoning the TNP MPA in 2016 and to offer suggestions for improving governance of this area.

In post-Apartheid South Africa, policy rhetoric concerning governance of MPAs has changed but this has not yet translated into practice. With the introduction of the new South African Constitution in 1996, environmental protection as well as the protection of basic human rights for all South Africans including protection of their cultural heritage and customary use of natural resources were enshrined in law. The National Protected Area Expansion Strategy was published in 2008 and implemented n 2010. In line with the CBD's Aichi Target 11, South African government committed to having 10% of its marine environment and 17% of terrestrial land under protection by 2020. Operation Phakisa (Phakisa translates as 'big fast results') was launched in July 2014 as part of South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) and aims to expand MPAs. In 2016, a notice of Intention to declare an additional 20 MPAs was published in the South African government regulation gazette no. 39646 (see Figure 3).

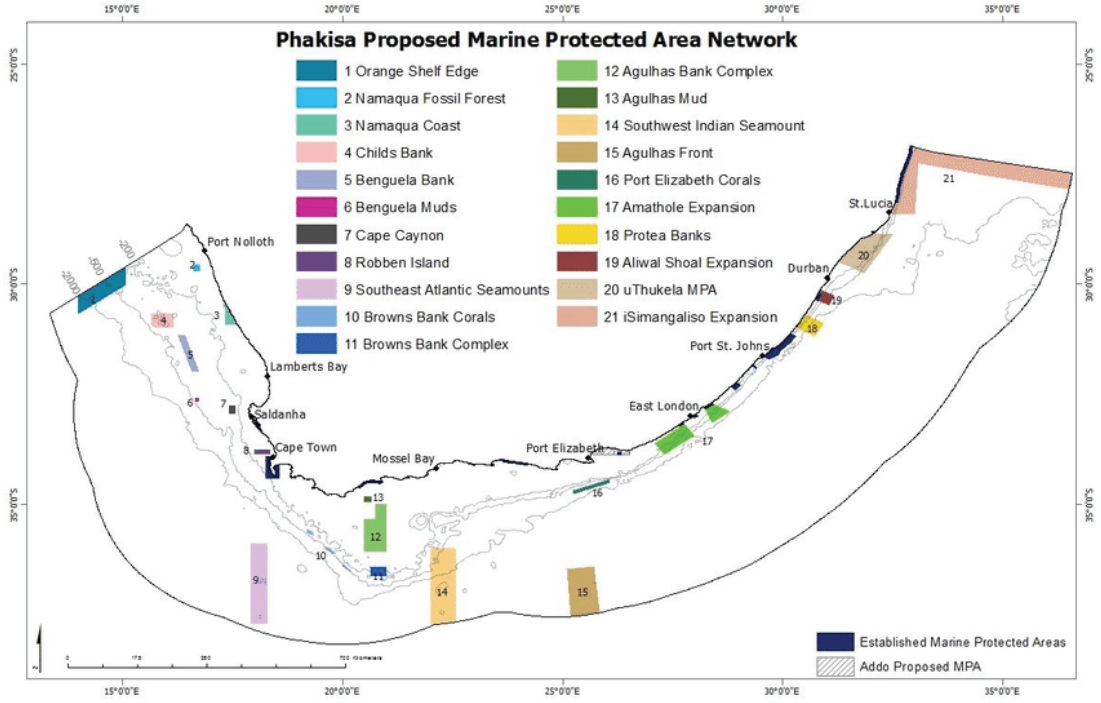

Figure 3: The Operation Phakisa Marine Protected Area Network Map

The purpose of Operation Phakisa and the proposed 20 MPAs is consistent with the 2010 CBD commitment to protect 10% of marine and coastal regions in ecologically representative areas. The designation of these MPAs is to support fisheries management and maintain or conserve rare ecosystems in a pristine state (Branch and Branch, 2018). MPAs are promoted by conservationists and natural scientists as a one size fits all approach for conservation. However, MPAs are being called into question by social scientists, non-governmental organisations, human rights groups, and in some instances communities that argue that MPAs are less successful and can have a damaging impact when they are implemented in areas used by indigenous or local communities (Christie et al., 2003; West et al, 2006; Mascia and Claus, 2009; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; ICSF, 2008 and 2010; Rajagopalan, 2009; Mbatha, 2011; Sowman et al., 2011; Sunde, 2014; Bennett et al, 2017).

There is increasing literature that highlights the disconnect between policy rhetoric and the reality of coastal communities and fishers on the ground. Scholars, NGOs and fisher organisations argue that there is a need to adopt a new approach towards MPAs that incorporates human dimensions and adopts a bottom-up form of co-management that facilitates participation of local communities in planning for coastal protection and governance processes (White, 1994; Johannes, 1998; Pomeroy, 2006b; Sunde, 2016; Rees et al., 2018). One of the objectives of the NEM:PAA Act (Section 2e) is "to promote sustainable utilization of protected areas for the benefit of people, in a manner that would preserve the ecological character of such areas." However, with an exclusionary government-based top-down approach there is a disconnect between conservation objectives and sustainable livelihood strategies used by coastal communities (Buscher and Wolmer, 2007). Buscher and Wolmer (2007) argue that if housing, food, livelihoods and traditional needs are not being met, this will lead to a separation of human rights and contestation with authorities over resources.

South African government initiated the People and Parks Programme in 2003 to balance impacts created by protected areas and to ensure that local communities received benefits from the management of these areas. As noted above, Target 2.2 of the CBD calls for full participation of local communities and relevant stakeholders in the management of new, protected areas. New forms of resource use governance need to take into account societal concerns about loss of biodiversity and protection of the natural environment while balancing human dimensions such as food security and how people use their environments, particularly in rural areas where there is a dependence on the natural environment (Berkes, 2012; Pelser et al., 2013; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Jones, 2014; Christie et al., 2017; Dehens and Fanning, 2018; Sowman and Sunde, 2018; Eriksson et al., 2019). Successful governance of MPAs needs

to incorporate an integrative approach to address both ecological and human dimensions, as top-down hierarchical approaches have been unsuccessful in achieving their conservation goals and are highly contested in local communities (Jones, 2014; Ramierz, 2016; Christie et al., 2017).

2.6 Perceptions

Perceptions can provide vital insights into understanding and recognizing how different stakeholders are affected by conservation governance. Different perceptions need to be incorporated when addressing management plans, as views of how a resource is managed contributes to either a positive or negative outlook on conservation (Bennett., 2016).

While it is important to recognize that each MPA is context specific, the success of an MPA is greatly determined by its stakeholders and how those stakeholders perceive an MPA within the framework of their own values, images and principles (Song et al., 2013; Bennett., 2018; Cinner, 2018). Many studies have illustrated that stakeholders' perceptions and how stakeholders' beliefs, worldviews and images shape those perceptions, are crucial in understanding how people view an MPA, for example, and how best to govern that MPA (Pollnac and Carmo, 1980; Richardson et al., 2005; Gelcich et al., 2009; Wilson et al., 2010; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Dehens and Fanning, 2018; Bennett et al., 2019). Perception studies have emphasized that views or attitudes towards protected areas are critical to determining legitimacy and thus by extension, greater potential for successful management through good governance (Gelcich, et al., 2009; Wilson et al., 2010). This is especially important in contexts that can be classified as a 'wicked problem' (Song et al., 2013).

Deeper meaning can be attributed to management by examining perceptions based on inherent mental constructs, such as values, norms and images (Rokeach, 1973; Dietz et al., 2005; Biggs et al., 2011; Song et al., 2013). These constructs are not linear but rather synthesize and flow into one another and can be integrated in theories of governance and management (Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009; Buijs., 2009). Perceptions are defined as "the way an individual observes, understands, interprets, and evaluates a referent object, action, experience, individual, policy, or outcome" (Bennett, 2016:585). The way in which an individual perceives a situation is based on a number of factors, but beliefs, worldviews and images help explain how different stakeholders can view a decision or action in such different ways, leading to contestations between one another over the same area. These differences in perceptions are based on how the area is observed which in turn is based on what information has been supplied and what

the individual has experienced (Bennett et al., 2019).

Stakeholders can evaluate successful management and 'good governance' surrounding a protected area by perceiving how transparent, communicative, participatory, consultative, collaborative and trustworthy they view the governance and management processes (Lockwood, 2010; Borrini-Feyebrand and Hill, 2015; Bennett et al., 2019). Values, images and principles form part of 'meta-level' governance (see above), of different stakeholders, in regard to understanding how coastal systems are managed.

Jentoft and Kooiman (2009) argue that values, norms, principles and choice have feedback loops and that are dependent on context. Interactive governance aims to minimize conflict and be flexible in its approach to help involve different stakeholders in a participatory approach that allows for collective decision-making and collaborative engagement and education between users and stakeholders (Jentoft and Kooiman, 2009). Thus, making known the values, norms and principles guiding stakeholders would assist in understanding why different stakeholders support or oppose a particular action or decision.

Bennett (2016) identified that a variety of factors can influence the way a perception is interpreted, as outlined in Figure 4. This consists of (1) contextual dynamics, for example, culture, socio-economic status, politics; (2) history, for example lack of consultation in a change to a regulation; (3) individual characteristics, for example, race and gender; and (4) meta-level governance characteristics, such as beliefs, worldviews, images and values that will motivate perceptions. Therefore, different perceptions amongst different groups can be understood based on this myriad of factors that influence them. These group or individual stakeholder perceptions are also subject to time and persuasion (Satterfield et al., 2009).

The four elements (Figure 4) outlined by Bennett (2016) suggests that understanding perceptions can contribute to better governance for conservation. Bennett (2016) outlines the following steps: Firstly, analyze what benefits a governance issue provides to local users and that it is perceived as equitable; for example, do the benefits of the MPA outweigh the negatives. Conservation impacts have not been equitable in the past and have led to some conflict (Brockington and Igoe., 2006; West et al., 2006), and therefore, the way an MPA is perceived will determine if it is considered 'just'. Communities can support the idea of conservation, but in practice if it is unjust and the negative aspects outweigh the positive aspects it will not be supported (Klain et al., 2014; Pascual et al., 2014). Secondly, support for conservation is linked to the extent to which conservation actions will increase or decrease

access to ecosystems and the implications for their livelihoods. This can be observed differently between user groups. For example, holders of traditional knowledge and those with expert knowledge may perceive the benefits of conservation in different ways based on their knowledge and experience (Fazey et al., 2006). Thirdly, perceptions of governance processes can affect the ability to implement policies and regulations. The legitimacy of policies, rules and decisions can be influenced by the nature and level of participation, transparency, accountability and communication (Lockwood,2010; Bennett and Dearden, 2014). Finally, conservation interventions need to be appropriate within its context for effective conservation. The appropriateness of management interventions, such as MPAs, differ according to the social, cultural, economic and political circumstances. Exclusionary practices, such as 'no-take' MPAs in some cases can be perceived as countering indigenous values of perceiving nature and humans as linked systems (Berkes, 2012). Dependency on natural resources for livelihoods and food security, cultural significance and customary practices within an area also need to be considered when seeking to understand how different groups may perceive conservation initiatives differently.

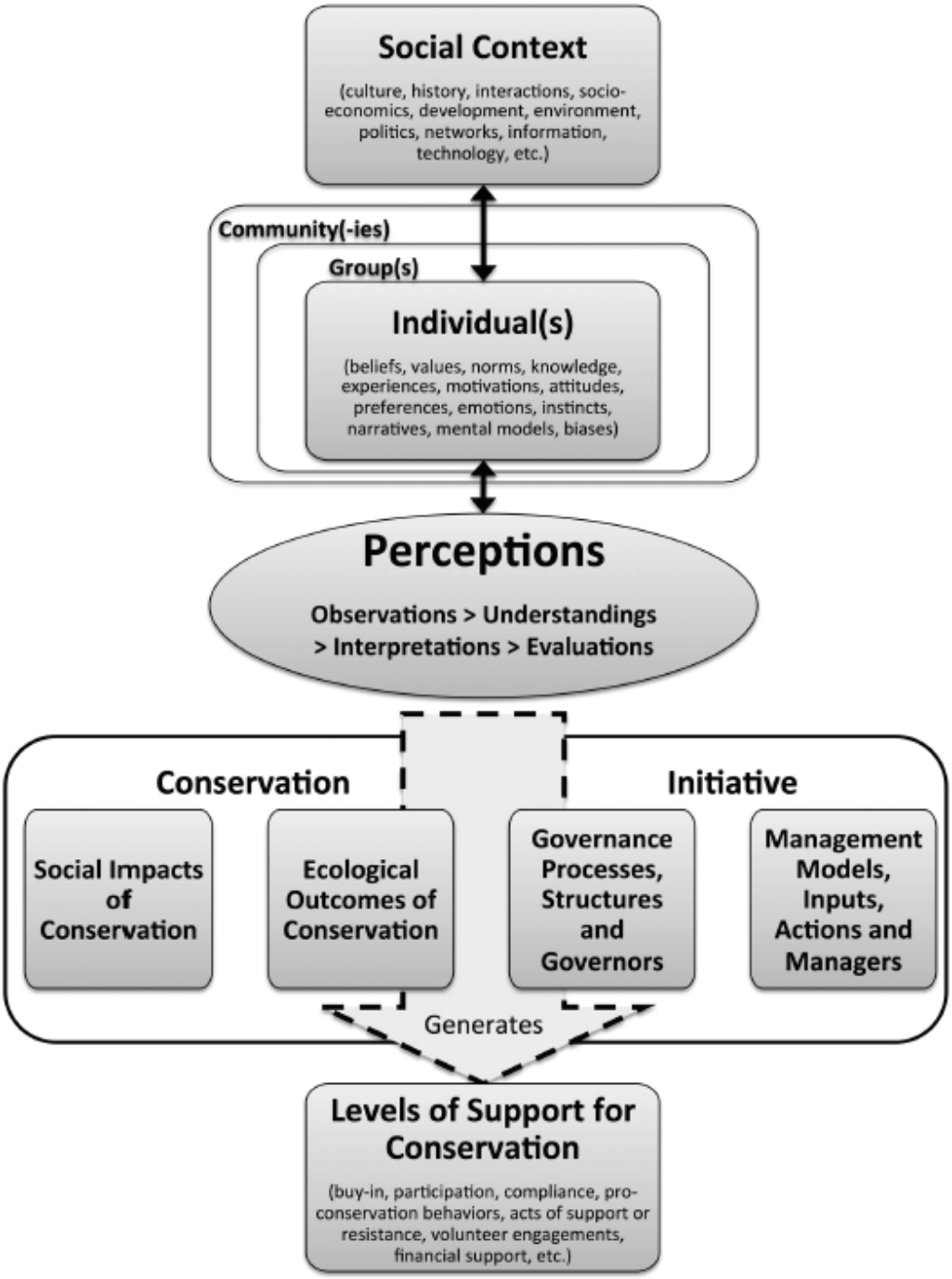

Figure 4: Contribution of perceptions to evaluations of conservation Source: Bennett, 2016

2.7 Access

Access is defined as "the ability to derive benefits from things" (Ribot and Peluso, 2003:153). This definition allows for inclusion from a broad range of relationships that can allow or inhibit actors to gain benefits from resources. For example, access to a fishing area is important for

the poorer community members, however the managing authority, SANParks deems access for tourists and the relative economic gains from ecotourism as more important, resulting in a displacement of those community members who had previously fished along the coastline (see section 4). Access is thus often related to displacement from a resource. The World Bank defines displacement as "(ii) loss of assets or access to assets; or (iii) loss of income sources or means of livelihood, whether or not the affected persons must move to another location, or the involuntary restriction of access to legally designated parks and protected areas resulting in adverse impacts on the livelihoods of the displaced persons" (World Bank, 2002 as cited in Coad et al., 2008:10).

Globally, people are dependent upon fisheries as a source of food and for their cultural practices and livelihood needs. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) approximates that close to 60 million people are dependent on fisheries, with the greatest concentration being in Asia and Africa (ICSF, 2016). Indigenous communities are often reliant on marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods, food security and other socio-economic and cultural needs (Christies et al, 2003; Sunde, 2014; Charles, 2016). Communities adjacent to a 'no-take' or strictly controlled MPA fit the World Bank definition as well, when it comes to access and loss of benefits that were historically derived from natural resources. When communities are relocated away from marine resources, it can greatly impact their standard of living. The displacement of communities from 'no-take' MPAs and the subsequent loss of access, food security, livelihood impacts as well as social and cultural impacts resulting from exclusion from natural resources have been identified in the literature on MPAs and rural communities (Christie et al., 2003; Colchester, 2004; Buscher and Wolmer, 2007; ICSF, 2008, 2010, 2016; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008; Mascia et al., 2010; Sowman et al., 2011; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Bennett et al, 2017). The loss of access to natural resources has been cited by West and Brockington (2006) as 'one of the most controversial and contested aspects of protected areas' as the creation of protected areas changes how people use and benefit from land (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001; Panusittikorn and Prato 2001; Wilshusen et al., 2002; Roth 2004; West et al., 2006). The forced exclusion of communities under the demarcation of protected areas has denied access and displaced communities from natural resources benefits in South Africa (Fabricius, 2004; Sunde and Isaacs, 2008).

There is a need to compensate local community members who lose access to natural resources (Brechin et al, 2003; Hoole, 2014; Bennett, 2018). The increase in MPAs to meet global biodiversity targets has been questioned by some authors as a form of 'blue or ocean grabbing' (Benjaminsen and Bryceson, 2012; Pederson et al., 2014; Bennett et al., 2015; Bavinck, et al.,

2017; Hill, 2017). This term refers to the dispossession that local community members experience at the hands of improper governance that removes their access and rights to resources, and that negatively affects their socio-economic status and social well-being (Bennett et al., 2015). Many MPAs were historically established to promote a fortress approach in which humans are separate from the environment (Adams and Hulme, 2001; Bryceson, 2014; Thorkildsen, 2014). This advancement of a Western concept of conservation has sacrificed local communities' livelihoods, access rights and benefits (Neumann, 2002; West et al., 2006; Dowie, 2009; Hoole, 2014). New standards in MPA governance are now incorporating access and the critical role that local communities can play in conservation (Phillips, 2003; Dudley, 2008; Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2010; Berkes, 2015).

In South Africa, access is important as national parks under colonial and white minority rule did not account for local community benefits and needs linked to natural resources. The 'fences and fines' concept has contributed to increasing negative relationships between local communities and managing authorities which can put conservation at risk (Western, 2002). Constructing a physical barrier to resources also removes autonomy and the power of communities to harvest resources implies that communities cannot self-govern but must be managed by an external agent (Hansen et al., 2014). This creates a power dynamic that prevents the community from being part of co-operative governance and excludes them from access to resources that were historically theirs. The exclusion of access to natural resources not only affects the power dynamic but does not allow for democratic participation in governance. The South African constitution established 'cooperative governance' and democratic participation as necessary in order to include stakeholder needs. However, the ongoing exclusion of some voices challenges both the legitimacy of governance for conservation, but also democracy in general (Hanson et al., 2014).

Access to resources is not only for livelihood needs but it is also intrinsic to community wellbeing and cultural identity (Stevens, 1997; Turner, 2004; Sunde et al., 2013). In South Africa, subsistence fishers were not consulted when MPAs were first created and communities were excluded from areas when they were declared MPAs (Christie, 2004; Williams, 2013; Sunde, 2014). There have been issues of access and exclusion by SANParks towards adjacent coastal communities in the Tsitsikamma since 1976, with the introduction of closed zones that escalated in 2000, with the entire MPA being zoned as 'no-take'. The adjacent communities located outside of the national parks were excluded under the Apartheid government and continue to be excluded in a post-democratic South Africa. The aptly self-named "forgotten people" of the Tsitsikamma area have experienced a decline in food security, decrease in health

and increases in anti-social behaviour and substance abuse that they have linked to exclusion from the MPA (Muhl, 2016). The subsequent change in regulation for fishing in December 2016, prompted a deeper understanding of this change in access and use. However there has been little change in access reported by community members as the zones that have been reopened are not viewed as accessible by community members due to their distance and the various restrictions placed on the anglers that they perceive as unnecessary, for example, the bag limits, very often the fishers catch very few fish but when there is an shad/elf/bluefish 'run', they find it difficult to fish in the MPA and feel that is so restricted and difficult to access that they would prefer to fish outside the MPA.

Exclusion created by lack of access can lead to conflict, and the creation of channels of participation can foster inclusion or exclusion. However, if governance creates fences and implies that communities cannot be self-governed and must be managed, this will lead to a further break down in trust and legitimacy (Seeland, 2000; Bedunah and Schmidt, 2004; Scherl, 2004; Martyr and Nugraha, 2004; Ribot et al., 2008; Hanson et al., 2014). I turn now to this issue of participation, representation and trust.

2.8 Participation, representation and trust

Stakeholder participation is a principle of 'good governance' and requires the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making to encourage transparency and accountability (Linke and Jentoft, 2016). Stakeholder participation is important to allow for a diversity of knowledge and perceptions in order to address key issues (Reed, 2008). This is particularly noted in management of marine environmental systems and fisheries (Gilek and Kern, 2015; Gilek, et al., 2016). Participation and public engagement are thus vital for healthy democratic engagement in order to facilitate good governance (Linke and Jentoft, 2016). When making decisions about conservation initiatives, for example, it is important to respect diverse values, images and worldviews of different stakeholder groups (Reed, 2008). Therefore, it is essential that stakeholder groups are represented fairly and by an elected representative.

Participation can be a challenge in stakeholder representation in environmental governance processes (Linke and Jentoft, 2016), including in the context of MPAs. Participation through representation can cause tensions if not democratically decided upon or when representatives are not seen as reflecting the interest of their stakeholder group. Meaningful participation needs to be viewed as legitimate by the stakeholder group in order for their interests to be fairly represented (McConney et al., 2003; Oracion et al., 2005; Metzger, 2013; Metzger, et

al., 2017). Individuals selected to represent interests and provide their contextual knowledge, whether it be conventional scientific knowledge or based on local knowledge systems, need to be perceived as trustworthy and legitimate (Raphael and Ruth; 2011).

Sztompka (1999:25), defines trust as "a bet about the future contingent actions of others". He explains that trust is something that is used by people or groups to identify risk on a daily basis and is determined by other groups or a person's "reputation, competence and appearance" (1999:71). Trust is a risk taken based on a hope for the future. When risk comes from a source that is trusted people tend to be more confident in the decision process (Siegrist and Cvetovich, 2000; Ropeik and Gray, 2002). Trust is also linked to a perceived motive, if the motive is considered just then stakeholders will consider the management trustworthy and legitimate (Nilsson et al., 2004; Terwel et al., 2009). Ideas of social capital are linked to this view of trust.

Social capital is defined by Robbins (2012:179) as "the relationships of trust and expectation between community members built through the investment of time and face-to-face interaction over long periods, is invested into traditional management systems stabilizing and regulating ecosystem flows and access to resources". A disruption of this system will result in a loss of accountability. In a traditional management system, local users would be consulted about the rules that govern resource access and use (Adger et al., 2005; King, 2011). However, in cases where a conservation agency introduces a conservation initiative that exclude involvement of local users, such as a 'no-take' MPA, it is likely that there will be a conflict of interests and a lack of trust in the governing authorities. Ostrom (1990) and Sivararamakrishnan (1998) found that local practice and common resources need to be managed on a foundation of trust and accountability. An effective MPA management plan needs to involve local users, so that trust between different parties can be established and social capital can be harnessed. If opinions diverge, this can lead to a perception of danger or risk (de Vos and van Tatenhove, 2010; Glenn et al., 2011).

Cinner (2018) found that local leaders can amplify uptake of a message and be a social influence in changing behavior and fostering trust. If leaders in an organization or managing authority are perceived as trustworthy and display positive traits (such as accountability, transparency and honesty) this will raise the perceived trust by stakeholders and users (De Ruyter et al., 2001; Maeda and Miyahara, 2003). Leaders can also encourage knowledge sharing by local users and researchers in a management process and can assist in providing further relevant material for better decision-making and trust building (Olsson et al., 2008;

Tsang et al., 2009; de Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011; Tam, 2015; Song et al., 2019).

When MPAs are unable to meet their objectives, it can often be linked to an inadequate integration of the views and knowledge of users and stakeholders in the planning and management process. Literature examining MPAs and trust highlights the benefits of consulting with communities and stakeholders **(**Jentoft et al., 2007; Charles and Wilson, 2009; De Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011; Chuenpagdee et al, 2013; Song et al., 2018). Often indigenous communities can contribute local ecological information, that in conjunction with scientific studies, can provide better insight and create management plans inclusive rather than exclusive of community members (Cullen-Unworth et al., 2012; Adams et al., 2014; Poe et al., 2014; Berkes, 2017; Ban et al., 2018). Traditional ecological knowledge is defined as "a cumulative body of knowledge, practice and belief, evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations of cultural transmission" (Berkes, 2012: 7). Traditional ecological knowledge is often transferred across generations and includes wisdom and practical comprehension of the local resources and area that is embedded within social and customary practices (Berkes et al., 2000; Olsson and Folke, 2001; Butler et al., 2012; Mellado et al., 2014). When integrated with scientific research it verifies information and provides additional insights for better management strategies **(**Garcia-Quijano and Pizzini, 2015). Ignoring important cultural dimensions within natural resource use can lead to contestation, distrust and negatively affect protected area management (Kaplan and McCay, 2004; Acheson, 2006; Evans and Klinger, 2008; Poe et al., 2014).

Trust is particularly important in marine areas as anglers and fisheries biologists have different perceptions of fish stock impact and use different factors to determine sustainable fishing practices (Verweij et al., 2009). These different forms of knowledge can undermine trust between different groups if problems and solutions are not jointly agreed upon (Nielson and Vedsmand, 1999; Offe, 1999; Warren, 1999; Loucks, 2007). Yet, in a western conservation model, a 'no-take' protected area can exclude people from accessing natural resources and removes land and resources from the adjacent communities. This removal can alter the way that users interact with the land and create negative social effects that ultimately impact on conservation goals and increase contestation with the managing authorities (West et al., 2006; Glenn et al., 2012; Jentoft et al., 2012; Walton et al., 2013).

In South Africa, historically a top-down model of government control over natural resources has been applied and MPAs have been declared without adequate stakeholder engagement (Sowman et al., 2011). For example, in the TNP, the declaration of the 'no-take' MPA in 2000,

has eroded trust in conservation agencies and democratic procedures, with local community members claiming that the new democracy cited has not been constitutionally fair (Faasen, 2006; Williams, 2013; Sowman et al., 2014; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). When trust in government and the managing authority is established, rules are regarded as legitimate and it is probable that there will be greater compliance (Hardin, 1998; De Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011). In this same example in 2016 - 2017, there was also an outcry from conservationists who felt that they had been excluded from the process of rezoning the MPA and that the change in regulation had been done too quickly and was politically motivated. Their trust in the 2016 rezoning process was hampered by a lack of transparency in the decision-making process and failure to consult knowledgeable representatives in adjacent communities about the value of the MPA for important for fish stock growth and species recovery.

As noted above, trust is a determinant of successful management. Yet trust is also directly linked with participation in decision-making. Participation is linked to a person or groups access and opportunity to be heard in a process (Ward et al., 2018) Meaningful participation enables those involved to consider processes and legislation as transparent and accountable. The dissemination of information and where that information comes from has an effect on what others perceive as the truth (De Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011). Different groups hold different levels of power and due to mistrust between different groups, different power dynamics came into play.

2.9 Concluding comments

MPAs are an increasingly popular tool for biodiversity conservation and fisheries management although their effectiveness as a management tool has been questioned. Increasingly the need to consider the human dimensions and socio-ecological contexts in conservation planning and management have been acknowledged (Sink et al., 2012; FAO, 2011). As such, how MPAs are governed is an important area for research and analysis. Historically, MPAs have been established with limited concern for adjacent communities, and with significant implications for their access to the resources upon which they depend. To achieve ecological and socio-economic objectives, however, participation and representation in MPA planning, management and decision-making is crucial. Understanding perceptions of the MPA among diverse stakeholder groups is a key aspect of this, as is the need for trust building between groups. This review of theory and key concepts sets the foundations for my analysis of experiences with the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA. In the next section, I outline the research design and methods I used to undertake my analysis.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach and methods used to address the objectives of this research. Specifically, the chapter outlines the study's research approach, elaborates on data collection techniques (e.g., semi-structured interviews, focus groups) and analysis methods. The process informing the selection of research participants is also explained, as well the approach to triangulating data. The limitations and strengths of my approach and methods are also addressed.

Data for this thesis was drawn from a two-year research project conducted on the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma National Park Marine Protected Area (TNP MPA) (see Chapter 1). My research examines the perceptions of a diverse range of stakeholders about the rezoning process. By understanding stakeholders' perceptions, opportunities for more effective dialogue on the area's future may be possible and this will lead to better governance of the MPA. My aim with this research is to help communities, managers and scientists envision long-term strategies that allow for conservation and development that is mutually beneficial.

3.2 Case-study approach and overview

My research methodology is rooted in a case-study based approach (Yin, 2009 and 2012; Creswell, 2014) in which I use elements of grounded theory to allow for flexibility in identifying and understanding issues of relevance to my research objectives. Grounded theory is described as "theory…derived from data systematically gathered and analysed through the research process" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 13). My research thus uses an inductive approach based on interviews and focus groups, and supplemented with census data, internal reports, and police records to understand different stakeholder perceptions about the rezoning of the TNP MPA.

A case-study approach was appropriate for this research because it makes use of an inquiry strategy to explore the perceptions surrounding the process of an event (see Creswell, 2014) - in this case the Tsitsikamma MPA and rezoning process. The advantage of using a case study is that it allows for a detailed description of the place and people, followed by an analysis of the themes that arise through engagement with key stakeholders associated with that context.

The Tsitsikamma MPA was initially proclaimed in 1964 as the Tsitsikamma Coastal National Park (Government Gazette No. 936; Notice 324, 04 December 1964). Tsitsikamma is the oldest MPA in Africa, and the second oldest in the world (Robinson and De Graaf, 1994; Branch and Branch, 2018). The Tsitsikamma MPA stretches for 80 kilometres along the Indian Ocean, linking the Western and Eastern Cape provinces of South Africa (Kruger and Saayman, 2010). The Tsitsikamma MPA is the coastal section of the Tsitsikamma National Park and is one of three national parks that form part of the Garden Route National Park (GRNP). It is the third most frequented park in South Africa and is one of the few national parks able to balance the costs of conservation through revenue generated by tourism (SANParks, 2017).

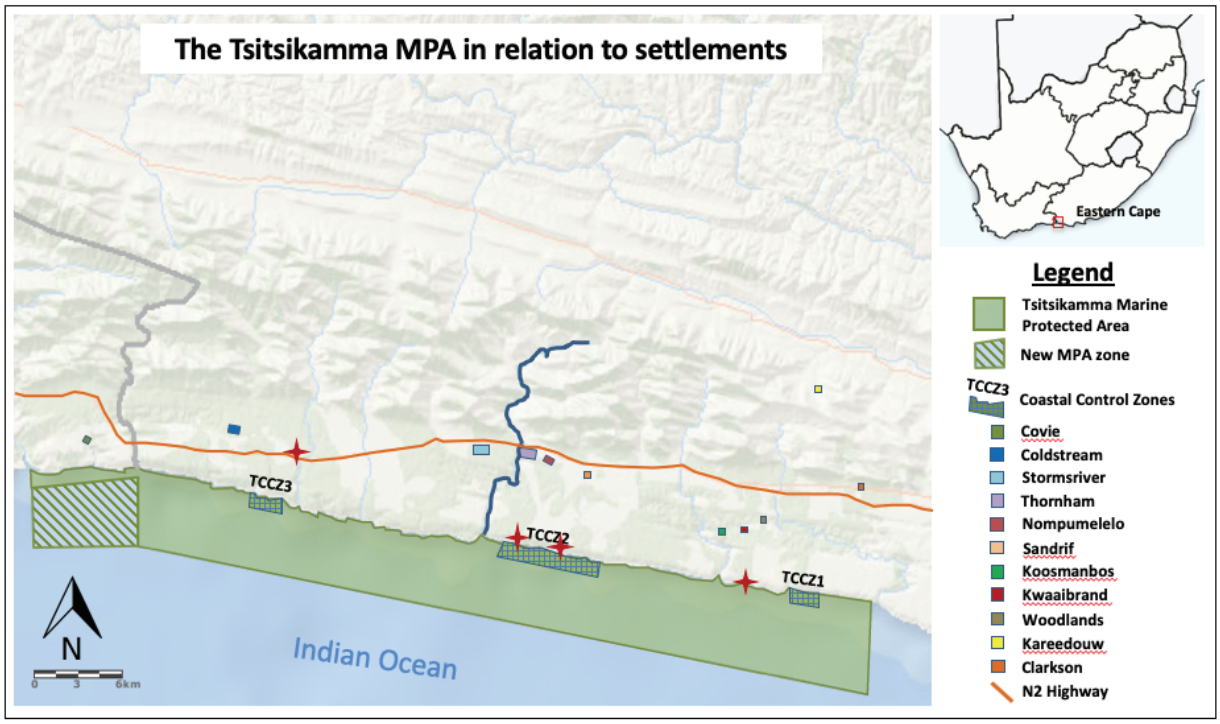

Figure 5: The relative location of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area to the local coastal communities

In June 2017, the GRNP was added to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and declared United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) biosphere reserve due to its faunal and floral diversity (UNESCO, 2017). The purpose of biosphere reserves is to reconcile conservation with rural development to allow for sustainable management of resources in partnership with local people. Biosphere Reserves also support the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) targets and SDGs in meaningfully linking biodiversity conservation and nature protection with human wellbeing (Coetzer et al., 2013; Reed, 2016; UNESCO, 2017).

Tsitsikamma has been the study site for numerous South African marine researchers (Buxton and Smale, 1984; Yssel, 1989; Mann and Buxton, 1997; Cowley et al., 2002; Götz et al., 2008; Hanekom., 2008; Schroeter, 2015; Smith et al., 2015), as well as the location for one of South Africa's premier hikes. The area also has historical significance to adjacent communities. The park is surrounded by private forestry and farms interspersed with local villages, for whom it has high social importance and helps to supplement livelihoods (Watts and Faasen, 2009; Williams, 2013). The TNP is managed by DEA through SANParks.

The Tsitsikamma is located in the Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, and according to the 2011 census, the total population is of the municipality is estimated at 40,663 people, with 65% of people in the area in the working age category (15-64). The average growth rate has been low, with 1,66% growth between 2001 and 2011. The majority of people residing in the area have some primary school as their highest level of education (48.5%). The majority of those people living in the area speak Afrikaans as a first language (73.5%), and almost a third of households are female headed (31.2%). The majority of fishers who registered to fish in the Tsitsikamma are male, and therefore, the process of registration may be excluding females from accessing the park. Data gathered from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2011) indicated that in the Koukamma Municipality, the average household income was between USD1384 to USD2697 per month, with 68% of households earning below USD2697 per month (Stats SA, 2011). The StatsSA census data placed unemployment at 15% in 2011. However, SANParks reported that unemployment in the area is at 50% (Stats SA, 2011; SANParks, 2016).

Tsitsikamma was initially the single largest 'no-take' coastal zone in South Africa (see Chapter 1). However, from 2000 until the 19th of December 2016, three coastal control areas were rezoned for anglers from the local Tsitsikamma community (Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003. Regulation, 2016:40511). The rezoning allowed anglers from Tsitsikamma coastal communities access to 20% of the park. Local anglers were defined in the regulations as community members living in the Koukamma municipal area in the Eastern Cape, and between Covie and the Bloukrans River in the Western Cape in South Africa. For individuals to register as anglers, they require a standard recreational fishing permit and to register as a Tsitsikamma community angler at the SANParks office in Storms River village (Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003. Regulation, 2016:40511).

The rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA in December 2016 was an effort to address the loss of historic rights of access by allocating three zones for angling in the MPA, and to restore the

rights of community members (SANParks, 2017). The regulating authority, SANParks under instruction from DEA had five days, from the 19th of December 2016 to the 24th of December 2016, to legally implement a plan to allow for the rezoning. Formally, the process of rezoning took place in consultation with a group of fishers from the Tsitsikamma Angling Forum (TAF). However, the actual process of rezoning is a source of significant contestation and diverse perceptions about the effectiveness of that process and its implications. These issues are the focus of the results section (see section 4).

Eleven communities are impacted by the location of the Tsitsikamma MPA, and the subsequent issues around access and governance. From west to east, these villages are Covie, Coldstream, Storms River, Thornham, Nompumelelo village, Sanddrif, Koomansbos, Woodlands and Clarkson (see Figure 5). These communities are located adjacent to the Tsitsikamma MPA and have been the most affected by the new re-zoning as indicated by the relative location of the three coastal control zones (see Figure 5). In the Tsitsikamma, there is a reported low level of unemployment, economic opportunity, and limited infrastructure (SANParks, 2016). Communities adjacent to the park have historically been dependent on marine resources for food security, livelihood needs and cultural needs (Faasen, 2006; Williams, 2013; SANParks, 2016).

My research is the first to engage with all the communities, as very little is known about their experiences with the re-zoning of the MPA. The adjacent villages with which I have interacted are the communities most affected by the re-zoning of the MPA and are considered the case study for this research. The Tsitsikamma case is relatively unique, although there are some other similar cases in South Africa (Sunde and Isaacs., 2008; Mbatha, 2011; Sunde, 2014; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). Although generalisations from this case cannot be applied to a wide range of other contexts, there are important lessons and insights about perceptions of access, trust, participation that build on our understanding of how to improve MPA governance.

3.3 Data collection methods

Qualitative data places an emphasis on "insider perspectives", and therefore, helps to provide holistic insights into the perceptions from diverse stakeholders about the MPA rezoning. In my research context, using qualitative (supplemented with limited quantitative data from census studies, etc.) will aid our understanding of perceptions within the surrounding socio-economic context (Leibbrant et al., 2010). Primary data collection methods are listed in Table

1. I address each of these below, but first outline my approach to the identification of research participant selection. This research is grounded upon triangulating multiple and related qualitative data-gathering methods. These varied social science methods aid in generating a "richly detailed, thick, and holistic elaborations and understandings" (Snow and Trom, 2002:150).

Table 1: Overview of data collection methods

Method	Purpose
Scoping and participant Observation	• Engage with stakeholders • Build rapport with community members • Gain an understanding of the rezoned areas and relative distances that community members had to travel • Gage initial reactions in order to determine relevant objectives and aims
Literature Review	• Broaden understanding of the research surrounding perceptions • Understand relevant historical information relevant to the case study • Develop context specific and relevant questions to be asked for the semi-structured interviews
Semi-structured interviews	• Gain direct knowledge from stakeholders on their perceptions surrounding the rezoning of the TNP MPA • Elicit their underlying worldviews, images, beliefs and values that inform these perceptions • Understand pathways forward and look for commonalities across groups
Focus Group	• Promote engagement and improve understanding of the rezoning across the management group • Allow for anonymity as a group • Foster active thinking and planning about potential pathways forward. • Engage critically with underlying belief systems and perceptions • Validate important information
Participatory film making	• Allow for visual representation of the area • Allow for community members to use 'their own voices' to articulate their perceptions surrounding the creation of the TNP MPA and subsequent rezoning. • Foster transparency by allowing community members to dictate the topics and issues most relevant to them and speak freely.
Maps & Census Data	• Assists in providing a spatial overview of the area and the zones relative to the communities • Census data provides a socio-economic overview of the communities adjacent to the TNP MPA

3.4 Participant selection and sampling

As noted above, the aim of this research is to critically examine the different perspectives of stakeholders regarding the Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning, with a view to understanding the underlying reasons for these different perspectives to make policy and management

recommendations. To fulfil this aim, it was necessary to identify the relevant stakeholders and resource users in the area. Initial identification and prioritisation of stakeholders took place at a workshop in April 2018 to build an initial concept of who was perceived as the relevant persons. A purposive approach was used to identify appropriate members to interview. This 'purposive' sampling approach (Creswell, 2014) was augmented with a snowball sampling process to further identify which community residents are anglers and have a history of fishing in the area. Purposive sampling is used to identify 'information rich case studies' (Mayes, 2006: 513). This includes classifying and choosing individuals or groups of individuals that have specific knowledge about or experience in the TNP MPA (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Palinkas et al., 2015). Snowball sampling is used to access specific individuals who are usually difficult to reach (Patton, 2001).

Decisions on sample sizes were based on practical and as well as logistical reasons. The differences in total numbers of individuals interviewed across the different groups reflects the total 'universe' of possible respondents. For example, there are a limited number of government representatives with direct involvement in the rezoning process. Similarly, there are a limited number of academics with familiarity with the issues. As such, I was able to access most of these key individuals. I have a relatively larger number of community respondents in my overall sample, but this reflects my focus on ensuring a range of community perceptions are captured. This is consistent with my aims and research objectives.

As noted above, there were various reasons for selecting respondents. In the government group, key members of organisations and within the DEA and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (DAFF) were selected through their proximity to the decision-making process about the rezoning issue. Academic participants were selected based on who had previously done research within the Tsitsikamma MPA. NGO participants were selected based on their work within MPAs and their outspoken views on the rezoning, and finally, community members were identified by their geographic location and resource use. The political and historical struggles of the community have been documented by SANParks and by a local community angling forum, the TAF. As the rezoning was declared as a benefit for all the previously disadvantaged members, I chose to interview community members from all the communities adjacent to the Tsitsikamma MPA. The community member identification was based on their historical connection to the MPA. It was imperative that community members interviewed were historical fishers or currently registered anglers, and whom had lived in the area for a minimum of ten years. The criteria to select interview participants from the community were as follows:

1) The community had to be located adjacent to the Tsitsikamma
2) The community had to have members registered to fish in the CCZs
3) There had to be a history of historical fishing in the area and of access to the coast.

All community members interviewed (except for one) were born in the Tsitsikamma and had a long family history stretching back through generations of fishing and natural resource use within their families. Table 2 details the economic situation as highlighted in the 2011 South African Census so as to contextualise the situation for most of these community members. In nearly all the adjacent communities, the unemployment rate was above 55% with low levels of education. On average, a third of the community (33%) had no income source. This implies that many members in the community are indirectly dependent on surrounding natural resources to supplement their livelihoods and provide some food security.

Table 2: Socio-economic status of adjacent communities

Community	Closest CCZ	Population	% employed	No tertiary education	% of working population with no income source
Covie	3	No census information	No census information	No census information	No census information
Coldstream	3	1657	40.44%	86,36%	34,22%
Stormsrivier	2	1670	35,33%	85,21%	43,78%
Thornham	2	664	27,56%	84,34%	25%
Nompumelelo	2	2449	34,79%	86,61%	35,89%
Sanddrif	2	280	27,5%	85,71%	29,29%
Koomansbos (Bluelilliesbos)	2	229	43,23%	74,67%	30%
Kwaaibrand (Witelsbos)	2	199	38,19%	83,92%	30,65%
Woodlands	1	1882	26,35%	88,36%	35,02%
Kareedouw	1	2363	NA	NA	NA
Clarkson	1	1824	NA	NA	NA

3.5 Scoping and Participant Observation

This research built on and extended my Honours research completed in 2016, which examined the natural resource use of community members adjacent to the Tsitsikamma National Park, and how the creation of the 'no-take' MPA had affected their food security and livelihoods. In December 2016, with the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma National Park MPA I recognized an important need to understand how much the rezoning had impacted the lives of the local fishers. Initial scoping occurred in April 2017, when I reported my results from my Honours research project back to the community and enquired what the rezoning represented to them. It was from these initial perceptions that I was able to formulate an idea of what the rezoning represented. Later, in September and October 2017 when I returned to the community, I was able to gather a much better sense of how the rezoning occurred in practice, now that community members had been involved with it for nine months. It was then that the idea of producing a participatory film as one of my methods emerged (see below), and to allow the community members to state their concerns surrounding the rezoning. During this time, I was able to observe how SANParks were managing the area and I developed an understanding and became acquainted with more communities outside of the four central communities that I had initially researched (namely Stormsrivier, Thornham, Nompumelelo and Sanddrif). This extensive scoping allowed for me to further develop social capital and foster trust within the communities.

Observational research also occurred during this time of scoping. Observational research is defined by Marshall and Rossman, (1995:79) as "… the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study". Bennett and Roth (2015) explain that in order to conduct participant observation, the researcher must immerse themselves in the group that they will engage with, observing discussions and analysing relevant documents that are created. When not in the community, I was part of several workshops within Cape Town and Port Elizabeth that examined the rezoning of the TNP, and South Africa's future regarding MPAs.

3.6 Literature Review

A review of relevant literature was required to understand the underlying history of the area and also to expand on the relevant research that was used to help develop my research instruments (e.g., semi-structured interview guide, focus group guide). Technical literature was reviewed (i.e., policy documents, regulation changes, internal reports, police records, and

peer-reviewed literature) to assist in formulating context relevant questions. Literature review was continuous throughout the project and started with the scoping activities with the communities in March and in September - October 2017. The interview and focus groups were guided by past literature and the framework and methods used to understand and code the interviews and focus groups was guided by participant observation, scoping and the relevant literature. The literature was also used to identify relevant gaps and to help validate and enhance understanding around why certain perceptions of the rezoning and the MPA existed.

Additional information was gleamed from internal SANParks reports, media articles, public submissions regarding the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma National Park, and census data of the relevant communities from the most recent census of 2011. These sources help to create a holistic image of why a certain perspective exists through integrating social and economic factors associated with the rezoning of the MPA (Reeves et al., 2008). Associated with these activities is an effort to build an overarching narrative and interpret following Yin's (2014) 'chain of evidence' approach. This approach shows that the research is contextual and related to multiple bases of evidence. Further non-technical literature (media articles, film clips and public submissions regarding the rezoning of the TNP submitted to DEA) was also incorporated as supplemental data.

3.7 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews seek to "identify interviewees' perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes." (Bennett and Roth, 2015:75). They are important tools for understanding underlying values, images, beliefs and narratives (Bryman et al., 2009). As several objectives of my study seek to elicit perceptions and to examine the underlying beliefs, worldviews and images that influence and inform perceptions, interviewing is an ideal method for gathering data. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews, as they are guided by a flexible framework of topics and allow for the interviewee to add details and themes that they feel are relevant. The interviews were all guided by the same set of questions and conducted across all the different groups, namely community fishers, government employees, NGO representatives, and academics. A total of 55 interviews were completed with each lasting on average 40 minutes. Some interviews were conducted in pairs or small groups of three in order to allow participants to feel comfortable, and often participants would be joined by wives or other family members who would also contribute their knowledge where they felt it was relevant or important. All interviews were recorded and transcribed at a later date (see above), with permission given by

the interviewee. During the community interviews, a community member acted as an assistant and helped to foster a sense of trust, as some of the topics were sensitive.

Semi-structured interviews permit the interviewer to gain unique insight into how the changes in legislation (rezoning) shape an individual's life, and to tell a story that situates the information within the wider field of economic, social and political change (see Slater, 2000). An example of the interview questions can be found in Appendix A. An overarching theme of the interviews was analysing people's perceptions of change since the rezoning of the MPA. The interview process allowed for reflection and better understanding of the problem (Sowman, 2006; Sunde, 2014). As noted above, the aim with the sampling process was to interview at least three people in each stakeholder category or group (as shown in Table 3) so as to include a range of viewpoints and perspectives. However, in some groups (e.g., government), there were not enough individuals who were involved in the decision-making process or who had experience within the Tsitsikamma, and therefore, fewer people were eligible to be interviewed. Table 3 summarizes the different groups that were engaged in the research.

Table 3: Summary of research participants by group

	Sector	Group	Total per sector
Interviews	Government	DEA	9
		DAFF	
		SANBI	
	NGOs		3
	Scientists	Marine Biologists	13
		Social Scientists	
		Fisheries	
	Community fishers	Zone 1 (Clarkson, Kareedouw, Koomansbos, Kwaaibrand & Woodlands)	30
		Zone 2 (Nompumelelo village, Sanddrif, Stromsrivier & Thornham)	
		Zone 3 (Coldstream and Covie)	

Focus Group	Management	SANParks	8

Note: for purposes of anonymity this summary does not disaggregate further within each group

3.8 Focus group

A focus group is a small discussion among a selected group of people to discuss their perspectives on specific topics as directed by a facilitator (Bennett and Roth, 2015). It refers to "…a wide range of approaches to [empower] community members to engage in research that increases citizen power and voice in communities" (Jason et al., 2004: 4). The use of a focus group deepens the research objectives by allowing participants from different user and stakeholder groups to express contrasting views and the reasoning behind their beliefs. Informal focus groups took place among community members prior to my semi-structured interviews, and during my report back of my honours research (Muhl, 2016). This activity formed part of the scoping process to identify key issues. Further scoping also occurred in a participatory film making workshop where participants discussed their views surrounding the rezoning of the TNP from a managerial and academic perspective. These focus groups laid the groundwork for the interview questions and guiding the initial research objectives.

In the context of this research, a formal focus group was used to interview SANParks staff within the GRNP, and which was organized to provide a safe space for officials to speak honestly and transparently. The focus group was established a researcher from SANParks, Mr. Mohlamatasane Mokhatla, and with representatives selected from a diversity of SANParks staff (e.g., enforcement officers, managers).

As noted above, the focus group participants were selected to represent the Tsitsikamma section of the GRNP, and to ensure diversity across different sectors within SANParks. The focus group with SANParks consisted of eight individuals, equally distributed across three sectors within SANParks, namely, scientific services, management and rangers. The focus group lasted three hours, divided the participants into two equal and representative groups, and involved two tasks. The focus group activity began with a brief introduction from each participant and consent to being recorded on a voice recorder by the facilitator.

There were two tasks planned. The first task was to establish a timeline of the history of the Tsitsikamma. The two groups approached this activity differently. One group elected to do a

personal history of the Tsitsikamma based on their subjective experience as a SANParks employee at the Tsitsikamma National Park. The other group chose to give an overview of the history of the park from its establishment in 1964 to the present. Both groups presented their timelines and explained key features or interesting points. Discussion followed in which any points requiring further explanation were reviewed. Both of these approaches yielded key insights on the subjective interpretations of the park, its relationship with adjacent communities, and perceptions about issues of access and participation. The second activity was to identify the strengths, weaknesses and pathways forwards bearing in mind the governance, socio-ecological and biological goals required of the TNP MPA. Both groups chose to divide their working materials (e.g., flip chart paper) into three columns: "strengths, weaknesses and pathways forwards". Points of interest were placed within each column, under the appropriate heading. This was a collective decision that each individual discussed and justified within their groups. This process encouraged a wide range of discussions about core research themes, while also ensuring the insights generated were co-developed.

The focus group ultimately allowed for the two groups to present their ideas to one another and challenge one another on their assumptions and reasoning. This process provided in-depth information on the MPA as perceived by SANParks representatives, including the underlying values, worldviews and beliefs held by this group.

3.9 Google Earth georeferenced satellite imagery, maps and census data

Topographical maps acquired from the National Geo-spatial Information (NGI), in the Department of Rural Development, were used to map the location of households interviewed and their relative distance to the closest coastal control zones of the Tsitsikamma MPA. Census data was used to outline the socio-economic situation that communities in the area faced, as the reopening was partially to assist with livelihoods. The census data as shown in Table 1 highlights the difficult situation of lack of employment and education in which many community members find themselves.

3.10 Participatory Community Film

A participatory community film can empower stakeholders by allowing their input in a manner that encourages and promotes trust and equity (Ranger at al., 2016). I already had an understanding of the historical, institutional and cultural context as explored in scoping sessions, previous Honours research and in literature reviews. However, I felt it imperative

that that community members be included in the process and produced the community film in order to allow them to articulate their own feelings about the rezoning. In December 2017, with permission from the local community and funding from the Community Conservation research Network (CCRN), a short film was produced over five days in which individuals across three different communities contributed their perceptions about the rezoning, and more importantly, how they perceived the Tsitsikamma MPA itself. This form of stakeholder participation allowed the community members themselves to articulate how they felt. The footage was then translated into English and transcribed with the key messages selected and integrated in a short 10-minute film. The film allowed community members to send a message directly to the managing authority that explained their grievances, and with the hope of promoting positive change. Insights from this participatory process have been integrated into my results or have been used to provide context for interpretation of results (see community conservation film - https://www.communityconservation.net/born-on-the-rocks/).

3.11 Data analysis methods

I have two primary sources of qualitative data collected from interviews and focus groups. I elaborate here on how I analysed this data to generate key insights in relation to my objectives. Interviews were conducted in both English and Afrikaans. All Afrikaans interviews were transcribed into English by the researcher and a research assistant simultaneously in order to agree that all translations were correct. As Afrikaans is my second language, it was important to have an assistant who spoke Afrikaans as a first language to verify the translation. The interviews in English were also transcribed. Following transcription and summary, I began the process of 'coding' the interview and focus group data. My coding approach was inductive and iterative, with the aim of interpreting interview and focus group data to identify common patterns and responses that aligned with my objectives.

I used key words from my objectives to structure my approach. Specifically, this involved developing core themes or categories (e.g., around access, participation, trust, governance). I also identified emergent codes from the transcripts (e.g., 'winners', 'losers', enforcement, compliance) as I read through them and re-listened to the original interviews to gauge meaning and intent through audio cues. Almost all of the text from my transcripts (not including introductory conversations and warm-up discussion) was organized or grouped into categories. I organized the coding and structuring process according to subject or theme as linked to my objectives, and not according to stakeholder groups. However, in doing this, I maintained

detailed notes on key insights being elicited from different stakeholders and made notes of particular strings of text that provided important examples and evidence.

More generally, I adopted Bennett's (2016) approach to using perceptions data as a strategy to analyse my own data within a South African context. This framework allowed me to sequence how social context influences the structure of a group, leading to the perceptions that ultimately determine their support for a change in conservation regulation (i.e., the rezoning). The semi-structured interviews were designed to be complemented by the focus group information which provided further descriptive data. The census data, media articles, literature review, internal reports and policy provided additional context and information, and aided in triangulating data and helping me to identify and interpret the underlying perceptions of different groups with regard to the rezoning process and governance of the MPA more broadly.

3.12 Limitations and challenges of research

There were several limitations and/or challenges associated with my research. For example, case studies are contextual, and therefore, reproducibility varies from context to context. South Africa is unique in its history and as noted above these results are difficult to generalize to other areas. However, I am seeking to gain a rich understanding of perceptions about the rezoning of the MPA, rather than seeking generalizable insights. The insights from my research findings will be relevant to other MPA contexts where conflicts and contestations over access resources and concerns about participation are experienced.

A typical sampling limitation involves who is available for participation (see Creswell, 2009). With my purposive and subsequent snowball sampling approach, I sought to alleviate the potential to only interact with those with the more power in the community. It is possible that my research results reflect the voices of certain individuals and interests over others (snowball sampling can create this issue as influential members may recommend other influential community members or allies). However, I was able to mitigate this challenge by reflecting a broad diversity of individuals within key stakeholder groups (e.g., communities, scientists, government authorities). The study area is also relatively small and focused around the Tsitsikamma MPA issues, enabling me to access those individuals and actors with the most direct connection to the issues. Indeed, the number of participants was limited as the community is dynamic - some respondents who were initially part of my scoping did pass away or encounter complex family situations that called them away (e.g., travelling for work). This difficulty is part of working within a community. There was also a great fear among

fishers that they could not speak freely as I would report them to the authorities, and that took time to overcome. This requires s great deal of participatory research and spending time in the community in order to earn trust. My previous experience in the region and relationships with community representatives (Muhl, 2016) was important in helping me gain this trust.

There were also challenges in receiving ethical clearance from SANParks, which I only received 18 months into the research project (see Appendix B). This delay did affect my ability to gather data. Due to concerns surrounding confidentiality, SANParks also requested that they not be interviewed, but rather have a focus group instead (see below). This does make coding and understanding their perceptions more difficult as there are always power dynamics within a room. This challenge was somewhat diffused by dividing the focus group into smaller groups that relied on local knowledge of managing the area, and in order to ensure different members contribute.

I also had to be aware of my own positionality. As a young, white female researcher, there was initially a lot of fear directed towards me, but then hope that I would be able to change things for the better. This was a pressure placed on me by all the different groups, and their strategy was to portray their viewpoints in a better light. Overall, however, my positionality likely provided me with an advantage in terms of the number of people willing to engage with me and the level of detail they provided in interviews and focus groups. Additionally, I sought to remain aware of my biases in my research given the level of emotion and hardship experienced by those I interviewed in the Tsitsikamma area. I was able to do so based on my previous experiences working in the area (see above) and my understanding of some the key issues and challenges facing different groups in the region.

3.13 Ethics

This project received ethics clearance from both the Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee (FSREC) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) on the 17th of July 2017 (see appendix C) and SANParks on the 28th of August 2018 (see appendix B). Anonymity was guaranteed to all participants and participants were intentionally grouped for the purposes of respondent anonymity.

As this research took place in an area where there was contestation, anonymity needed to be guaranteed. A consent form was given to participants to sign to ensure anonymity in line with FSREC at UCT (See Appendix D). However, a focus group with SANParks was done in place

of interviews in order to allow the representatives to speak freely and for a diversity of voices. This was the wish of SANParks and the participants. Given the sensitivity of some of the themes covered, some stakeholders' views differed from their organisation. Therefore, to protect their right to share a different perspective from their organisations, I have used terms such as "most" and "the majority" even in cases when all stakeholders held that opinion to protect certain groups. Where feasible, I have been as specific as possible without compromising confidentiality.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

Six objectives guided this research. First, I aimed to identify the relevant stakeholders and resource users in the TNP MPA and to elicit their perspectives on the 2016 rezoning of the TNP MPA. Second, and in relation to my first objective, I sought to assess key stakeholder perspectives in regard to opening-up sections of the Tsitsikamma coast to local users. Third, based on different perceptions and my understanding of them, I examined the underlying values, worldviews and images that influence and inform perceptions of different groups (e.g., communities, scientists) towards the rezoning of the MPA, both historically and in relation to the recent rezoning. Fourthly, I examined the potential socio-economic implications of the decision to rezone for local communities. Fifth, based on an understanding of different perceptions, I considered how the interactions, relationships and levels of trust among different stakeholders and user groups may have influenced the potential for positive or negative outcomes in the Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning process. Finally, in collaboration with research participants, I aimed to develop recommendations to address the key issues and concerns raised by different stakeholder groups.

To address these six objectives, I have organised my findings into sub-headings. I begin by focusing on perceptions and the underlying values, images and worldviews that inform those perceptions, and as mediated by the change in access for fishing with the recent 2016 rezoning. In doing so, I identify the issues of access that emerged from my data analysis (see Chapter 3), including the manner in which changing access has influenced perceptions about 'winners' and 'losers', and the values and meanings attached to the coastline. Thereafter, I examine how issues of trust are affected by the process of rezoning and the way the governance of the TNP MPA has evolved over time as a result. Key issues emerging from my data analysis (see Chapter 3) include challenges with consultation and participation of key actors, the politics associated with conservation decision making at local and national levels, concerns about enforcement and monitoring, and the implications generally for governance of the MPA.

4.2 Perceptions about changing access in the TNP MPA through time

A key objective of my research has been to examine how key stakeholder groups (e.g., communities, scientists, MPA managers) have perceived (and experienced) changes in access associated with processes of rezoning the TNP MPA (see Chapter 1). Changes in access have

been perceived very differently by stakeholders depending on their values, disciplines and historical association within the Tsitsikamma area. In particular, several key findings emerge from my research, including: how perceptions of access to the MPA have changed over time (e.g., the history and timeline of access in the Tsitsikamma MPA); the manner in which different groups perceive themselves to win or lose from the challenges of access; how changes in access influence values and meanings attached to the coastline; and the influences of changing access on the ecological goals and conservation efforts in the area.

The history of the TNP MPA is regarded by local community research respondents as one of exclusion - a theme highlighted by all 30 community members interviewed. These individuals identified the loss of access to areas that were used not only for fishing, but also for recreational, spiritual and cultural reasons as a major loss when the MPA was promulgated in 1964. Moreover, respondents in this research perceived the forest and coastline as connected and highlighted how losing access to the coast effectively also leads to a loss of access to the forest.

"Prior to the proclamation of the Garden Route, the old Tsitsikamma National Park, as Africa's first marine reserve, local inhabitants used to access the coastline for fishing. They used to access the indigenous forest for either recreational purposes or medicinal purposes or spiritual reasons. With the implementation of a national parks system it… it kind of created boundaries, certain restrictions in certain areas. There was no consultative process prior to the proclamation which excluded user groups from accessing the areas [forests and coasts] where they had gone before." – (Community member 1, September 2018)

Additionally, and as highlighted by interview respondents, the lack of consultation about access issues, and the way in which regulations were implemented in a top-down hierarchical way (see below), has often exacerbated situations of conflict between adjacent community members and the rangers within the park. This is acknowledged also by all conservation NGO representatives interviewed, who have noted that the past exclusion of people from coastal resources had led to conflicts and worsening situations of poverty for adjacent community members (historically and at present).

Table 4 reflects an historical record of how access has changed through time with policy, regulatory and legislative initiatives. As summarized in the table, opposition to the exclusion catalysed by the TNP was first officially documented in 1995, and in the form of a petition presented by the Tsitsikamma Angling Forum (TAF) to SANParks (see Chapter 3). At the

time, membership of the TAF felt that given the new democratically elected government, they could petition to have their rights to access the MPA restored. The previous loss of access was perceived by community members to be an artefact of the Apartheid regime, and therefore, a situation that could be addressed. These perceptions and the hope for positive change have also been documented in the participatory film initiative (see Chapter 3) that led to the documentary, 'Born on the Rocks' (see: https://www.communityconservation.net/born-on-the-rocks/).

These expected changes in access did not occur, however, and subsequent concerns about and requests for fishing access continued until the rezoning in 2016. At present, the communities are still negotiating access because certain communities are still excluded – they lack proximity to the limited number of areas that have been opened (see Chapter 3).

Table 4: Timeline of change in access in the Tsitsikamma MPA through policy, regulatory and legislative changes

Pre-1964	Fishing and bait collecting were permitted with a permit from the Department of Forestry.
1964	The formal creation of the Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP)
1964-1975	Shore angling permitted with an entrance permit. No bait colleting allowed or off-shore fishing.
1975-1978	Coastal access for fishing restricted to 15 sites in the western section of the TNP despite a petition from 300 local community members objecting to restrictions
1978-1995	Coastal access reduced to a single 3km section at the Stormsrivier mouth.
1995	TAF present a petition for the opening of a significant section or whole area of the park for angling with 344 signatures. The annual entrance permit price is lowered from R135 to R10.
2000	Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area (MPA) is declared and the coast becomes a 'no-take' zone, with the line fishery declared to be in a state of emergency.
Nov 2006	A government task team is created to establish a proposal for a trial plan for limited coastal access, in accordance with a Ministerial Proposal.
June 2007	A proposal is presented to DEAT and SANParks.
Sep 2007	Frustration mounts and 70 members of TAF fish illegally in the park.
Oct 2007	The marine science community responds with a statement of concern to the minister and a proposal to open the MPA to the community for fishing is submitted by DEAT.
Nov 2007	The minister announces that the MPA will continue to remain 'no-take' and that access will be restricted.
Oct 2010	At a local meeting between the government and community raises the issue of angling, in response a statement of concern is released from the marine science community.
Oct 2014	DAFF meets with the Minister of DEA, and with the Kou-Kamma community. The decision is made to appoint a working group with DEA and SANParks to review whether the MPA can be opened for community members who cite that they have lost their historical rights and cultural heritage.
Dec 2014	Working group appointed to revisit the fishing access for the Tsitsikamma MPA within the Operation Phakisa programme.
March 2015	Workshop is held with TNP, DEA: Oceans and Coasts, DAFF, SANParks, Koukamma Municipality and Executive Members of the TAF to re-evaluate the draft proposal from

	2007 allowing for controlled fishing access.
June/July 2015	TAF, SANParks, DEA and the Kou-Kamma municipality meet and agree upon a draft regulation to open specific areas for fishing with certain restrictions
July 2015	The regulation is approved by the Steering Committee and awaits final approval by DEA.
Nov 2015	Ministerial approval of the regulations published in the Government Gazette No 49423 GG1145, 19 November 2015 and Government Gazette No 39424 GG No. R1146 of 19 November 2015 by the Minister of Environmental Affairs.
Dec 2015	Access is implemented and fishers are allowed to fish for a trial period, with strict monitoring. An agreement is implemented between the South African National Parks and the Tsitsikamma Community in terms of Section 50 (1) (b) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003 on the 15th of December 2015 as per Clause 3, Sub-Clause 3.1.
Jan 2016	An online petition by the "Friends of the Tsitsikamma" and an application for a court interdict led to settlement agreement with the Friends of the Tsitsikamma Association, to stop the pilot recreational angling project in the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area (MPA)
Dec 2016	On the 19th of December 2016, three coastal control areas were rezoned for anglers from the local Tsitsikamma communities (Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003. Regulation, 2016:40511).

Of importance, and as revealed through my interviews, this formal record of change is not interpreted consistently among the different stakeholder groups involved, or in terms of how those changes have impacted local communities. For example, SANParks representatives perceive the timeline of the community members requesting access as being a more recent experience. Specifically, SANParks representatives believe community members only really raised concerns about the park in the early 2000s, with a period of heightened conflict in 2007/2008 (see Table 4). This differs from community members who reported being unhappy with the access rules in the park from as early as 1976, when stretches of the coast first began to be restricted. As one SANParks representative stated:

"The major thing that happened was that the park was declared into a 'no-take' MPA and this led to some unhappiness in the neighbouring communities towards this decision that was taken by DEA and SANParks. And this also triggered the request, the more formalised request of fishing access by communities to SANParks, and this has been ongoing. The first part of it happened shortly after the MPA was declared a 'no-take' zone, maybe it's peak around 2007/2008." – (SANParks representative, focus group, September 2018).

There is also a different perception among community members about when access was restricted, highlighting that even experiences within the communities are not homogenous. For example, community members whom identify as unemployed or seasonal workers recall the loss of access as occurring closer to the late 1970s and early 1980s. In contrast, the employed fishers, who self-identified as having better means to pay to access to fish recall the closure as

occurring in 2000. This perception likely stems from the fact that they were able to make use of the three-kilometre open access zone in the MPA that was in place prior to 2000. Interestingly, and up until 2003, different members of the adjacent communities also discussed the role of a fishing club that was active in the Tsitsikamma closed zones, and that collected their own fish catch data. This group (the TAF or 'club') claimed that they had a small impact, and because SANParks rangers were local people, they had an informal agreement that they could fish in the closed zones if they did so 'sustainably' and left the area in a 'pristine state'.

"We had a Tsitsikamma Angling Club when it was open, then they closed it. And then after a couple of years, we started with the Tsitsikamma Angling Club again but they [parks board] actually turned a bit of blind eye to the guys who used to go fishing down here. That ended 10 or 15 years ago. There was no change (in what we caught)." – (Community member 2, September 2018)

Different groups (community members, conservation representatives, etc.) have all recognized the exclusion of local people from the park. However, perceptions about the extent to which communities have been excluded through time and the impacts of that exclusion really does depend on how different groups view one another and the MPA itself. For instance, with some representatives within the conservation NGO community, the exclusion created by the park was perceived as positive because it 'benefits nature', with positive impacts of tourism an added benefit. Yet, there is some irony here because many MPAs are not even established based on well-grounded ecological principles This insight was reflected by a conservation NGO representative:

"Our generation have inherited a PA strategy and PA network that reflects --- some have a strong biodiversity case --- but many of them were somebody's favourite place that they wanted to protect, and I think the history there as well from excluding people from protected areas is playing out in places like Tsitsikamma… I reckon more than half of our MPAs don't even know what they are protecting". – (Conservation NGO representative 1, August 2018)

Therefore, community members were not necessarily having a detrimental impact on the area in the first place, and that the primary reason for the creation of the TNP MPA was to exclude local communities for the benefit of tourism. Indeed, more than half the community members interviewed felt that the park was created to generate tourism revenues at the cost of excluding them, and largely because adjacent communities were perceived as detrimental to the 'pristine' area. In my interviews, community members often referred to themselves as being seen as

"baboons sitting on the rocks", and this increased tension towards SANParks who they perceived as being instrumental to continuing their exclusion.

Interestingly, the scientists in this research, who were either conservation or fishery scientists, also shared the view the Tsitsikamma was established without consultation. However, they all felt that the MPA had now become necessary because it was an area that was in a relatively pristine state. As reflected in my findings, this perspective differs notably from other stakeholder group representatives I interviewed, including SANParks representatives and community members. As noted above, community representatives in particular perceived the Tsitsikamma as an area historically designated to exclude local communities and their perceived negative impacts, for the benefit of the tourism sector.

Despite the multiple, and sometimes competing narratives about access, most marine biologists and representatives of conservation NGOs interviewed for my research situated the TNP in the context of their own perceptions about the state of conservation in South Africa. Specifically, NGO representatives perceived any changes in zoning in the TNP MPA that allowed increased access to reflect an overall trend towards decreased protection, and as a further precedent for decreasing conservation efforts. Specifically, these interview respondents perceived the Tsitsikamma MPA and the rezoning process as a worrying sign of a future where short-term social and political goals were prioritised. For the conservation academics and NGO representatives I interviewed, the TNP MPA remains a symbol of marine protection and conservation, and the decrease in protection increases the vulnerability of the ocean ecosystem. As noted by one conservation NGO representative,

"If we take protection down to 0.2 or 0.1% …who realistically thinks that we can actually achieve any kind of marine conservation and protection of our species if we are only allowing our marine ecosystems 0.1% of the ocean, that we are in charge of, to be left alone by humans." - (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018)

Yet, despite the perceptions of conservation-oriented respondents, the MPA rezoning was also perceived by SANParks and the DEA as a necessary step to redress rights concerns and acknowledge the rights and needs of communities living adjacent to the MPA.

"The requests started in 1964, they didn't start in 2007 or 2015, so I can understand when they (community members) say there is a feeling of being forgotten or a lack of acknowledgement that they were there. I think the greatest argument, and it has slightly

changed in regard to the opening of the MPA… was redressing the rights issue and that's where the strength of the argument lay, it wasn't about recreational fishing. It was redressing the rights of access." – (SANParks Focus Group representative, September 2018).

We cannot speak about a conflict of interest or changing goalposts because actually the conflict of interest happened in 1964. There was a conflict of interest because a bunch of people who used to have access to the ocean for their livelihood, for protein intake was taken away from them, this is a redressing an issue from the past." – (SANParks Focus Group representative, September 2018).

Addressing historical rights has certainly changed how the MPA is perceived by some conservation NGOS. Here, there is an increasing acceptance of how experiences in Tsitsikamma MPA reflect a complex Apartheid legacy. As one conservation NGO representative discussed:

"Firstly on a meta-apartheid legacy sort of scale…there would be a lot of complexity and undercurrents between PAs, especially coming out of a mindset where a protected area is like a museum, where wealthy people can go and it's this pristine environment to the exclusion of local communities, who no longer even have the financial means to access those areas let alone be able to, have economic or food security benefits from those areas… The fact that the PAs once they came into place didn't ever have proper co-management, even though it's enshrined in our legislation, just never ever, it never ever came out in practice in the way that it should. So, I think that further entrenched conflict between parks and communities." - (Conservation NGO representative 1, August 2018).

Ultimately, and as reflected in my interviews, the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma was not just about allowing limited fishing. Rather, it was about setting a direction for the future of conservation and economic development. The extent of polarisation on this topic is significant, with many stakeholders seeing humans as a part of nature (e.g., community members), and others seeing community members as extractive and disconnected from nature and a detriment to the long-term preservation of the area. This is where the perception of one group 'winning' and another group 'losing' emerged – especially in the context of the December 2016 rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA.

4.3 Perceptions of self and others as "winners" or "losers" in the MPA rezoning

One of the key findings of my research was the manner in which the rezoning has changed the lived experience for stakeholders and resource users in the Tsitsikamma. The perception of the MPA rezoning and access restrictions associated with the MPA through time is very much reflected in the way different stakeholder groups perceive themselves as either 'winners' or 'losers' from those changes in access. For example, because it is the oldest MPA in Africa, representatives from conservation and science interests perceive the Tsitsikamma MPA as indicative of what will eventually happen to all MPAs in South Africa – that is, they become opened to adjacent communities. Depending on the individuals I interviewed, this pathway is either viewed positively or negatively. I outline these different perceptions below and start with those of the communities.

The locality of adjacent communities in relation to the coastal control zones has played a significant role in determining how community respondents perceived the rezoning and access issue. For instance, my findings show how those in Thornham, and Mandela Park were relatively close to the rezoned areas, while those in Coldstream, Covie, Stormsrivier, Woodlands, Clarkson, Kareeudouw and Koomansbos did not have the same level of access. As a result, individuals from these communities needed to use a vehicle to access the fishing areas. Overall, the community members perceived the areas that were opened as part of the 2016 rezoning process as largely quite difficult to access.

"The fishing areas are at the most inaccessible places and therefore the older generation who lost the sea cannot access it." – (Community member 3, September 2018)

This insight was shared by other community members who added, *"They opened a very small area, I was there, I had visitors, and we went down, and I showed my visitors that it means nothing to us (the opening of the sea)."* – (Community member 4, September 2018).

The implications of these perceptions and experiences are largely negative. Notably, most community respondents feel that the TNP MPA is simply making an effort to 'look good on paper'. For many respondents, the reality is that the changes they had anticipated as part of the 2016 rezoning did not materialise, and this was reflected in a community members comment:

"People were happy that the sea was open, and people applied to get their permits and they went to the sea, but when they saw how it was implemented, they saw the behaviour of the wardens and they looked at all the restrictions. They sort of became sober; the good news was not really that good news. People stray over the boundaries and go to their spots they prefer.

They became disenchanted with all the restrictions; they just want to be free to fish." – (Community member 5, September 2018).

Another interviewee agreed and said, *"People were happy until they saw how it was implemented. This is not what we wanted."* – (Community member 6, September 2018).

This view was also shared by the majority of community members interviewed. They felt that the historical loss of rights was not addressed by the 2016 rezoning of the MPA. They perceived themselves as being portrayed as 'winners' in the rezoning, but in reality, they felt that they had 'lost'. This insight was shared by several community members, as reflected in the quotations below:

"Somehow I think both SANParks and the Tsitsikamma Angling community are missing the rational. SANParks thinks they've achieved what the local communities were pushing for and that's where it ends." – (Community member 1, September 2018).

"I think SANParks are doing a very difficult balancing act. On the one hand they want to keep peace with local communities by giving them tits and tats, little crumbs from the table. On the other hand, they want to make money out of tourism, especially foreign tourists, who they can charge a bundle of money for availing the sea to them to take walks or whatever. But I don't know if they are succeeding, they are just alienating the local communities." – (Community member 5, September 2018).

While the community members interviewed perceived SANParks and the conservationists as being the 'winners' because of the strict laws implemented, the conservationists perceived the community members as being 'winners' as they had access to a 'no-take' MPA and could fish freely. In contrast, SANParks participants interviewed felt that they were in a position where they had to balance many different values and interests. While they didn't consider themselves as 'winners' or 'losers' directly, they did feel pressured, and they did note a sense of having a "rushed process".

SANParks as an organization was placed under significant pressure to allow fishing within the MPA. However, the process and way in which the rezoning was decided upon did not allow for adequate engagement. The lack of consultation with marine and fisheries biological scientists and inadequate consultation with community members has led to increased contestation. In part, these conflicts stem from the lack of transparency and communication

from the DEA. For example, when it came to the rezoning, a SANParks representative commented,

"We know the proclamation of the rezoning was coming but there was no indication of when it would happen. The wait(ing) was from SANParks side and the communities' side, with lots of pressure from the community to SANParks." - (SANParks Focus group representative, September 2018).

The SANParks representatives in the GRNP stated, for example, that they were only informed of the proclamation on the 19th of December 2016. However, they were required to have a registration system in place, staff set up at the coastal control zones, new permit systems in place and rangers trained on the new regulations by the 24th of December 2016. Because of this short time frame, the TAF were not adequately informed or communicated with, and this led to the members of Forum who had been consulted before, feeling excluded and shut out of the process. This insight was shared by one of the community members who was also a member of the TAF:

"They excluded us after the Minister made the announcement. SANParks excluded us and they did their own thing for that period. We understand that the gazette says that SANParks is the implementation agent, but we needed to be consulted and contacted because we had been in consultation for all those years and suddenly, we were standing outside. So that made us very angry!" – (Community member 8, September 2018).

However, the community members were not the only individuals who felt as though they had 'lost'. Most fisheries scientists and conservation NGOs interviewed also felt that they had been 'losers' in this process of rezoning. As noted above, a dominant narrative was that of a "conservation failure" because the rezoning was seen as undermining South Africa's conservation efforts. This opinion was shared by all conservationists (fisheries scientists and NGO representatives). Although they felt it was important to address historical injustices of local communities, the manner in which the rezoning had occurred had actively excluded them as a group, and in their view, had prioritized communities over conservation.

"Communities told SANParks/DEA where they wanted to fish, a plan was drawn up that tried to accommodate this while at the same time trying to allow the MPA to meet its conservation objectives. This went out for comments to national stakeholders. Scientists recommended alternative plans that would ensure adequate conservation. DEA/SANParks disregarded these

and opened up what they thought would best appease the locals" – (Conservation scientist 1, August 2018).

The lack of agreement between SANParks and the DEA also reveals a lack of internal communication. Some government interviewees felt positive that they had balanced community member interests with regard to the socio-economic benefits of rezoning, with ecological goals. Others viewed the rezoning as needing more time and consultation and believed the process to have been too rushed. This is reflected in the comments of by two government representatives:

"I personally was not necessarily satisfied with how the process went or the extent of area that was zoned in the end. The initial declaration allowed access to locals before there was time for public comment and without any consultation with for example scientists. This was rightfully challenged in my view and consequently was withdrawn to allow for consultation and public comment. I felt that the science process that informed the final decision-making could have been more inclusive with wider consultation and involvement of relevant experts"– (Government representative 1, July 2018).

"Rezonation was done in terms of recreational access, and not small-scale or subsistence fishery access, so as not to divide communities between those members that could benefit and those who would still be excluded. There are pluses and problems with this. Also, it is suggested that the regulations are innovative in a SA MPA context in terms of using different options to promote sustainability. Current monitoring efforts by SANParks have been welcomed and noted as an example of what should also occur in other MPAs." – (Government representative 2, August 2018).

Overall, the process by which the rezoning process occurred was revealed through my interviews across different stakeholder groups to be unsatisfactory both in its promise and practical application. Most respondents perceived a lack of transparency with the process, and despite SANParks being an institution that is nested within the DEA, they noted a lack of co-ordination amongst key governance institutions in decision-making. Based on the majority of respondent views, the rezoning of the TNP MPA as a mechanism to improve access for historically marginalized communities failed to adequately involve those adjacent communities, as well as other key stakeholders, in the planning and decision-making process.

4.4 Access, values and the meaning of the coast

The research revealed that coastal communities and other stakeholders' perceptions of the Tsitsikamma coast were informed by their different values, and the meanings they attached to local places. My show that the value of the coast is clearly not only about fishing access. Many of the individuals I interviewed in adjacent communities discussed how the coast was for then embedded with cultural and recreational, as well as relational and spiritual values. These perspectives are reflected by two community respondents:

"In the old days, people would go down to the coast with their families, enjoy their time there, camp overnight, in the morning they would go out to harvest and there after return home. This would happen once a month, where the whole family would be together." – (Community member 9, September 2018).

"Just be there, with the scenery and experience the sea, the calmness and the exercise, it's a very good feeling. I love going down with the family, last time when I went down with other family members there at Coldstream and they really, really enjoyed it. My brother in law asked, he said, 'can't we just put up a tent here, it's so nice and peaceful and quiet. It's very - the ambience- the atmosphere is so overwhelming, it's very, very, very nice to be there." – (Community member 8, September 2018).

In the process of my interviews with community members, they frequently identified an issue they believed had been ignored in the proclamation of controlled CCZs. In their view, key government actors responsible for the rezoning (the DEA and SANParks) equated access as a limited restoration of particular (and historical) rights to fish, rather than the provision of a more general return of access to the coast. It should be noted that only the 'holder of a permit' can actually access a fishing area. However, in the stories my interview respondents shared, it was common for several community members or entire families go down to their coast places. Indeed, access to the coast for and by women and children was also identified by community respondents (see community conservation video) as something that was historically a part of their family life. These insights show a lack of understanding (or emphasis) by those that designed the rezoning regulation about the importance of the sea and coastline as a source of relational, cultural and spiritual values to communities. Indeed, access to the coast has a strong cultural dimension, and the simple ability of local community members to walk in nature was cited by more than 75% of my community interview respondents as a way to feel at peace and remove themselves from their everyday stresses. This loss of connection to nature was a

concern that community members felt had not been addressed in the rezoning process, and that they and their families continued to be excluded from the coastline. These perspectives are articulated below by two community members:

"Since birth my father has taught me to fish. And you can see everything that Christ created for us. The sea is our way of life."– (Community member 10, September 2018).

"My child hasn't been to the sea, he doesn't know anything about sea creatures or how they look. I want to show him in the pools, (points) look there is a fish, these are mussels. He will ask a lot of questions. If you take him to the beach he's just going to swim there. Then we go home again. But he has never seen anything, and he doesn't know anything about the sea." – (Community member 11, September 2018).

In previous interviews as outlined above, it was not just the loss of access to fish that has individuals and created conflicts with adjacent communities, but the lack of consultation and how that has manifested in a regulation that is not actually meeting the fundamental needs of community members. Still, this issue is complicated. The relational, cultural and spiritual values reflect an undercurrent of frustration, but there are potential benefits and outcomes associated with the current rezoning when it comes to access to fish. Indeed, the initial rezoning was declared by the DEA as a way to provide redress for the local historical rights of anglers, and the zones were created for fishers. This is important. For instance, one community member referred to the practice of fishing as being "more valuable than gold" (Community member 10, September 2018). Another community member was even more forthright and said:

"If I had to choose between my wife or fishing. I would choose fishing. That's how valuable it is to me" (Community member 13, September 18, September 2018).

Still, and despite the value of access to fish, the Tsitsikamma coast is perceived by many community members as having cultural significance and associated with the process of initiation from child to man (see community member 5). During interviews, the fishers I interviewed discussed the spiritual and well-being benefits that came from accessing nature and that served as a rite of passage. Many others identified the sea as a space of healing because access to the coast removed them from the stress of their lives and the potential for substance abuse. The coast represents a way to "escape reality".

"I was fishing with my parents and my father and other community members taught us how to fish. How to take it out, clean the fish and prepare the fish and to hand the fish over to your mother, it was a matter of pride to show your mother what you brought back from the sea and get praise from her. Fishing was also something like going through your initiation rites, like other people do when they get circumcision. For us it was going to the sea and bringing back fish to show that you're a man so it was part of our culture, besides fishing also was to see who was the fittest and who was the strongest, who's the most steady on your feet when running over the rocks, who could get out on top of the cliff first. Competing with others, who could carry the heaviest load of fish. Who could walk over the rocks barefoot? Those were part of your culture to show you were a man and its part of the initiation thing." – (Community member 5, September 2018).

These cultural, relational and spiritual values assigned to the coast by local community members were also flagged by NGO representatives. These respondents were concerned about the lack of access for community members, such as women, who could not afford permits to access the area. However, conservationists viewed the rezoning as restitution of recreational fishing rights and this places a very different emphasis on who actually gets access. This labelling of fishing as recreational implies that fishing is a hobby when in reality it has a much deeper meaning for many community members. In this context of trying to understand and reconcile multiple values and rights, the regulation may actually complicate the situation further, as noted below:

If it's (being opened) for cultural reasons and fishing being a way of life, then doesn't this fall into the small-scale fisheries policy (SSFP) and why not address it through that policy? This process needs to conform with what's going on there and then the discussion changes as they are not a SSF (small-scale fisher) … they are recreational. It makes absolutely no sense to me, they are confounding processes now and making huge complications for themselves and either if you are a small-scale fisher and you have a legitimate fishing right that has not been recognised, there is a SSFP that aims to recognise that right and give them access to the ocean. But now this Tsitsikamma issue has created another category of person who supposedly should be getting access to the ocean or even in an MPA, which is a recreational fisher and legally and policy wise that opens up a whole new can of worms" – Conservation scientist 2, July 2018.

"Opening this MPA to recreational fishing will set a dangerous precedent in a conservation area that is closed to all, for the benefit of all. Allowing a few people access for recreational

purposes would negate the benefits that accrue to all South Africans." – (Conservation scientist 3, July 2018).

"I struggle to understand how a recreational right trumps an international commitment to protect our biodiversity. I understand if it's more, a long-standing fishing right that you need, either to survive or bring in your livelihood but if it's purely recreational, then that shouldn't be something that is over ridden by the creation of something like an MPA." - (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018).

For the purposes of the rezoning process, legally classifying fishers as recreational rather than as subsistence or small-scale fishers has had an interesting but problematic outcome. Specifically, this categorization has helped to exacerbate a perception that fishers were seeking preferential treatment to fish in an exclusive MPA, rather than seeking access for cultural purposes. Conservation scientists and NGO representatives have thus been concerned that the purpose of rezoning was to restore recreational fishing rights. However, the use of the 'recreational' designation has its roots in some technical and legal contexts. Specifically, the DEA has indicated that the classification was meant to include fishers in three categories recognized in South African fisheries policy - subsistence, recreational and 'cultural' fishers. They did not want to exclude any community member whom historically may have some claim to access the coast. As such, the term 'recreational fisher' is arguably the most inclusive and could more likely include anyone who lived in adjacent communities but whom could no longer access the coast or fish because of the MPA designation.

Yet, this broad notion of 'recreational fisher' opens up issues of identity. Defining a local fisher is not always straightforward. In Tsitsikamma the identity of a fisher is determined by those who self-identify, and those identified by other community members as "one of them". This issue of identity was raised by a SANParks focus group representative who felt that the regulations were intended to emphasize a geographic area rather than the identity of a person. This individual explained that if a person owned property in the Tsitsikamma area, they were entitled to a fishing permit. However, they may not have the historical loss of access that a community member might experience, and whose parents and grandparents before them had lost their access and fishing rights. This point was also echoed by scientist who felt that by classifying fishers as recreational, it did not effectively address the needs of fishers who had directly lost access to resources upon which they depend.

"Regulations are horrible and rigid and difficult to deal with but those are the only tools we

have. This is not just about the number of fish and where they fish and how it impacts the MPA…this is about how this community's identity has been changed over the few years."- (SANParks focus group Representative, September 2018).

As noted above, the labelling of fishers as 'recreational' has influenced how the rezoning has been perceived by conservationists, and largely in a negative manner. Yet, SANParks has in many ways rejected the label of recreational fishers, and in doing so revealing that they had some sympathy for the community members, and therefore, felt that the regulations required change.

The finding from this research shows that values and meanings about the coast differ among stakeholder groups associated with the MPA. Moreover, wrapped up in this issue of how the coasts is accessed and valued are matters of identify – who values the coast. Of note, there is a recognition of the many complications this situation reveals – socially, economically and ecologically. Indeed, many of the stakeholders I interviewed (across all groups and not just communities) recognised the lack of access as being unjust, they viewed the process of rezoning as unfair in its classification of fishers as recreational, and they perceived the rezoning of the coast as undermining conservation goals and not effectively addressing the historically disenfranchised fishers' rights. This shared recognition of the challenges is important. Still, perceptions of how it can be resolved, and who wins and loses (see above) vary significantly. This is evident in how the worldviews of different stakeholder intersect with ideas about ecosystem impacts.

4.5 Worldviews and images regarding enhanced access and impacts on the ecosystem

The fundamental concern about access also manifests in different perceptions about the local ecology and the impacts of adjacent communities and fishers on local ecosystems. For example, most community members saw themselves as "fighting against" SANParks and the government to access what they perceived as their human and cultural right - to use and benefit from natural resources, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Community members also felt that because of their location, fishing helped to provide some nutritional supplement. Nearly every community member interviewed listed fishing as being important for "adding something to the table".

"There are many times that you return with nothing. We don't go in masses down to the sea. Between two to four of us go on a day and once or twice a month. It's only when there is a big

fish run that more of us will go down to the coast."- (Community member 13, September 2018).

In this way, community members also saw SANParks as an extension of a government that had failed them, and as not allowing them to fulfil their duties as stewards of the local ecology (see community member 14).

*"When it comes to the sea, you cannot classify it as stealing. God made this place for us. The sea is there for us to make a living. This government means f*** all to me."* – (Community member 14, September 2018).

The community fishers I interviewed also believed they are having a limited impact on fish stocks. If there are species at risk, they indicated they were prepared to compromise and adhere to clear rules, but repeatedly, they enquired why trawlers and fishing vessels that they had observed in the MPA were not regulated. The recognition of the activities and impacts of these trawlers forms the underlying rationale for why community respondents believe their fishing activities were (and are) having a minimal impact on marine resources (see community member 8 and 3).

"*It's been here for generations; the sea has been used by our ancestors and they have never depleted the fish stocks. For years and years and years there have been boats in Eersterivier and you can't tell me that those men have cleared out the ocean. Every single moment there is our blood on the sea. My father and grandfather fished these seas their whole lives. If the boats are fishing, and the fish are not extinct, how could we make it extinct plus our parents have always fished and they never destroyed the fish stocks."* – (Community member 8, September 2018).

"The argument (by us) is that the Tsitsikamma can never be overfished. the people who do the overfishing are the trawlers." – (Community member 3, September 2018).

Regarding the sustainability of their fishing practices, community interviews respondents did not feel that it was possible to harvest fish unsustainably because of the restrictions placed on them with the permit system. They explained that fishing was unpredictable and dangerous in most areas along the Tsitsikamma coast. Repeatedly, they argued that access to the ocean was difficult due to the terrain and rough seas on the coast, with some even requesting that older fishers be given special access to reach certain areas. Almost every community member cited

the difficulty of access as a reason for why they cannot deplete fish stocks. Most fishers felt that even without monitoring by SANParks staff, the nature of the terrain and environmental condition meant that it was very difficult to fish unsustainably.

"The cliffs are very steep, to carry fish right up from the bottom to the top is very difficult. The roads are not that accessible you must be very fit to do that. The fish are not waiting there for you with open mouths to put a hook into their mouths, so they can be pulled out. Fishing is also a seasonal thing, it depends on the tides, it depends on the temperature of the water, it depends on the moon, there are a lot of influences. So, the fish are not there waiting to be caught. The argument that we overfish in Tsitsikamma, and the other areas on the coast won't have fish as fish migrate to those areas. I don't know how valid that argument is." – (Community member 8, September 2018).

This perception was also supported by a SANParks representative, who noted that according to the data they had received, there had been little evidence of negative impacts to fish stocks as a result of the rezoning of the TNP MPA. This was further substantiated by an internal fishery monitoring report (Smith et al., 2018).

In regard to preservation of the area more generally, the community fishers I interviewed shared the viewpoint that their strong ancestral connection to their 'place' was a further source of stewardship of the natural environment. The fishers interviewed for this research expressed an interest in protecting the area over the long term, and in maintaining the ecology and diversity of the area. Yet, they were aware that non-local actors were potentially threatening that diversity. Specifically, they perceived SANParks as the authority with responsibility to ensure sustainable fishing by monitoring and enforcing regulations that ban trawlers and other boats local fishers had reported active in the MPA. In particular, they argued that SANParks should focus more on the lack of monitoring of the areas adjacent to the MPA, where people had easier access to the coast and could overfish. As one fisher highlighted:

"It is a good thing to protect but us that don't have boats or ships but how are we going to get (too many) fish, we fish from the beach, how are we going to get (too many) fish?". When I probed further, *"What is the purpose of conservation in the TNP?",* the response from a fisher was, *"I can't say precisely what it is. They (SANParks) say to us that they protect it for the future generation that will come, but if you look at the area you see the bigger boats that are here on the water that are taking out all the fish and they are not doing anything for conservation. Those boats take a lot of fish and us anglers, we catch one or two fishes, if you*

are lucky." - (Community member 13, September 2018).

This perceived double standard was mentioned by all of the fishers interviewed, and they questioned why boats and trawlers were actually allowed in the MPA given the access challenges they confronted. Yet, more generally he concepts of sustainable fishing within the MPA was strongly supported by community members. Of note, SANParks and DEA representatives acknowledged that opening access zones in the TNP MPA has not had an impact on fish stocks. However, these representatives did note that monitoring had only been ongoing for the last 20 months.

"The concern over the fish stocks, I think that's partly because it is the oldest MPA, so if you look at the maximum ages of the fish that are in that area, it should be pretty much as pristine as it could be, we've had 50 years of protection, and the maximum age of some of the species is about 50 years so you should have a really good natural, functioning fish community. The concern was based on some modelling exercises that looked at if you allowed fishing how many fish could potentially be caught and what the impact would be over a very short time frame. We haven't seen that from the data we're getting." – (SANParks Focus Group representative, September 2018).

The difference in perceptions about access and impacts of local fishers on fish stocks is reflected in debates about sustainable fishing in the TNP MPA. Indeed, one of the key objections to the re-opening was the presumed ecosystem degradation that would result. This narrative was also reflected in different media outlets prior to the rezoning, with headlines reflecting a polarized debate (e.g., *"Tsitsikamma MPA re-opening: SA's fish stocks at risk say experts")* (Reitz, 2017). As far back as 2007, when the initial effort to rezone was under debated, there was a dominant narrative that rezoning the MPA would have devastating ecological consequences.

Indeed, the maintenance of a healthy ecosystem has been the primary argument offered by scientists to protect the MPA. The value of the MPA to marine scientists is in the 'pristine' state of the Tsitsikamma ecosystem and its perceived function in protecting endangered and endemic fish stocks. The rezoning of the MPA was thus perceived as a loss of long-term ecological goals, not only for present but for future generations. When the rezoning occurred in 2016, there was a strong sense of loss by marine scientists and resentment that an area that had remained 'pristine' for the over 50 years was now perceived to be at risk. This is reflected, for instance, in the words of a conservation NGO representative and marine biologists whom

had worked in the area for many years:

"The percentage of real protection is lessening as an MPA that allows fishing is not really protected." – (Conservation NGO representative 3, August 2018).

"This is a reflection of poor governance and custodianship of a national asset …. Here we see the Government itself acting in an ad hoc, non-transparent and unaccountable way in terms of assessment of impact." – (Conservation scientist 4, July 2018).

Most of the members from conservation NGOs felt that there was a potential for fish stocks to be depleted due to the spill-over impacts that might extend from the access points (or control zones). There was and remains some concern that these edge effects mean that more than 20% of the MPA is actually 'open' - at least from an ecological perspective. However, all conservationists and conservation NGO representatives held a common view that if the laws were designed to protect fish species, and only certain species were targeted, and if monitoring was effective, fishery resources could be sustainably harvested:

"It's hard to have strict rules about what to catch because you can't see what you catch until you pull it out of the water." – (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018).

As noted above, many marine biologists felt that the rezoning contravened conservation principles. They felt, moreover, that changes to the status of MPAs had been prevented in the past because scientists and conservation managers regarded such actions as negative for all South Africans, a viewpoint again reflected in the media which described the rezoning as "destroying fifty years of conservation" (Steyn, 2016a and 2016b). This perspective was shared by a marine conservationist who characterised the rezoning of the MPA as being akin to "allowing hunting in the Kruger [National Park]".

"If I must look as an outsider, I would think, 'oh shucks what are they doing now, it's like hunting in the Kruger National park?!'" – (Community member 15, September 2018).

Thus, while conservationists perceived the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma to be "a step backwards" in terms of protection of species, community members were and are clearly not of the same view. For instance, a community member who fished while the MPA was a 'no-take' zone claimed that they were still catching the same size and number of fish that they caught in 1990s. However, this experience predated stricter laws and the fines that made it too

risk to continue to fish. Still, many local fishers felt that the rezoning had not compromised the fish stocks, that the coast was 'self-regulating', and that those areas that had been opened were difficult to access and therefore constrained the potential for significant impacts. Clearly there were and remain different perceptions amongst stakeholder groups about the impacts of rezoning on fish stocks and local ecosystems.

In the sections above, I have focused on perceptions about the rezoning and the underlying values, images and worldviews that inform those perceptions. In doing so, I identify several related issues of access, including the manner in which changing access has influenced perceptions about 'winners' and 'losers', and the values and meanings attached to the coast. How these perceptions will be reconciled has much to do with future opportunities for participation in decision making and trust building, and the way the governance of the TNP MPA will evolved over time.

4.6 Perceptions of the rezoning process, nature of participation and issues of trust

In this section, I examine different stakeholder's perception of the participation process, how issues of trust were affected by such processes of rezoning, and the way the governance of the TNP MPA has evolved. Despite the 2016 rezoning, communities continue to perceive SANParks (as the 'face' of the rezoning) in somewhat of a negative light. There remains an inherent distrust of SANParks that in linked to the 50 years of exclusion that is now embedded in the collective memory of many adjacent communities. Previous attempts to reopen the MPA were unsuccessful and much of the negative perceptions about this history land at the doorstep of SANParks. Overwhelmingly, negative perceptions about the rezoning are not about the specific outcomes or the regulations themselves – although these clearly have an impact on perceptions. Rather the negative perceptions have much to do with the process by which the rezoning was done.

For example, almost all of the community members interviewed for this research felt that the rezoning had not included sufficient consultation among the key groups of local stakeholders that were affected. For instance, interviewees from the communities of Clarkson and Kareedouw (see Chapter 3) said that they were not consulted, and felt disconnected from the rezoning process, despite the legislation which identified them as individuals with a right to fish in the coastal control zones. Other communities also felt excluded, and it was commonly perceived that only representatives from Thornham, Coldstream and Nompumelelo village had been engaged in discussions and deliberations, and even then, the consultation focused on

a limited set of individuals.

Indeed, the process by which the rezoning was implemented was identified by 25 out of the 30 community fishers interviewed for this research as problematic. Much of this frustration is linked to how SANParks consulted only with the TAF, an organization in which not all community members are a part. Although the TAF is a key stakeholder, they do not represent the interests and needs of adjacent communities. This concern was also shared by NGO representatives and academics within the conservation sector, who wondered who the rezoning was actually benefitting, and whether those representing the 'community' were actually focused on addressing historical injustices. Moreover, conservationists interviewed for this research felt that alternative economic opportunities related to the conservation of the TNP MPA would be more beneficial to community members.

There was general agreement about including community in stakeholder processes among NGOs, scientists and government stakeholders I interviewed, as well as agreement about the importance of and trust building. However, who was consulted and who participated in the rezoning process prior to, during and after the 2016 regulations were promulgated, significantly influenced how the decisions regarding the rezoning process were perceived. In turn, these perceptions had a direct effect on the extent to which different stakeholders developed or maintained a sense of trust with the managing authorities (SANParks and DEA). Thus, there are several historical reasons and current challenges that have made the rezoning process particularly challenging in the TNP, but many of these challenges are linked to the broader rezoning process that reveals a lack of actual consultation and participation with key stakeholders; an inability to overcome some of the politics associated with development and conservation tensions; and the implications of a lack of trust on enforcement.

For example, consultation with community members prior to the rezoning in 2015 and 2016 was facilitated by representatives from the DEA, SANParks and the municipality, in conjunction with TAF members. However, this process originated in 2007. On two occasions, in 2007 and 2015, the government declared their intention to rezone the park and allow limited access for fishing. Both times they were met with fierce opposition from the conservation community. Some members of the general public and conservationists perceived that the Tsitsikamma MPA functioned effectively as a closed MPA, and that this status was critical to maintain fish stocks in adjacent coastal waters (see above). Indeed, previous attempts to open sections of the park were unsuccessful because consultation efforts were not able to alleviate concerns held by scientists and conservation stakeholders. Moves to open the park and create

some access opportunities for local communities were thus effectively blocked in 2007 and 2015. Yet, in 2016 when the final regulation was implemented, the process to incorporate concerns of scientists and conservation stakeholders not addressed (see SANParks Focus Group comment below).

"When the draft gazette was published and (people) [i.e., scientists and conservation stakeholders] *asked for comments and how DEA was addressing those comments. Those were not well workshopped at all."* – (SANParks Focus Group representative, September 2019

As the insights from SANParks Focus Group representatives reveal, there is a disconnect between stakeholder groups and their perceptions about the extent to which different groups had engaged in participation processes. For example, representatives from the DEA perceived the 2006/2007, 2015 and 2016 rezoning to have had broad-based consultation with local community members, and therefore, that recommendations for how to effectively rezone the park reflected community input. However, marine scientists outside of DEA and SANParks were not consulted about the 2015 and 2016 rezoning process, and subsequently, felt that the attempts to rezone were largely detrimental and not reflective of their core concerns (i.e., about ecological values associated with the TNP MPA). This perception about the process was supported by NGO representatives and other stakeholders (i.e., community members outside of the TAF) who similarly felt excluded during the recent 2016 rezoning consultation process. As one NGO representative noted:

"*I don't recall there being any formal response, our CEO wrote to the minister, and suggested that there are a number of avenues we should be looking at before just opening the MPA, and to my recollection, we didn't get any formal response at all."* – (NGO representative 2, August 2018).

As noted by a range of research participants, opportunities to improve the 2016 process could have started in 2015 with the pilot project to rezone four areas within the Tsitsikamma MPA for recreational fishing. The pilot project ended within a month following a high court order brought by the Friends of the Tsitsikamma that the stipulated that the 2015 rezoning had taken place illegally, and that specifically the public participation process had not been completed before fishers were granted permits to fish within the MPA. Indeed, most marine conservationists and NGO representatives interviewed reported dissatisfaction with the process since their comments and concerns regarding the rezoning were never addressed in either the 2015 pilot project or the 2016 rezoning. For example, one conservation NGO

representative (see below) indicated that to their knowledge, those who submitted comments received no responses, and felt that an underlying reason for the tension surrounding the rezoning is due to lack of dialogue and feedback:

"Because getting the response and actually having a dialogue, that is stakeholder engagement, it's not I tell you something, you tell me something and that's it." - (NGO representative 1, August 2018).

My findings show that a real and perceived lack of consultation led to a loss in trust amongst stakeholders and managing authority representatives for in the TNP. Indeed, the sense of dissatisfaction was shared by many who felt that their contributions of knowledge and their expertise were largely undervalued. A lack of response from SANParks to queries and comments made by conservation scientists and NGO representatives in the rezoning process led many stakeholders to perceive the government as "hiding" information and possibly not following established decision-making procedures. All individuals interviewed felt that the consultation process was not adequate nor comprehensive. As noted by one community member, the perception was that consultation was largely a one-way process:

"When it comes to consultation it always came from our side. It's always us." - (Community member 8, September 2018).

A fisher from the TAF further noted that even when the new regulations were introduced, they were still excluded from participating in decision making processes. However, community members were not alone in this perception. For example, a conservation NGO representative interviewed noted that any scientists who had worked in the marine field believed the lack of consultation was "a recipe for disaster". And in regard to the location and size of the 'coastal control zones', a representative from an NGO felt that from a practical point of view the MPA was being set up to fail. This opinion was also shared by community members and marine biologists who felt that the compromise in the rezoning which aimed to balance biological and socio-economic objectives had not generated any material benefit for either objectives, and that overall the consultation process had been negative.

"The way it was done, none of the key marine scientists and organisations had been included at all in coming up with what they decided, and the absolute unwillingness to share any of the information that had guided their decision making around where those zones were. So, our calls to say, 'please can we sit down with all the relevant stakeholders and discuss this, we

believe there is a way of resolving this if all the different stakeholders meet'. So, the biggest thing we (the organisation) were not supportive of, was the process. They didn't engage and ultimately that's why the friends of Tsitsikamma took them to court." - (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018).

"We have a formal partnership with them, but they weren't willing to even sit down and discuss this issue. The department had chosen a specific set of stakeholders who they thought were relevant and anyone outside of that, they weren't willing to discuss anything with, which I think was a bit sad for me." - (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018).

Interestingly, representatives of all of the groups I interviewed acknowledged that the rezoning would be a difficult process. Yet, there was a clear recognition that broader and more comprehensive consultation was needed to avoid mistrust among stakeholders in the long term, and some frustration because there was a general perception that the managing authority had the resources and ability to encourage a more effective process of consultation and engagement.

However, it should be noted that there were tensions even within communities with regard to consultation processes and the implications for participation in decision making. For example, there were concerns voiced by community representatives that only members of the TAF had been engaged – a concern also echoed by other key stakeholders (e.g., academics, other conservation scientists). For SANParks and the DEA, and as noted previously, the TAF was perceived as representing all fishers and community members. Yet, within the communities themselves, the TAF is not perceived as representative of their interests. The TAF is comprised predominantly of fishers, and the access concerns faced by communities adjacent to the TNP are about more than just fishing rights – they are fundamentally also about place and culture.

As indicated in my interviews, the TAF did try to represent their members, and it is often very difficult for members themselves to attend consultation meetings because of their location and timing. Nevertheless, the TAF itself was perceived by many in the adjacent communities as not always fair or effective when informing their constituents about the material, information or actions that were the focus of their meetings. In Kareedouw and Clarkson, for instance, the traditional fishers were unaware that coastal control zones were even open, nor did they perceive the areas that had been opened as reflective of their traditional fishing areas. This situation further compounded an already challenging situation - many of the community

fishers, including those from the TAF, equally perceived the consultation as predominately 'one-way'. Although their grievances were 'heard', they felt that no one had actually listened to their arguments:

"At Clarkson, as usual we are the last people that are informed regarding the marine areas". – (Community member 16, September 2018).

"There was consultation, but it didn't reach anything. It always comes to a deadlock over which areas should be fished or not. SANParks wants to give the impression that we should be thankful to the Minister for bending over backwards to accommodate us but it's nonsense. We just want the sea to be open that's all." – (Community member 5, September 2018).

Interestingly, a representative from a conservation NGO agreed with the community members, noting that the rezoning process reflected the historical and exclusionary approach associated with Apartheid (i.e., not including people of colour in decision-making processes), and that many of the underlying issues that constrain consultation and participation are not yet resolved. This perspective, for example, is summarized below by two conservation NGO representatives and a SANParks focus group representative:

"The whole world is moving towards involving coastal communities living next to MPAs and we are lagging way behind in that aspect, even our management doesn't consult communities. We tell them. We don't consult." - (Conservation NGO representative 1, August 2018).

"I think not enough has been done to make the community feel like it is their MPA. When you have an engaged community, they are part of the MPA, they are not excluded, which is why I say the whole exclusion thing should never have happened, if you were going to put in an MPA, but we know the history of why." – (Conservation NGO representative 3, August 2018).

"Because it has been this way from 1964 all the way until 2014, that is a long time of conflict. It's going to take a long time for that frustration and anger to start to dissipate and for that trust and relationship building to happen. We are one, two years down the line, I don't think you can change 50 years of conflict in 2 years, it's going to take a lot longer, but there has to be that openness and willingness to do that." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

There were also significant issues with the *timing* of the consultation process. Specifically, the

timing of the rezoning process was perceived as rushed by conservationists, NGOs, SANParks and TAF members. The TAF members specifically felt themselves excluded when it came to the process of implementing the regulations and carrying out the registration of community anglers. But there were interesting differences depending on the zoning intervention. For instance, a majority of community members noted that 2015 efforts had been more inclusive, despite the unconstitutional process by which it was rezoned. This insight was shared by a leader and community member from within the TAF:

"It was very well organised in 2015 and it wasn't in 2016 and it frustrated us, and we conveyed our disappointment with SANParks leadership, how they did that whole implementation. We were not happy with how it was done. They excluded us after the Minister made the announcement. SANParks excluded us and they did their own thing for that period. We understand that the gazette says that SANParks is the implementation agent, but we needed to be consulted and contacted because we had been in consultation for all those years and suddenly, we were standing outside, so that made us very angry." - (Community member 8, September 2018).

However, feedback at the focus group does point out some of the underlying reasons for this situation. SANParks only received the regulation change on the 19th of December 2016, and it was their responsibility as managing authority to have the regulations implemented by the 24th of the same month. As representatives of SANParks noted, the time of year that the regulation was released made it highly stressful. Moreover, it was a short time frame to implement the regulations, and this explained why communication and consultation with fishers in the final stages of the process were was not prioritized. SANParks was under significant pressure, notably from the DEA. However, SANParks is not responsible for proclaiming the rezoning, as they are the management authority – that responsibility falls to the DEA, whom promulgate regulations for SANParks to enforce. SANParks was provided with very little warning when the 2016 regulation change was communicated to them, and this left them with the difficult task of implementing the regulations over the Christmas period when many staff were away on leave. Businesses also close early at this time of the year in the area which meant that basic logistical issues like generating printed material to assist with training staff and communications activities was difficult. Obtaining additional staff for the implementation was also complex and challenging. As a SANParks representative explained:

"When the final regulations were gazetted, very few people had actually seen what those final regulations were going to look like. There was very little acknowledgement of when it would

be implemented. That's quite an important point, that the time of year was very bad. There was very, very little pre-warning time that the regulations were going to be gazetted and that put SANParks on a back foot." - (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

The untenable position in which SANParks was operating did result in a lack of communication which in turn translated in a sense of mistrust by community members. As one community member noted: *"SANParks makes promises but there is no follow up."* - (Community member 17, September 2018).

The majority of community members interviewed were in support of the area reopening in time for Christmas. However, due to the unsuccessful pilot phase in 2015, and the previous unsuccessful attempts to rezone the MPA, many community fishers were concerned that the rezoning would not take place. As noted above, the timing in which the process occurred proved detrimental to relationships of trust. These challenges have continued. For example, the post-rezoning consultation process has also been perceived as inadequate by most community members because little information has been released. There remains a concern from conservation NGOs, marine biologists and other scientists, (social and natural scientists) about the effectiveness and the impacts of the rezoning, and other stakeholders I interviewed (see below) have noted that there is very little liaising among various stakeholders post-rezoning.

"There is no communication, there is no liaison between these very important role players, and I think if these role players don't sit down and meet and thrash out whatever concerns, then all of this lobbying and canvassing over decades will be in vain." – (Community member 1, September 2018).

"I'm not massively convinced that the department is going to successfully implement any of the regulations that they have promulgated there and that's why stakeholder consultation has been developed so that you bring your stakeholders on board so that they also buy into the enforcement mechanisms and set ups rather than just unilaterally decide, this is how it's going to happen." – (Conservation NGO representative 2, August 2018).

SANParks representatives are aware of these views and in some cases support these perceptions. There is a recognition that in the future they should communicate more, and meaningfully consult and involve fishers to aid in better decision making. Moreover, among conservation NGO groups and community members there is a belief that as long as

communities are excluded from the economic benefits of conservation, they will turn to 'poaching' unless there they can meaningfully engage in conservation decision making processes and influence the outcomes. As a SANParks representative noted:

"That's where we are going with co-production. I strongly believe that the fishermen really do need to be pulled in earlier rather than later on in some of these research projects so they can provide input into it. So that when it comes to revision there is going to be a lot more understanding, a lot more buy in and healthy debate." - (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

The findings from my interviews emphasised a need for inclusive and bottom-up empowerment for successful conservation. Positive outcomes associated with an MPA are linked to the prosperity of adjacent communities. Fishing is still very much a way of life for some community members around the TNP area, and the continued lack of consultation and emphasis on enforcement (see below) is not yielding benefits in the long term. 'Soft methods' of behaviour change, such as environmental education or having the park open for a few days a year, cannot be viewed as successful reconciliation strategies – while they are a step in the right direction, they offer little resolution for poor communities that have lost access to their livelihoods and means of food security for almost three generations. There are ways to move forward as articulated by respondents in my research, and these are discussed in more depth in the Discussion section (Chapter 5). As one example, however, the development of services, and infrastructure that allow communities to benefit from conservation, are likely a better use of current funds than the establishment of poorly located access points that are staffed by increasingly isolated park rangers. For instance, during the focus group with SANParks, participants emphasized that rangers were feeling disheartened and disempowered in their current positions. This is indicative of a breakdown in communication between fishers and the managing authority that needs to be addressed.

4.7 Perception of politics in conservation

Challenges with the process of consultation are evident, and they have been outlined above. However, the politics associated with conservation decision making at local and national levels are also difficult and add an additional layer of complexity to the rezoning experience that need also be recognized. For example, in interviews with fishers, they often mentioned that the political climate and their voting power was something that could be used to pressure government to effect change. The previous Apartheid government's management of the MPA

did not recognize that communities living adjacent to the MPA, nor that those communities used the resources to supplement their food requirements and felt the coast contributed to their spiritual and mental well-being. In this section, I summarize the key findings related to the politics associated with the rezoning, and as perceived by different stakeholder groups. I also summarize insights from those I interviewed about how conservation and development objectives can co-exist in the Tsitsikamma, with benefits of access extending beyond fishing.

According to fishers I interviewed, the protected area was created to exclude them and other local people from accessing the coast, to remove their dependence on the ocean, and to relocate their focus towards land-based employment. For example, local fishers discussed how they were encouraged by their fathers and grandfathers to rather work in the plantations. This experience was also initially documented through focus group discussions I held with community members in 2016 during my Honours research (Muhl, 2016). However, in the context of my research, the interviews I have had with a wider range of stakeholders - community members and conservation scientists and conservation NGO representatives - have further identified the influence of politics on the rezoning and the original decisions to establish the MPA in the first place. As one conservation NGO representative noted:

"We never had an overarching PA plan that proactively identified where (to place MPAs) and set objectives and said that for biodiversity we need these places from a food production point of view, we need to secure access for communities because they are important for livelihoods and food security. We never did that… There was never really the proper consultation and proper co-management in place. None of what is happening there is surprising me, it's all just symptoms of a much bigger political history and specific history of protected areas in our country." – (Conservation NGO representative 1, August 2018).

Still, the conservation representatives I interviewed felt that historically there had been a strong science legacy in regard to ocean and coastal management, and the identification of candidate MPAs to meet ecological objectives. However, with the emphasis on resource management in the early 2000s to help support communities (e.g., linking resource management and livelihood opportunities), new tensions emerged. In this context, the historically powerful role that conservation scientists played in the MPA context has been reduced, leading to increasing concerns over who gets to inform decision making. This is a process issue (as highlighted above) but it is also now a political issue. As noted throughout my interviews, the lack of consultation with scientists has raised major concerns. However, because of their historic role in contributing to decisions that resulted in loss of access to

resources for communities, their exclusion in decision making was largely supported by community members participating in the rezoning. For communities, scientists and the conservation community are perceived as restricting their use of natural resources used historically. Some of these political dynamics were explained by a conservation NGO representative. As noted below:

"In the early 2000s they brought in this management band which they called resource management, which didn't exist before and they were much more political in their position. There started to be a tussling between management and science. Management were the new appoints and they were all non-white and the science were old legacy white people that were still in the department. And then the department split which became even more complex, with (the department of) fisheries and (the department of) environmental affairs and there has always been this conflict within the two departments, it became between the scientists and the management, which became very black/white and those protected areas were actually all proclaimed when the scientists were the leader in the show. So, there has never been the same buy-in within the departments between the managers and the scientists. Now, too, when they are opening up protected areas, you get nervousness in the department. They get all nervous and are wanting to protect the proclamation and you've got the managers wanting to open it all up. So, you've got all these layers of complexity… It's like an onion trying to peel out all these layers." - (Conservation NGO 1, September 2018).

Many scientists moreover perceived the re-zoning in 2016 as not just about access specifically, but as part of a ploy to get more votes during the election. There was a perception from marine biologists and fisheries experts who had worked in the area that the government was using 'vulnerable' community members primarily for their own political aims. As two conservation scientists noted:

"When I think of the political interference though, my experience and this is, I think everything we say is only from our own personal experience and perspective so this could be completely wrong. From where I sit, I have also seen a lot of political interference…while I think there was a lot wrong with the way protected areas were established and the way they have been managed, it does feel like there has also been political interference from the ANC government. So, they use these opportunities to get political kudos from communities, so it feels like they (community members) have also been riled up and set up to be more active and to be less constructive." - (Conservation scientist 5, July 2018).

"[The rezoning was implemented...] To get votes…but not to say that the grievances put forward by the community were not relevant but if government was so serious about maintaining people's culture and historical traditions, I don't think it would have taken this long, in my view. I also think it wouldn't have been done in such a rush." - (Conservation scientist 6, July 2018).

The response from community members suggest they are very aware of the politics surrounding the MPA. However, rather than seeing the government as using them, or themselves manipulating a political system, they perceived the MPA as a means through which they were and are restoring their rights and access to customary resources and practices. The community members knew that protests occurring just prior to elections in 2016 would be an ideal time to push for the restoration of their fishing rights. Without access to lawyers, however, there are few options available for communities to exert pressure on decision making authorities, and community members are also well aware that previous requests to gain access to specific areas in the MPA had largely been ignored. Thus, they used the elections to try and put pressure on the government in the only way that they felt was effective, and that was through threatening to take away their votes. Indeed, when speaking on the MPA, a local community member highlighted that the politicisation of the MPA is directly linked to a history of alienation:

"I think they must evaluate it (the MPA) and see how much they have alienated local communities and whether the MPA is achieving what they originally wanted to achieve. So far for me they haven't achieved anything in terms of reconciliation for communities, but maybe that was not their major objective." – (Community member 5, September 2018)

4.8 Tensions and trust between different stakeholder groups

The interviews with different stakeholders have repeatedly highlighted how different groups have perceived one another in the context of the rezoning process, and with reference to the MPA. Of particular interest here is how different stakeholder groups characterize each other and ascribe particular motives (including political motives) to each other. These widely differing views and 'ascribed motivations' have significant implications for trust building, collaboration and future participatory processes.

For example, SANParks representatives noted that there was significant pressure from more powerful conservation scientists who wanted the Tsitsikamma MPA to remain a 'no-take'

MPA, and whom had the resources to do so. At the same time, those same representatives also recognised how communities are at a political disadvantage and economically vulnerable, and therefore, in need of access given their limited resources. As a SANParks representative discussed:

"There is an enormous difference between the identity of the fishing community and the Friends of the Tsitsikamma, the 'local unschooled I just want to speak about my rights kind of people'... whereas the Friends of the Tsitsikamma are hugely wealthy, know lawyers as personal friends, pretty good incomes and salaries, they don't need to fish they go buy their fish at a restaurant, they don't need to catch fish. The man on the ground doesn't have that money, doesn't have that kind of status in life and these people because of their status in society and their knowledge of the legal process and court process, enables them to do this and they stop the MPA, how many times. The community they don't have these skills or that access (to lawyers)." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Several SANParks and DEA respondents also perceived the large gap between the values and views of scientists and communities with regard to the rezoning. As a result, SANParks respondents were acutely aware that they were not just dealing with a regulatory problem, but a political challenge and effort to address a historical conflict. Moreover, these respondents were able to see that the politically disadvantaged communities had historically very limited legal representation or political support. This was highlighted in a comment by a SANParks representative during the focus group:

The other point is you have these two groups of people fighting but it's not an equal fight. It's difficult for us to deal with, because regulations are horrible and rigid… but those are the only tools we have. This is not just about the number of fish and where they fish and how it impacts the MPA, this is about how this community's identity has been changed over the few years." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Importantly, there is also an understanding that what motivates this particular regulatory, legal and political challenge has and will shift through time. SANParks recognizes the rigidity and inequity of the rezoning regulation and historic access rules in view of the long-term rights of local communities. However, communities are explaining their motivations now not so much as about access to a resource (i.e., fish), but as a right of cultural redress. This is a more nuanced and important shift that is being recognized, although slowly. This insight was articulated by a SANParks representative:

"In 2005, I wasn't here but from what I've read, it revolved around fishing, specifically recreational fishing and in this instance, the arguments were changed slightly, and it was redressing that rights issue and that's where the strength of the argument lay". – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Still, my findings highlight the tensions about these motivations and evolving narratives about rights amongst and even within different stakeholder groups. Among natural and social scientists, for example, the natural scientists I interviewed perceived social scientists as being too focused on the 'letter of the law' (i.e., ensuring rights), and unable to make sacrifices in order to preserve 'a greater good' (i.e., a pristine landscape). In contrast, social scientists I interviewed perceived natural scientists as not recognizing the fundamental rights of local communities, and not acknowledging the history of the area or of the social exclusion that occurred. This issue was described by a conservation NGO representative:

"What we really need in South Africa is a far more integrated social and natural science approach, often the two different parties come at it, almost from opposite ends of the scale and with very little effort or attempts to kind of meet somewhere in the middle, so my experience is often the social science sector applies and understands the letter of the law … but often behaves as if there is an unlimited set of resources both biological and financial with which to implement these laws and the natural scientists and managers are the guys that recognise the issue of scarcity, better, and are always trying to do the best they can with a limited resource and those two viewpoints clash massively and there is no one saying okay, we recognise both sides and we need to incorporate people better and understand human issues better but we also need to recognise that our resources are limited and that we can't necessarily get the ideal of everyone having everything that they need, so what's the middle ground, and that's the space which really we need more of in South Africa." – (Conservation NGO 1, August 2018).

As illustrated above, this polarisation of views among different stakeholder groups reinforced the idea that there are silos of perceptions and action in the TNP MPA. Interestingly, the perceptions of stakeholders of one another often reinforced particular stereotypes and generalisations. For example, SANParks perceived themselves as having to mediate between top-down decision making and community expectations, or in other words, between those that perceived their role was strict conservation and those that felt their role was to create conservation and development opportunities for adjacent communities (e.g., through tourism,

or increased access to fisheries). My findings thus show that for those strongly aligned with the 'fences and fines' conservation perspective, their perceptions of communities are typically one of seeking to maximize resource access and harvesting. These insights show that how different groups perceive one another must be acknowledged to address the rezoning conflicts. Not surprisingly, SANParks representatives in the focus group described the pressure they felt to balance community expectations with the regulations that were handed down to them. As one SANParks representative summarized.:

"SANParks is an intermediary between top-down decisions (DEA and the minister) setting or proclaiming regulations, and we are an intermediary between this process and the bottom-up needs and expectations from our communities where we are expected to be flexible in addressing all these needs from the bottom up." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

4.9 Perceptions of enforcement and management of regulations

The enforcement of the MPA regulations has had an effect on levels of trust among stakeholder groups through time. If fishers were caught within the MPA, they faced fines of up to R3000 for trespassing and for harvesting fish. Their fishing equipment would also be confiscated, and they would have to attend court to face a criminal charge and a fine. Failure to pay those fines could result in prison time of up to three months. As a result, SANParks and scientists (or other external stakeholders with an interest in the MPA) have historically been regarded by communities as more interested in enforcing their legal authority and opinions, than in seeking to work with and/or build awareness and education among communities about the benefits of the park.

In this section, I focus more directly on the perceptions of different stakeholder groups about enforcement of the rezoning regulations. Notably, the regulations determining access in the Tsitsikamma MPA are different from standard recreational permits, although certain rules regarding fish size and bag limits apply. At present, community members purchase a recreational permit from the post-office and use that permit - plus a proof of address - to register as a Tsitsikamma fisher. Once they are registered, they are permitted to fish four times a month in designated zones (the specified coastal control zones) with bait harvesting and angling limits that are more strict than standard recreational fishing regulations.

According to SANParks the regulations are designed to ensure sustainability of fish stocks.

However, as previously noted, the timeframe over which the new regulations were introduced is problematic given the limited opportunity for consultation. This challenge of consultation and participation (as discussed above) has thus led to a series of issues related to enforcement and compliance, further exacerbating problems of trust. This insight was highlighted in a focus group with SANParks representatives:

"When the final regulations were gazetted, very few people had actually seen what those final regulations were going to look like. There was very little acknowledgement of when it would be implemented. That's quite an important point, that the time of year was very bad. There was very, very little pre-warning time that the regulations were going to be gazetted and that put SANParks on a back foot." - (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

This was supported by another representative who agreed and said,

"There was a sudden rush to now get to know what the regulations were. We were asked to implement immediately, but the rangers didn't know what the regulations were, we didn't have brochures to show what those regulations were. The shops were all closed on the 19th of December… We tried to get extra staff from other national parks. People said they would send us five people, we only got one…another park said, we'll send you six, we only got maybe another one or two. But those rangers also didn't know the regulations, so there was an exceptional running around trying to get the things in place…to legally implement what was allowed to be implemented." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

This summary of experience from the perspective of SANParks representatives aligns with fisher perceptions about their own exclusion from the process, with subsequent implications for their willingness to comply with the regulations, and the challenges of enforcement facing authorities. SANParks representatives in the focus group expressed feeling torn as they were perceived as the law-makers, but perceive themselves as intermediaries who enforce the law, but also as an organization entity that conducts scientific research and that interacts with adjacent communities. These dichotomies in perception create a number of sources of tension about enforcement and compliance for various stakeholder groups.

Indeed, SANParks representatives have noted how difficult it was to enforce regulations that were rushed through, and that are perceived by adjacent communities as unfair and exclusionary. And as noted above, community themselves interviewed felt not only that the current access zones were unfair, but that there should be a dedicated access zone for each

community to enhance equitability across all adjacent communities. Indeed, many community respondents supported an access area adjacent to each community and said they would monitor and enforce the rules of access themselves. Having dedicated access was also perceived by community respondents as creating opportunities for a more sustainable future for their children and grandchildren. This sentiment was supported by a conservation NGO respondent who said that when it comes to enforcement of the regulations, having a sense of ownership about those regulation is critical to build trust and create the conditions for more collaborative approaches to governance:

"Self-regulation and compliance are one way but that you'll only foster once you get this feeling of ownership in the community. That means that they also need to be involved in deciding where and what kind of path." – (Conservation NGO representative 3, August 2018).

Among the conservation NGO community, meaningful and inclusive engagement of stakeholders is considered necessary in the long term if enforcement and compliance with the zoning regulation is to succeed. This view was emphasised by a conservation NGO representative who shared the following perspective:

"I'm not massively convinced that the department is going to successfully implement any of the regulations that they have promulgated there and that's why stakeholder consultation has been developed so that you bring your stakeholders on board so that they also buy into the enforcement mechanisms and set ups rather than just unilaterally decide, this is how it's going to happen." – (Conservation NGO representative 1, August 2018).

Also recognized by a range of respondents was the link between engagement of local communities (i.e., local fishers) and information sharing for better decision making. Both a representative from SANParks and conservation NGO representative who worked in enforcement highlighted the importance of sharing information and providing education as a foundation to improve trust necessary for better enforcement and compliance outcomes. For example, a conservation NGO representative shared the insight that people needed to know why a specific area needed management interventions and subsequent enforcement of regulations:

"There is just an expectation that people have to comply without understanding why. If there is an MPA, people need to see the information and understand why those areas exist." - (Conservation NGO representative 3, August 2018)

A SANParks representative observed that by sharing his information with fishers about the ecological values and benefits of the MPA, they became far more invested and interested in how enforcement and management are necessary. Regarding enforcement, it was felt by SANParks respondents and other stakeholder groups that building a relationship with the community is an important step forward and some progress is being made, in spite of a very negative history of exclusion, and that wining the trust of communities was imperative. As a conservation NGO representative noted:

"It's about having those relationships with those communities that's where they have to put a bit of effort in. Get it to the point where you can call them up and say look your guys are targeting steenbras, we need you to stop, where it reaches the level that you can do that, and I don't think our MPAs are working towards that." – (Conservation NGO 3, August 2018)

Despite the views of these stakeholders, my findings show that the fundamental reasons for enforcement in the MPA and with regards to particular zones and/or species, are not always apparent to adjacent communities. Initial mistrust about the creation of the MPA and then the strongly held belief by community members that their fishing efforts had little impact, have led to ongoing questions and conflicts about the need for enforcement. Moreover, the approach to enforcement is also clearly important. The historical criminalization of fishers (i.e., the potential for fines and/or prison as discussed above) as the primary mechanism of enforcement has been very problematic. This approach to enforcement has made families vulnerable (i.e., losing a wage earner) and has undermined the future employment prospects of individuals charge. Because SANParks is the face of this process, conflicts with communities are inevitable.

"You develop a relationship and most fishermen, they want to tell you things, they will tell you hey last night I was fishing and I saw some guys were poaching over here, so you then get that other level of info and you're building that relationship so it's a long term thing, it's not a short term solution." – (Conservation NGO 3, August 2018).

What also emerged from the interviews with conservation NGOs and community members is that training and capacity building of SANParks staff is important for enforcement and compliance. Interview respondents are noting an ongoing shift in the approach to enforcement from a criminalization focus to more of a relational approach. SANParks acknowledged that it would take time to build relationships with communities and it was observed that even in

two years, trust was starting to develop. For example, a SANParks representative noted that: *"From a law enforcement perspective, it was noted that the communication with communities has gotten better over time and there has also been ongoing engagement with the Angling Forum."* – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Similarly, the TAF have indicated that there is more of an effort from SANParks to communicate their concerns and listen to local fishers. This is an important development in the capacity of SANParks. However, it is important to note that SANParks representatives did not have a mandate to engage with communities, and this has negatively affected their ability to build those relationships.

A common perception shared by interview respondents from SANParks and the DEA was that there will inevitably be a period during which enforcement issues will be 'worked out'. However, if there is a feedback coming from fishers then it is important to follow up on that information, take the information into account as opposed to ignoring it, and to work on how to best tackle that problems identified. For example, SANParks respondents have noted that the enforcement of the regulations was difficult because they had to be implemented so quickly (as discussed above). However, their implementation is also a challenge because they are quite rigid and inflexible. For example, fishers have long wanted to bring their children with them to fish, yet the regulations stipulated that those children also required an identity document (like their parent). This is problematic given that South Africans do not receive an identity document until they are legally considered adults. It took time and effort, but SANParks was eventually able to work around this constraint by using a birth certificate as an identity document, and to allow children to access the MPA to fish with their parents. This is a good example of the type of feedback, that when taken into account and resolved, contributes in significant ways to better compliance and enforcement outcomes. However, as noted by a SANParks official:

"Sometimes our way of moving forwards is made difficult by those very regulations and how those regulations are proclaimed, it's very structured and very rigid, it doesn't allow for a lot of flexibility over short periods and I do think that's still going to be a potential hindrance going forwards." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Ultimately, enforcement and compliance issues need to be communicated in a consistent manner, and in ways that reflect the concerns of different stakeholders. There is some optimism for the future in this context, if a more flexible and relational approach is developed:

"I believe anything can be harvested sustainably as long as you have strict criteria. It's hard to have strict rules about what to catch because you can't see what you catch until you pull it out of the water." – (Government representative 3, August 2018).

This more positive sentiment overall was reflected by one SANParks representative who noted:

"Here is an opportunity to see if these regulations can work and if they really work then it fits the conservation objectives and the social livelihood objectives. But we need to be adaptable in that framework." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

4.10 Concluding comments

In post-Apartheid South Africa, MPAs are changing in how they are governed, with expectations they should be more inclusive of adjacent communities and local stakeholder groups. However, in the TNP MPA, there is still a disconnect between policy reforms and the reality for fishers on the ground. There remains a need to adopt a new approach towards MPAs that incorporates human dimensions, and in which protected areas are governed through co-management arrangements. This requires the meaningful incorporation and participation of local communities, along with effective enforcement and compliance (White, 1994; Johannes, 1998; Pomeroy, 2006b). In the next section, I synthesize and discuss some of the key insights from the findings of this research, including the importance of perceptions as a basis for decision making, the material and non-material consequences of loss to access for communities, the importance of establishing legitimacy and trust, and the pathways towards more collaborative governance of MPAs in a South African context.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research has been to critically examine the different perceptions of stakeholders regarding the rezoning of the TNP MPA. Specifically, I have examined the underlying reasons for these different perceptions in order to understand why there has been such contestation over the rezoning process and then use these insights to inform management recommendations. Fifty-five semi-structured interviews were conducted with stakeholders across five main stakeholder groups, namely local communities, scientists, conservation agencies, NGOs and other government agencies Four core themes that have emerged from my research findings (see Chapter 4 – results):

1) The importance of understanding and acknowledging different stakeholder perceptions of the MPA rezoning process and recognizing that these different perceptions are informed by underlying values, images and worldviews, and how these are connected to the success or failure of the Tsitsikamma MPA.
2) The value of access to the coast for local communities and how it shapes the cultural practices and transfer of knowledge across future generations.
3) The importance of establishing strong participation processes for increased legitimacy and trust among stakeholders when implementing changes in regulations.
4) The implications of my findings for improved governance of the TNP MPA and why it is important to take perceptions into account.

5.2 The importance of acknowledging and understanding perceptions

Understanding different perceptions of the rezoning of the TNP MPA is crucial to understanding why contestations and conflicts have arisen. Globally, Research has demonstrated that perceptions about MPAs and how they are governed are based on inherent mental constructs, such as values, norms and images (Rokeach, 1973; Dietz et al., 2005; Biggs et al., 2011; Song et al., 2013). In the case of the TNP, the MPA itself represented different values and norms to different groups. Understanding the underlying differences between these groups in the context of the rezoning process can help explain why contestation surrounding the creation of the ‘no-take’ MPA and subsequent rezoning occurred. Furthermore, different stakeholders contribute critical knowledge that when combined can inform governance of the MPA, and in a way that can meet biological, social and economic objectives (Kooiman and Jentoft., 2009; Jentoft et al., 2012; Voyer et al., 2012; Bennett et al., 2017).

The design and establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) reflects a number of objectives and underlying assumptions. Some MPAs are developed with the objective of nature protection, while others, depending on their designation may create opportunities for resource management (Jentoft et al., 2012). However, in the case of the TNP MPA, there was a lack of consultation regarding the motivation for the MPA initially and its subsequent rezoning and consequently there was no common vision or support for a set of common objectives. As a result, the MPA represented very different values, worldviews and beliefs to different stakeholder groups. How different stakeholder groups perceived the MPA and the rezoning process and interpreted the motivations of others, mattered significantly in regard to support for management purposes and the decision. This ultimately influenced the success of the MPA rezoning.

The Tsitsikamma MPA as a conservation area was generally supported by all stakeholders when it was established in 1964. For example, community members perceived conservation as connected to the land which were important to them. However, the subsequent exclusion of community members from access to the coast in 1976 with the partial closure of the MPA, and then the complete closure in 2000, encountered strong resistance. These changes were viewed by local communities as an effort to promote conservation for monetary gain at their expense. Local community members perceived their use of coastal resources as sustainable and viewed their lives as being culturally, socially and economically connected to the sea. This is consistent with West and Brockington (2006) who showed that the creation of a protected area changes how local people are able to access and value nature, often by separating people from the resources upon which they depend. When access to the coast is restricted to local communities, there is often a loss of support for conservation initiatives (Bennett., 2016; Christie et al., 2017).

The loss of access to the coast in 1976 experienced by adjacent communities changed their perception about what the MPA represented and fostered an ‘us vs. them’ relationship with SANParks (the regulating authority) and some members of the science community. Natural scientists in particular were perceived as generating research that supported the protection efforts that led to the exclusion of communities from the coastline. The declaration of the MPA was thus perceived by local communities as yet another means of oppression by the apartheid regime. These underlying perceptions of the MPA are based on the values, principles and cultural assumptions of different stakeholders and help to explain why the historical ‘no-take’ Tsitsikamma MPA has become a site of such contestation and conflict over objectives and assumptions about what to protect and how.

As my findings reflect, the narratives describing the closure of the TNP MPA go in several different directions. For example, there is a narrative that the TNP closure reflects a process of 'othering' (Huebschle, 2017) towards community members, and that it represented a failure to represent community interests (which largely continues to this day) of the newly-elected democratic government of 1994. However, to conservationists, the Tsitsikamma represented a completely different set of values leading to a different narrative. Whereas community members see it as a loss of their rights, and have labelled themselves 'the forgotten people', the conservation community perceives the closure of the MPA as a strong conservation mandate, with prized endemic species protected and a safety net to protect the line fishery from collapse. A third narrative is also in play, however, that invokes notions of pristine wilderness ideal for the benefit of tourism. This narrative is premised on the concept of the coastline as largely untouched by people. As reflected in my interviews, this narrative was supported by several former SANParks employees and researchers as a potential motivation for the original exclusion of local community members.

The subsequent rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA in December 2016 to a partially opened MPA with three coastal control zones (CCZs) represented an attempt to acknowledge the loss of fishing rights and redress past injustices (SANParks, 2016). However, the majority of community members who fished felt that the location of the zones was still inaccessible, and that the rezoning was no more than an attempt to 'placate' communities. The areas that were opened are not where local people want to fish. Additionally, being able to fish only four times a month and at specific times is not perceived as a suitable accommodation of community fishers' rights to access the coast. The rules that have been put in place to manage fish stocks within the rezoned open areas are complex and perceived as unnecessary and aggressive by local fishers.

In contrast marine and fisheries scientists perceived the rezoning process as excluding them as it did not allow for their participation in the process or acknowledge the potential knowledge and contributions that they could make towards the rezoning decisions The lack of participation of different stakeholders in the process and the lack of integration of local and scientific knowledge in the decision-making processes further entrenched polarization between groups. Unless the perceptions of key stakeholders are effectively considered and managed in the design and implementation of the MPA, it is unlikely that conservation goals or the redress of historical injustices will be achieved.

5.3 Perceptions informed by values, worldviews and images

As my research has shown, there are a wide range of perceptions amongst different stakeholders concerning the rezoning of the MPA which are underpinned by different values, worldviews and images. Biological scientists have perceived the rezoning as a decision that goes against conservation objectives. They perceive the rezoning as a direct threat to conservation objectives, and a threat to the sustainability of endemic and long-lived fish species within the area. In their view, there is some reason for concern - the rezoning of South Africa (and Africa's) oldest MPA from 'no-take' to partially open-access can set a precedent for reducing MPA protection and size in the future.

Moreover, the rezoning of the MPA was also seen to interrupt long-term marine and fisheries research for the sake of what was perceived to be a few privileged local fishers. However, the challenge is that this perception, like those held by other groups, may not be based on complete understanding of the context. Specifically, the decline of line fish stocks and lack of enforcement of regulations in other partially opened MPAs (Chadwick et al., 2014; Branch and Branch, 2018) does not necessarily apply to the TNP. This is an issue that requires further analysis and historical reconstructions of fish stock data, combined with a better understanding of the knowledge of local fishers that have a keen interest in maintaining healthy fish stocks over the long term. Additionally, it is very challenging to address controversial issues such as the opening up of an historic MPA when perceptions held by certain groups are 'intractable' or hard to change.

At present, wildlife conservation typically benefits elite members of society and not those adjacent to protected areas (Brechin et al., 2003; West et al., 2006; Buscher and Wolmer, 2007). Without recognising the consequences of MPAs and the difficulties that local people have faced, it is very difficult to move forward and achieve effective outcomes – social or ecological. As my findings emphasise, however, there is no truth to the belief by certain stakeholders that local community members were not interested in conservation. Protection of nature was perceived as important, and community members emphasized their interest in being involved in management of the TNP to achieve multiple objectives. Indeed, their larger concern was with the presence of larger trawlers which are fishing illegally within the MPA, and the double standards that they felt was imposed on them by SANParks and other government agencies.

The underlying reasons for different worldviews are determined by the frame of reference

from within which stakeholders view an issue (Song et al., 2013; Bennett et al., 2019). In the case of the TNP MPA there was contestation due to a lack of acknowledgement and consultation of the different stakeholder groups. Acknowledging and understanding different worldviews, images and beliefs can only come from engagement between different groups during the participation process and failure to acknowledge these differences is likely to result in limited support for MPA interventions and lead to conflict (Rice et al., 2012; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). Stakeholders view successful management of a protected area to be contingent on how transparent, communicative, participatory and collaborative the governance processes are (Lockwood, 2010; Borrini-Feyebrand and Hill, 2015; Bennett and Satterfield, 2018). Therefore, good governance requires an understanding of the underlying goals, values, motivations and worldviews of different stakeholder groups (Kooiman and Jentoft., 2009; Chuenpagdee and Song, 2012).

Moving forward in the TNP MPA rezoning will require different stakeholder groups, including communities, government, the science and NGO communities, to reflect on their own values, worldviews and assumptions, and to be willing to adjust their perceptions and positions as a way to build trust. For example, conservation NGO representatives perceived the lack of goal-orientated direction and lack of efforts to engage stakeholders as ultimately setting the MPA rezoning process up for failure. Conservation NGO representatives acknowledged that there is a decline in line fish stocks in South Africa (as reported by Chadwick et al., 2014) but that MPAs are not the panacea for fisheries management (Hilborn et al., 2004). Therefore, it is imperative that when designing and rezoning MPAs, greater consideration be given to other biological goals, in addition to socio-economic and governance goals. Viewing the MPA as a socio-ecological system, that requires both social and ecological objectives to addressed, has a much greater likelihood of success (Berkes, 2015; Christie et al., 2017)

Perceptions of success and outcomes of the TNP MPA rezoning among stakeholders have differed widely throughout the process. Unless these diverse perceptions are acknowledged and processes are put in place for them to be reconciled, there is little chance of a successful outcome. For example, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has long perceived the rezoning as a balance of biological, social and economic goals, and consequently supported the implementation of the rezoning in spite of objections from the science community and a public outcry. For DEA, the implementation of the rezoning (even if only on paper) was a success. Still, there is little evidence that DEA interrogated the results of the rezoning for community members. Indeed, for better outcomes, the perceptions of all stakeholders in regard to their relationship with the MPA need to be incorporated in the management plan (Bennett,

2016; Dehens and Fanning, 2018; Bennett et al., 2019). It is important as well to recognize that these perceptions are based on underlying values, beliefs, images and worldviews of users and stakeholders (Song et al., 2011) and disregarding them, creates a 'wicked problem'.

To be successful, an MPA needs to be perceived as aligning with stakeholders' own values, principles, beliefs and worldviews (Song et al., 2013; Bennett., 2016; Cinner, 2018). This has not happened in TNP MPA, and ultimately, the MPA rezoning has not been perceived as a success. The historical loss of fishing rights and access has been deeply problematic for coastal communities, while the opening of the MPA for limited use has been perceived as a means to placate them and does not address their cultural and food security rights. For scientists and the conservation community, the opening of the TNP MPA is seen as a conservation failure. For improved governance (see below) there needs to be interface between the science and management process, and careful consideration of the social context and perceptions that ultimately determine legitimacy and trust (see below). The limited number of scientists working with communities, the limited engagement between marine and social scientists and the limited engagement between communities and government reveals a lack of collaboration amongst different groups and different disciplines. As groups continue to be surrounded by like-minded individuals from similar disciplinary backgrounds or knowledge systems, there is a lack of ability to embrace other ideas or acknowledgement of diverse and different values that other groups have, or differences in how the MPA is perceived (Bennett and Satterfield., 2018). Unless these different groups are brought together to discuss their ideas and views on proposed management decisions (Cvitanovic et al., 2014), management rules and resource use will be perceived differently, and contestation and conflict are likely to persist.

5.4 The value of access to the coast for local communities

In South Africa, there is a well-recognised history of exclusion from accessing certain areas and resources based on race (West and Brockington., 2006; Curruthers., 2007). Many communities, for example, have been relocated or denied access from key coastal areas (Williams, 2013; Hanson et al., 2014; Sunde, 2014). West and Brockington (2006:257) identify the loss of access to natural resources as '…one of the most controversial and contested aspects of protected areas' because the creation of protected areas changes how people use and benefit from land (or marine resources). When communities are relocated from the marine resources upon which they depend, their standard of living is often placed at risk. The displacement of communities from 'no-take' MPAs and the subsequent loss of access, has direct implications for food security and livelihood opportunities, as well as social and cultural

sustainability (World Bank, 2002: Coad et al., 2008; Sunde, 2014; Charles, 2016; Sowman and Sunde, 2018).

Access to resources is perceived as a material necessity, often linked to livelihoods and food security needs (Christies et al, 2003; Sunde, 2014; Charles, 2016; ICSF, 2016). However, in my interviews, I found that access to the coastal resources was valued by community members as more than just a material good. Community members perceived access to the coast as a way to connect to their ancestors. Specifically, the connection to nature and thus to God was emphasized several times in community interviews. Local community members experienced a therapeutic effect from being near the coast that was linked to their mental well-being and part of the experience of growing up. These sentiments align to Bennett's work on perceptions (see Figure 4, Chapter 2) that link social context to individual's identity. This identity is nested within the individuals' culture, environment, history and interactions and is mediated by their perceptions which then link to how they will perceive a conservation initiative and the level of support they will give it (Bennett, 2016). In the case of the TNP MPA, the perception of connection with their ancestors and the sense of mental well-being that people experienced from accessing the coast, were emphasized in interviews. Additionally, there was a view that having access to the coast was a way to educate children by enabling the transfer of traditional and local knowledge. Access to the coast was identified as also helping to remove children from social ills such as crime and substance abuse. Therefore, the historical closure of the zone given the social context for local communities lead to a lack of support and negative perceptions of the MPA.

The rezoning of the TNP MPA in 2016 (Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003. Regulation, 2016:40511) sought to enhance access for fishers to the coast for fishing. However, access concerns have not necessarily revolved around fishing. For community members, The TNP MPA is as much about knowledge sharing with family members and a space to be at peace. This relates to the work of Kooiman and Jentoft (2009) who argue that meta-level governance characteristics (such as values and beliefs) motivate perceptions, and therefore, help to explain why some of the access issues are as much non-material as they are material. Maintaining and transferring local knowledge across the generations is one of those non-material concerns associated with a loss of access. For example, Berkes (2012) found that exclusionary practices and loss of access undermine local indigenous beliefs and values. Here, the loss of access in the TNP shapes how knowledge to future generations will flow, and how that further disadvantages local people beyond their material losses (reduced fish catch). Indeed, the lack of access for the economically disadvantaged, and therefore, those in need of the material

benefits of a fishing zone is a central part of the contestation experienced in TNP. Yet ultimately, many stakeholders view the rezoning of the MPA as a political move to win local votes without realistically addressing historical injustices appropriately.

Jentoft and Chuenpagdee (2009) have argued that values, norms and principles underpinning goals needs to be incorporated in governance to determine how access can be achieved fairly and equitably without compromising human rights or conservation objectives. In the case of the TNP, NGO representatives and social scientists have been concerned that changing access through rezoning has not affected real change for community members in term of their non-material needs, and that the continued marginalization has created more contestation and anger from community members. In contrast, the managing authority and the government department responsible for the rezoning of the MPA have focused their effort to rezone as a strategy to address the material aspects of access. However, in reality, the non-material aspects were most important to local community members (see Chapter 4 - findings). This reveals a fundamental difference across various groups as to how the MPA is perceived. Notably, if different stakeholders have an opportunity to collaborate early on and to understand the complexity of the TNP MPA and what it represents to different use groups, more effective governance outcomes might be possible.

5.5 Weak participation processes undermine legitimacy and trust

Trust is a foundational principle upon which for relationships are built and is needed for management that is inclusive (Song et al., 2018). The Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning was perceived as controversial and efforts to build trust were needed to overcome quite diverse viewpoints and generalized political perspectives. As my interviews revealed, both the local community and marine science community felt that the rezoning was linked to a broader set of political objectives that extended the debates and discussions beyond the science of rezoning.

Trust between different groups is essential for effective governance (see Chapter 2 – literature review). Specifically, the expanding literature examining MPAs and trust highlights the importance and benefits of consulting with diverse stakeholders, with a particular emphasis on the links between communities that have been involved in the conservation of protected areas and successful outcomes (Jentoft et al., 2007; Charles and Wilson, 2009; De Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011; Chuenpagdee et al, 2013; Song et al., 2018). More recently, Cinner (2018) found that the actions of conservation authorities and leaders can influence

conservation behavior more generally, including among communities and other key stakeholder groups. In this regard, if a conservation organization or managing authority is perceived as trustworthy and displays 'positive traits' (e.g., accountability, transparency, honesty) in their interactions with other stakeholders they are more likely to collaborate with others to achieve better governance outcomes (De Ruyter et al., 2001; Maeda and Miyahara, 2003). In situations where MPAs are unable to meet multiple objectives (ecological and social), there is often evidence that the integration of users and stakeholders into MPA governance processes has been poor, or that positive traits of managing authorities has been absent (Cvitanovic et al., 2014; Bednarek et al., 2018; Dale et al., 2019) (see also Chapter 2 – literature review).

There is a clear recognition of the value of participation, and the need for collaboration to achieve trust over the long term, and to achieve ecological as well as socio-economic benefits. As one SANParks representative clearly summarised:

"Through co-learning we can all take ownership and benefit from the park… We want to encourage ownership of the park by local communities, this will need ongoing engagement with our communities as well as inclusion in attitudes in developing products." – (SANParks focus group representative, September 2018).

Legitimacy and trust are necessary for effective governance of natural resources (Jentoft et al., 2007; Charles and Wilson, 2009; De Vos and van Tatenhove, 2011; Armitage et al., 2012; Chuenpagdee et al., 2013; Song et al., 2018). Trust between different stakeholder groups is essential for effective dialogue and critical reflection between groups that can help MPA managers and other stakeholder to meet their objectives (Cinner, 2018). Legitimacy reflects accountability and is important for systems that require multiple governance actors (Armitage et al., 2009). The rezoning was rushed, and it was perceived that SANParks had been put under pressure by DEA. Ultimately, Conservation NGO representatives concluded that the lack of effective communication and co-ordination between DEA and SANParks and the lack of understanding regarding the complex issues affecting communities on the ground, were particularly problematic. This recognition does provide an entry point for shared discussions about how to move forward with governance.

Soneryd and Linke (2017) have shown that trust among different groups is essential for good governance of MPAs, and that members of stakeholder groups have to be perceived as legitimate by other group members (Linke and Jentoft, 2016; Ward et al., 2018). One of the

key challenges facing the TNP MPA has been the lack of effective representation of certain stakeholder groups, and in turn, how this influenced the perceived legitimacy of decisions and the trust among groups. For example, SANParks is clearly trapped between 'representations' of their role in the rezoning, where they are seen as drivers of the process by the community, yet they view themselves as mediators between communities and DEA. Specifically, they were required to implement legislation on the rezoning and are seen as the drivers of the rezoning process by many community members. At the same time, SANParks representatives (and the organization itself) have not always supported the specifics of the rezoning regulations (e.g., the lack of access for children) and have been forced to implement the regulatory changes too quickly. The blurring of roles among some stakeholders leads to a loss of legitimacy and trust – there are multiple 'representations' of the same organization. For example, SANParks was perceived as driving the zoning and as unsympathetic, when representatives within SANParks did in fact sympathize with fishers and supported some of their requests. Finally, legislators within DEA did not connect management (SANParks) and government (DEA) with stakeholders effectively and functioned instead within silos. This was also evident from the differences in perception from DEA representatives who viewed the rezoning as resulting in a successful outcome despite a lack of representation of stakeholders in the process. This in turn led to a loss of trust and accountability from all other stakeholders.

My research found that in addition to a lack of stakeholder representation and participation in the rezoning process, there was also a problem with representation of stakeholder groups, with implications for efforts to build trust and legitimacy (de Vos and van Tatenhove, 2010; Glenn et al., 2011). Moreover, Hanson et al., (2014) and Dehens and Fanning (2018) show that the exclusion of voices undermines the legitimacy of governance. This is poignant in South Africa, where democratic participation was only established in 1994. Subsequently, the exclusion of scientific stakeholders and community members who were not part of the Tsitsikamma Angling Forum (TAF) highlights the concerns about legitimacy and power dynamics involved in the rezoning process. Only three communities had representatives involved in the TNP rezoning process, while the TAF (see Chapter 5 - findings) was not representative of those who had the most to win or lose from rezoning. Specifically, the representatives of the TAF were not regular fishers and did not necessarily understand the difficulties faced by community members that fished. Yet, throughout the rezoning efforts in both 2015 and 2016 there was an assumption by other stakeholders (e.g., the managing authority) that the TAF was representative of fishers from the nine communities. The reality is the TAF did not effectively communicate to their constituencies about the proposed rezoning plans, nor communicate the cultural importance of coastal resources to communities to the managing authorities and other

key stakeholders.

In environmental governance, representation is important. Linke and Jentoft (2016) found that representatives of groups need to be considered by the groups they represent as legitimate or their input will not be considered valid. Dehens and Fanning (2018) and Song et al., (2019) have illustrated that legitimacy is related to trust. However, they challenge the assumption that involvement of stakeholders also means that stakeholders will feel a sense of trust or perceive decisions are legitimate. This is also the case in the TNP. At certain times for example, representatives of TAF felt that they provided input to the process but that key perspectives were not reflected in decision making processes. The rezoning proceeded in a way that was very different from what they had envisioned. They accepted the outcomes of the rezoning because they participated in the process, but they did not feel it was legitimate. Many researchers and NGO representatives have also questioned the rezoning process, and the legitimacy of the stakeholders involved. The breakdown of trust between government and key stakeholders and the subsequent sense of illegitimacy of the decision have severely hampered efforts to garner support from communities and other stakeholders.

Ultimately, my research shows that although stakeholders can be incorporated in governance processes, their feedback can be 'massaged' to suit a role that the managing authority feel is easier to accommodate, rather than take into account the actual needs local communities. Meaningful stakeholder engagement must be accountable to those with whom it engages and clearly communicate why decisions have been made. This view is supported by Bennett et al., (2019) who argue that input from participants must be integrated into the decision-making process to ensure accountability. Finally, consideration of peoples' perceptions is crucial for good governance. Fair representation of different stakeholder groups, meaningful participation and accountability are equally important for good governance. This will be further explored in the section below.

5.6 Implications of findings for improved governance

Communities are important constituencies in democratic decision-making yet co-management of MPAs is not happening between SANParks and communities as advocated in the People and Parks program. Conservation NGO representatives also highlighted this as an issue, stating that SANParks and DEA have facilitated processes to bring natural scientists and local community members into the same room to discuss issues and share knowledge. Therefore, a practical outcome that meets the interests and needs of all groups is unlikely as there is a lack

of interactions between scientists and local people and a lack of integration of the community's local knowledge with scientific knowledge. Science as a way of knowing is not necessarily 'objective' (De Santo, 2010; Von Heland and Clifton, 2015) and communities are suspicious of such knowledge when it is imposed on them. Local indigenous knowledge systems of people dependent on nature influence how the MPA is perceived and therefore either supported or opposed. The issue of whose knowledge counts is a contentious issue in the context of natural resource management (Gray, 2016; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). Thus, the lack of recognition of local ecological knowledge was ultimately a lost opportunity to share and combine knowledge systems in a way that led to better understanding of the system s and better governance of the MPA. The integration of science and local knowledge systems is essential for good governance (Likens, 2010; Parry and Murphy, 2013; Dale et al., 2019) and the TNP MPA management had it included both systems of knowledge may have led to greater support for rules, improved compliance and decreased conflict surrounding the 2016 MPA rezoning.

Users and stakeholders in the Tsitsikamma MPA are confronting many issues related to access – material and non-material. Moreover, their participation in decision-making, sense of trust and how the MPA shapes their identity is crucial when understanding what the rezoning represented. These issues of access and participation are closely related to the governance of MPAs (Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009; Christie et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2019). My focus in the findings section is about perceptions that are linked in the end to how to better govern the TNP MPA, given the significant contestation and social and ecological complexity of the system.

There are several key discussion points that emerge on these issues. For example, improved and ongoing communication and interaction is important, including education and awareness between SANParks, fishers and the broader community to promote trust and to avoid decisions being made in silos. Through interaction, a better understanding of worldviews and values can be shared and understood by different groups. It is also important that stakeholders be in similar positions of power across groups so that the voices of one group do not drown out the other (Sowman and Wynberg, 2014) For those groups that are economically excluded, allowances are needed so that groups can meet without having to face personal financial costs, or feel their livelihoods are at risk (Ratner and Allison, 2012; Ratner et al., 2013).

There is an opportunity to show in the Tsitsikamma MPA that a workable solution exists if there is improved participation and consultation. However, stakeholder views must be

incorporated into planning and decision-making, along with continuous feedback, monitoring and evaluation to determine progress and outcomes of the rezoning (Linke and Jentoft, 2016; Christie et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2019). Having constant feedback across groups through meetings and other participatory opportunities will allow different stakeholders to understand one another's perspectives and worldviews, and to work together to produce a plan that is seen as legitimate. Legitimacy will ensure that stakeholders feel accountable and part of the regulation change, as they understand the process and why the rezoning is being managed in the way that it is (Armitage et al., 2012).

There are other key insights that emerge from my research. For example, it's important to build local capacity for greater knowledge sharing about the issues confronting the MPA, and therefore, improve opportunities for further compliance with the regulations. However, it's important not to assume that local people will support regulations unless they have an opportunity to co-develop them. Therefore, building capacity and improving awareness is important for sharing information and data, and in turn can increase perceptions that local knowledge is being used in conjunction with scientific data to improve management, lending a sense of ownership to all stakeholders (Nielsen and Vedsmand, 1999; Mellado et al., 2014; Dehens and Fanning, 2018). Additionally, a sense of ownership of the park by local communities is enhanced with ongoing engagement and inclusion in management and decision processes, such as allowing communities, for example, to see the footage gathered by SANParks researchers from their Baited Remote Underwater Video System (BRUVs). This would provide a visual point of interest that fishers could contribute local knowledge towards and generate discussion amongst local communities and scientists.

Insights from my research highlight many opportunities to improve the governance of TNP MPA, now that the rezoning has happened. These opportunities reflect the insights gleaned from interviews and focus group discussions, and reflections on the literature. For example, there was evidence of co-learning among anglers and SANParks rangers in the context of catch monitoring (Armitage et al., 2017; Ban et al., 2018). However there remains an opportunity to continue monitoring in a collaborative way, and to build long term research and monitoring partnerships that are strategic and transdisciplinary. This creates opportunities for action *research* that allows for community members to be part of the scientific process.

Whilst there are serious concerns regarding the rezoning and regulations there are other important pathways to foster improved governance of the TNP MPA, and in ways that address the present contestations and conflicts. For instance, although there are issues with the location

of the zones, there are additional issues with the permit system. For example, it's important to maintain continuous improvement of the registration process and adjust the process to make it easier for people to receive permits. This could include, for example, having SANParks go out to the communities to provide permits to local fishers, rather than fishers being expected to come into the SANParks offices. Efforts to reach out to marginal groups in the context of MPAs is increasingly recognised as an effective practice (Pomeroy, 2006b; Sunde, 2016; Rees et al., 2018). Indeed, in the TNP MPA addressing the issue of allowing economically disadvantaged members, women and children the opportunity to be allowed to access the national park at certain times of the year, is important. Finally, having regular camps for local children and excursions for the elderly members of the community is needed, so that they can foster positive relationships and proactive participation with rangers (Infield and Namara, 2001).

Insights from the research highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the current governance and institutional arrangements associated with the TNP MPA. For example, the key strengths identified by SANParks include their staff capacity and that they are maintaining ongoing relations with the community. The rezoning process can be a means to positively engage with community members and explore mechanisms to reduce conflict, while also engaging the science and NGO communities. However, because SANParks has a 'dual role' (i.e., a governance role to create social and economic opportunities, and a conservation role), it is challenging for them to act as a 'bridge' for all stakeholders (Berdej and Armitage, 2016). The pressure on SANParks is challenging as well because the regulations are very rigid, and therefore, not easily adaptable to the needs of the community or the managing authority. More communication between the DEA and SANParks is needed to improve co-ordination and communication with respect to the rezoning process. Some of these strengths and weaknesses involve changes within the institutions and institutional arrangements associated with the MPA. However, there are also process-related strengths and weaknesses that can help or constrain efforts for more collaborative governance.

Ultimately, collaboration is required to overcome the deeply held perceptions of the different stakeholder groups about the rezoning process. This desire of working together was reflected across all facets of my research. Conservation outcomes in a post-2020 global biodiversity framework is linked to a stronger emphasize on community and local institutions. Robbins et al. (2009) noted, for example, that community members will generally approve of rules allowing their continued resource harvesting practices, whilst simultaneously approving restricting rules on other practices. Local participation and legitimacy of the institutions are

crucial to community-centred conservation outcomes (Pollnac et al., 2001; Brooks et al., 2012; Brooks, 2016). A lack of participation with local people, scientists and conservation NGOs in developing regulations and changes in resource use, may negatively influence sustainable natural resource behaviours, decrease legitimacy, weaken social ties, and decrease social network cohesion (Jentoft, 2000; Pretty, 2003; Viteri and Chávez, 2007; Kawaka et al., 2017; Alexander et al., 2018). For long-term benefits, there is a need to foster greater involvement of communities in management and decision-making and recognise the important role they can play as stewards of resources and the MPA.

Community members can see a positive future relationship with the TNP MPA. They perceived themselves as being natural historians who have observed the changes in nature around them and have respected the environment in the past. They also recognize that reconnecting with the MPA and coast would be a healthy way to re-direct children's attention away from substance and alcohol abuse. Moreover, there was an understanding from marine scientists that if fishing was about access and culture, that they should be involved in co-creating a plan with monitoring that ensured sustainability. This was echoed by conservation NGO representatives who felt that the MPA needed to be co-governed with measurable goals that incorporated local knowledge, while ensuring South Africa's commitment to the international agreements for protected areas.

Conservation and consultation surrounding the MPA is about more than 'just fishing'. The MPA needs to represent a healthy natural environment that is beneficial for all South Africans. Therefore, it is important that the park creates opportunities for co-learning in ways that protect ecosystems and support people. For this to happen, processes of engagement and consultation need to be put on place and need to involve a variety of stakeholders that reflect a commitment to power sharing.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

MPAs are a key strategy for enhancing the protection of biodiversity conservation and ecosystems. Globally, there is a significant focus on increasing the number of MPAs and building networks of MPAs to support marine conservation. However, MPAs have significant implications for people and adjacent communities, and too few MPAs are designed and implemented with ecological and social objectives in mind (Jentoft et al., 2012; Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Sowman and Sunde, 2018). There is a growing body of evidence to show that MPAs must be governed and managed in ways that take into account the social, political, legal and economic contexts in which they are situated (Ahmadia et al., 2015; Bennett et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2018). This includes improved understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the various stakeholder groups (e.g., communities, managers, scientists) involved with MPA initiatives.

This thesis critically examines the perceptions of diverse stakeholders regarding the 2016 Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning process. The Tsitsikamma MPA has been an area of contestation since its creation in 1964 and has undergone various policy and regulation changes related to its use and access by adjacent communities and other groups such as tourists and recreational anglers. However, the rezoning process reflects a recent attempt by government to address ongoing contestation with local communities regarding their request for access to coastal areas and marine resources upon which they have historically depended (Muhl, 2016).

A number of objectives have guided this research, including 1) the identification of the relevant stakeholders and resource users affected by the rezoning; 2) investigating key stakeholder perceptions regarding the rezoning process and the MPA more generally; 3) examining the underlying values, worldviews and images that influence and inform perceptions of different groups; 4) examining the potential socio-economic implications of this decision for local coastal communities; 5) understanding the perceptions of different stakeholders, considering how the interactions, relationships and levels of trust differ among key stakeholders may have influenced the potential for a positive or negative outcome in the TNP MPA rezoning process; and 6) developing recommendations in collaboration with research participants that address the key issues raised by different stakeholder groups. In order to address the aim and objectives, I used a qualitative case study approach with semi-structured interviews and focus groups. These data collection activities were supplemented with field observations, a participatory film project, and map and census data.

6.2 Key findings

There are several key findings that emerged from this research. Overall, this research contributes important insights about the importance of taking account of the perceptions of stakeholders in MPA management, governance and decision-making processes. The research has contributed an empirical case study on the importance of perceptions and meaningful participation, and the implications for governance of MPAs. Comparisons to other experiences in South Africa are possible (see below) and it is important to determine lessons that have broader relevance. The research also contributes examples of and insights into the principles of good governance for decision making in protected areas (e.g., Lockwood, 2010; Lausche, 2011), and supports other research which highlights the importance of local context, participation, equity and legitimacy in MPA governance (Charles and Wilson, 2009; Bennett and Dearden, 2014).

The research shows that among stakeholder groups associated with the Tsitsikamma MPA, there are diverse and deeply held perceptions about the rezoning process and the governance of the MPA more generally. The Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning process means very different things to different stakeholder groups. The rezoning of the TNP MPA is perceived as a positive example by some government stakeholders as an effort to address past injustices and as a means of reducing conflicts, whereas for local communities it did not represent redress and has not made an impact towards addressing their cultural needs. On the other hand, scientists view the Tsitsikamma MPA rezoning as a dangerous precedent that may pave the way for similar openings in other MPAs and undermine efforts to protect marine ecosystems and rebuild line fish stocks in South Africa. Furthermore, the various stakeholder groups involved in this research have very diverse perceptions of each other and their respective motivations for supporting (or not) the rezoning process. This has significant implications for efforts to govern and manage the MPA, to overcome conflicts and build trust, and in terms of coming up with shared recommendations that all stakeholders can agree with going forward.

Findings from this research highlight the importance of and challenges associated with participation in MPA governance, especially participation of local communities living adjacent to the Tsitsikamma MPA. For the rezoning of the Tsitsikamma MPA to be supported, all stakeholder groups need to be included in the planning and decision-making process. Including stakeholders in multiple sessions where goals and objectives of the MPA are jointly formulated, discussed and /or revised is needed for more inclusive and legitimate governance of the MPA. Participation of all stakeholders also creates an opportunity to explore, discuss and incorporate both local and scientific knowledge in decision making. Participation is also

clearly linked to building trust among stakeholder groups, and this is the basis for many of the successes in other MPA governance contexts (Bennett and Dearden 2014). However, the lack of participation of stakeholders in the Tsitsikamma MPA reflects in many ways the inability to address colonial and apartheid power structures post-1994 which resulted in the continued marginalisation of rural coastal communities. The lack of effective participation of local communities in the rezoning process resulted in a loss of trust in the process and a negative perception of the MPA and its associated management and government agencies (respectively SANParks and DEA). Also, the lack of participation reflects the notion that some of these protected areas are 'pristine', when in fact they have been a colonised space that have excluded people in accordance with western-centric conservation values (Faasen, 2006).

Related to the issue of perceptions, there remains within the Tsitsikamma MPA context some relatively simplistic views about people and nature, and their relationships through time. This research attempted to hear from as many voices as possible and to be inclusive of many different groups. The experience in the Tsitsikamma MPA shows that it is important not to categorize people into specific roles that 'other' them, and that much more effort is needed to understand why different perceptions and narratives about the rezoning process exist. For example, the extent to which community members feel excluded from decision making and from access to resources is critical. A wide range of stakeholders, and notably community representatives, emphasize the importance of access. The loss of access to the area and its associated marine and coastal resources were felt to have violated constitutional and human rights of community members and has led to ongoing conflicts, along with a perception among community members that is linked to a rise in substance abuse, food insecurity, poverty and a loss of identity. However, this desire for greater access may not imply community members are interested in using the marine resources unchecked or without limits, as some other stakeholder groups perceive as reconciling, and understanding these views can help avoid some of the 'us vs. them' situations which are an issue in some conservation settings (West et al., 2006; Jentoft and Chuengpagdee, 2009).

Lastly, findings from this research should be useful for decision makers (e.g., SANParks, other authorities) responsible for meeting MPA objectives. This research documents the many different perceptions that exist amongst stakeholders in one specific context. Understanding peoples support can inform plans and decision-making. Therefore, knowledge of perceptions can be used to make better decisions (Kooiman and Jentoft, 2009; Song et al., 2013; Bennett, 2016; Christie et al., 2017). By identifying and examining these perceptions, there is a more complete picture of why there are conflicts, the reasons various stakeholders and groups feel

the way they do, and therefore, creates opportunities to discuss potential differences of opinion and explore potential options and solutions. Given the emphasis on MPA expansion and efforts to meet international targets and agreements, having a clearer set of practices and guidelines relevant to the South African MPA contexts is beneficial.

6.3 Recommendations

Several recommendations emerge from this research which are based on my key findings (Chapter 4), and on the ideas that emerged from stakeholders themselves. For example, a key recommendation is for managing authorities and other conservation stakeholders to *value and take account of perceptions in MPA planning and governance*. Perceptions are driving much of the conflict in the MPA and these perceptions must be reconciled. The Tsitsikamma MPA experience provides a learning case for other MPAs in the country as to why perceptions matter. The Tsitsikamma can also therefore be a case of how to deal with this challenge by creating more opportunities for stakeholders to engage with one another, learn about their differences and co-develop opportunities for that address social and ecological objectives.

There is much effort to increase the number of MPAs in South Africa as elsewhere. However, there is an opportunity and need here to emphasize the equitable management of existing MPAs by ensuring stakeholder perceptions are taken into account. A focus on equity in MPA governance means more effort is needed to *create effective public participation processes* and 'spaces' (e.g., workshops, meetings) where different stakeholders share perceptions about proposals, plans and conservation initiatives. These spaces of interaction may be a source of tension and conflict but are necessary to create a sense of ownership of the MPA among all stakeholders. This research and the experiences in Tsitsikamma highlight the challenges that emerge when effective public participation processes do not occur.

As noted above, adherence to existing national policies and guidelines for more effective public participation processes in MPA planning and decision are needed. There are many existing regulations and policies that require meaningful participation, but these regulations and policies are not always followed by managing authorities and government agencies. However, a stronger community voice and active role in decision making will enhance trust by creating space to discuss MPA objectives, deciding on access priorities, and fostering conflict resolution. Most importantly, more participation creates much needed opportunities to *encourage an exchange of information and knowledge* between scientists and local communities, and to promote incorporation of local ecological knowledge and science in MPA decision making.

Finally, a more *collaborative approach to governance of MPAs* should be promoted within the protected area system in South Africa. Key stakeholders and park authorities should orient themselves toward a governance model that creates opportunities for increased participation, sharing of knowledge and ideas and participating in decision making. This can be done by creating more opportunities for workshops and other participatory spaces so the key issues can be raised and discussed. As my focus groups showed, careful facilitation can help encourage collaborations this is somewhat a of a new approach in the SANParks system. It is recognized that more effort and research would be needed to understand how to promote more collaborative governance or co-management of protected areas (Bennett and Dearden, 2014; Jones et al., 2017).

6.4 Further research

Based on my research, there are several areas requiring for further research. Most importantly, more attention needs to be given to understanding the human dimensions of MPAs in South Africa. For example, understanding perceptions is needed to improve governance as shown in this research but is rarely the main focus of a conservation plan or initiative. Furthermore, more research is necessary to understand different governance approaches to MPAs and the extent to which stakeholder perceptions are being addressed. The current top-down approach as reflected in the Tsitsikamma MPA case study is not working well. Different models that are more collaborative need to be the focus of research so that lessons on what works and what doesn't can be developed. Also, comparing experiences with different governance efforts in coastal or marine areas across South Africa can emphasis lessons that are learned in different places helping also to create more diversity in approaches.

This research has highlighted the various perceptions and experiences of stakeholders with regard to the rezoning process as well as the underlying values, worldviews and motivations that influence the perceptions of these key stakeholders. The importance of taking account of these different perceptions in planning and decision-making relevant to MPAs has also been highlighted. The Tsitsikamma MPA experience provides an important lesson for South Africa in the marine conservation realm. Local communities are often in the best position to help protect the resources they depend on for their livelihoods and cultural identity. However, more research on South African MPAs and other conservation settings would be helpful to identify when and how positive ecological and social outcomes are more likely if a wide range of stakeholder needs and perceptions are meaningfully considered.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Semi-structured interview questions (English version)

Interview Questions

1. Please state your name and surname, and briefly about what you do for a living.
2. What is your relationship to the Tsitsikamma conservation area?
3. What was the purpose of conservation within the Tsitsikamma historically as the oldest marine protected area in South Africa?
4. In your understanding, what does the Tsitsikamma as a conservation area represent at present?
5. Who do you believe benefits from and should benefit from conservation in the Tsitsikamma?
6. Do you support the opening of the coastal control zones in the MPA? What does fishing in the area represent? Why do you think the re-opening took place? What do you know about the re-zoning, can you describe what took place?
7. What do you perceive SANPark's role to be in relation to the Tsitsikamma? What, in your opinion informed the re- opening up of the MPA – and how were the particular stretches of coast decided?
8. What was your view on the regulations promulgated in 2015? Do you think the regulation change in 2016 was an improvement on the regulation change in 2015?
9. Do you think the regulations are appropriate to the area in terms of bag limits, species, fishing times and access?
10. Are the current regulations appropriate in terms of the rights, needs and interests of the surrounding community members?
11. When it comes to changes in regulation involving areas that are of high biodiversity and natural heritage, who should be consulted when an MPA, the Tsitsikamma, is reopened? Do you think it is possible for the MPA to be open to the fishers in a sustainable manner? Who should be involved? How long should the process take?

    South Africa has a long-standing dilemma between rural development and increasing nature conservation targets. How do you perceive the relationship between community and nature conservation? How do we reconcile communities and conservation?
12. What would be the best outcome going forwards?

Is there anything else I should know? Or that you feel is important for me to know.

Appendix B: Research Permit for the Tsitsikamma – Garden Route National Park

To acquire and manage a system of national parks which represents the indigenous wildlife, vegetation, landscapes and significant cultural assets of South Africa for the pride and benefits of the nation.

South African NATIONAL PARKS

Permit Number: MUHL-E/2018-015
Issue Date: 2018/08/28
Research Permit: Tsitsikamma - Garden Route National Park

Project title: Parks and people: An analysis of the perceptions surrounding the re-opening of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area.
Senior Researcher: Ms E Muhl
Co Workers: Dr P Mbatha, Prof M Sowman

Herewith the permit for your research project valid from 28 August 2018 until 30 June 2019. The approval is subject to the following conditions:

The Park Management staff must be contacted prior to entry into the park (see list of staff members below). This approval grants you and your co-workers free entrance to the Park *for bona fida* research.

Standard Conditions:

- The use of non-demarcated areas will lead to the disturbance of animals and eco-systems, trampling of vegetation and soil erosion and only the use of accepted pathways and areas is therefore permitted, UNLESS BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS. PLEASE CONTACT THE PARK MANAGEMENT STAFF IF RESTRICTED AREAS NEED TO BE ACCESSED.
- No damage shall be permitted to any natural vegetation, environment or property.
- Animals may not be disturbed in any way.
- Uncontrolled vehicle access and parking could cause damage to vegetation and soil erosion and therefore only the use of approved vehicles routes and parking areas is allowed.
- Fires can cause loss of vegetation, soil erosion and life and therefore fires, and braai's are not permitted unless in dedicated braai areas.
- Remove all rubbish and waste as it has an effect on the health of visitors, animals and plants.
- Other visitors to the area and or neighbours may not be hindered in any way.
- Pollution affects the health and safety of animals, plants, visitors and neighbours and is not permitted.
- Excessive noise affects animals (e.g. birds nesting in the areas), visitors and or neighbours and is not permitted.
- Your permit must be retained and kept on your person at all times, and produced on request.
- The areas under the control of SANParks are used entirely at your own risk. South African National Parks, its Board, directors, employees and agents are not liable for any loss or damage to the property or possession of any guest or participant (or accompanying minor) whether such damage is caused by the negligent act or omission of South African National Parks; arising from death or any bodily injuries of whatsoever nature sustained by a guest or participant (or accompanying minor) whether such injuries are caused by the negligent act or omission by South African National Parks, and/or by the defective functioning of any apparatus. The guest or participant and/or his/her/their estate hereby indemnifies South African National Parks against any claim, action, judgment, costs and/or expenses which may be made against South African National Parks and as may in any way be related to the above. The onus lies with the company or applicant to ensure that they are adequately insured.
- Please note that you (your delegates, staff etc) are subject to the conditions set in terms of Section 86(1) of the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998) and the National

addo elephant
agulhas
augrabies
bontebok
camdeboo
garden route
- *tsitsikamma*
- *knysna*
- *wilderness*
golden gate highlands
karoo
kgalagadi transfrontier
kruger
mapungubwe
marakele
mokala
mountain zebra
namaqua
table mountain
tankwa
|ai-|ais/richtersveld
west coast

PO Box 176
Sedgefield
6573

Garden Route National Park
Scientific Services
Office of General Manager

Tel: (044) 343 1302
Fax: (044) 343 2331
www.sanparks.org

To acquire and manage a system of national parks which represents the indigenous wildlife, vegetation, landscapes and significant cultural assets of South Africa for the pride and benefits of the nation.

South African NATIONAL PARKS

Environmental Act: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003) for the duration of your stay in the National Park. Your attention is specifically drawn to sections 64(1) (a), (b) & (c) which refers to penalties in terms of the Act.

- SANParks staff's instructions, notices, regulations and signs must be complied with.
- The activity shall be restricted to the area applied for.
- Gate and operating times to be complied with.
- NO PETS ALLOWED

Special Conditions:

All conditions contained within the research agreement linked to this permit must be complied with. It is the Researcher's responsibility to familiarize themselves (including co-workers and research assistants) with these conditions prior to commencement of work within the Park.

Any contraventions of the above will result in your permit being revoked.

Park Management Contact Details:

Tsitsikamma: Area Manager	Bulelwa Mseng
Telephone:	042 281 1607
Email:	Bulelwa.mseng@sanparks.org
Tsitsikamma: Senior Section Ranger	Euginia Mkhatshwa
Telephone:	042 281 1557
Email:	euginia.mkhatshwa@sanparks.org
SANParks Coordinator:	Mohlamatsane Mokhatla
Telephone:	044 343 1302
E-mail:	Mohlamatsane.Mokhatla@sanparks.org

Kind Regards

Signature Removed

Nerina Kruger, South African National Parks, Tel: 044 343 1302, Fax: 086 621 5340
E-mail: nerina.kruger@sanparks.org

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Appendix C: Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee Approval

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD
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RONDEBOSCH 7701 South
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17 July 2017

Ella-Kari Muhl
Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences

Parks and people: An analysis of the perceptions surrounding the re-opening of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area

Dear Ella-Kari Muhl

I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee has approved the above-named application for research ethics clearance, subject to the conditions listed below. The Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee (FSREC) has made the following comments on the application:

- COMMENT 1: The title of the project in the Consent Form should provide a full account of the acronym 'MPA'. Please therefore adjust the title of the project in the Consent Form to read: "The opening of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs): How politics, power and customary rights influence indigenous people's access to food in South Africa".

The FSREC has also offered the following opinions on the proposal which you may wish to consider in the development of your research activities.

- Information about the project should include a clear explanation of the role, purpose and implications of the MPA to ensure that the opinions expressed by the interviewees are based on facts and not hearsay;

- The researcher should try and avoid bias in their research. Statements such as: "This research considers how communities are excluded from governance of coastal resources…" indicate that there is perhaps some bias.

- Implement the measures described in your application to ensure that the process of your research is ethically sound; and

- Uphold ethical principles throughout all stages of the research, responding appropriately to unanticipated issues: please contact me if you need advice on ethical issues that arise.

Your approval code is: **FSREC 46** – 2017
I wish you success in your research.

Yours sincerely

Signature Removed

Prof Timm Hoffman
Chair: Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee

Cc: Phililе Mbatha (Supervisor)

Appendix D: Consent Form

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
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SOUTH AFRICA

RESEARCHER: Miss Ella-Kari Muhl
TELEPHONE: +27-82-850-5285
E-MAIL: mhlell004@myuct.ac.za
URL: http://www.egs.uct.ac.za/

Informed Voluntary Consent to Participate in Research Study

Project Title: Parks and people: An analysis of the perceptions surrounding the re-opening of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area (MPA).

Invitation to participate, and benefits: You are invited to participate in a Masters research project. The study aim is to understand the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the opening of the Tsitsikamma MPA. Understanding different views is critical to better planning and management that is broadly supportive and inclusive.

Procedures: During this study, you will be asked questions relating to your own perceptions, these are flexible, and you can choose how deeply you would like to answer them.

Risks: There are no harmful risks related to your participation in this study. You can request anonymity, but for the purpose of my analysis your interview will fall into a group of your choosing. These groups will be included in the results and analysis.

Disclaimer/Withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality: All information collected in this study will be kept confidential. For the purpose of this study, you will be placed in a group/category for analysis. You are encouraged to discuss which stakeholder group you fall into with the researcher, if you are concerned.

What signing this form means:

By signing this consent form, you agree to participate in this research study. The aim, procedures to be used, as well as the potential risks and benefits of your participation have been explained verbally to you in detail, using this form. Refusal to participate in or withdrawal from this study at any time will have no effect on you in any way. You are free to ask questions or request further information at any time during this research.

I agree to participate in this research (tick one box)

☐ Yes ☐ No

_____	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Date
_____Ella-Kari Muhl_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature of Researcher	Date