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CAN PROCESS FACILITATION RE-ROUTE ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT?

**Case studies in facilitating ecotourism planning in South Africa and
Madagascar.**

Mini-Dissertation

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'World-wide, development initiatives have been plagued by failure – often resulting in the intended beneficiaries (including the natural environment) being worse off than they were before the launching of the development initiative. At the heart of these failures lies the nature of the approach adopted by the proponents of development projects. A failed approach often lacks community consultation and involvement; inappropriate technological intervention; and a limited understanding of the complex interaction of local socio-economic, political and natural processes.'

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Executive Summary

Ecotourism¹ is a rapidly growing global phenomenon that has significant impacts on wilderness areas around the world (Honey 1999). Ecotourism projects that have shown to be successful in achieving sustainability² are however rare³, despite the hope and funding that continues to be invested into them⁴. In order to distribute the costs and benefits of ecotourism equitably among the role players⁵ (RPs) and mitigate negative social and environmental impacts, a different approach to ecotourism development is required.

Tourism development that focuses on meeting the needs of the tourist alone has proved to have long-term detrimental effects on the natural and social environments, especially in wilderness areas. Literature reflects evidence that this environmental degradation is directly linked to poverty (Kothari 1993, Ndegwa 1996, Chambers 1997, Nelson 1997). In order to preserve the natural environments of wilderness areas, ecotourism development projects must therefore focus on providing local people with an alternative livelihood strategy. Otherwise local people are yet again faced with limited options for survival and thus over-exploit the available natural resources, including those assets on which ecotourism development relies. For example, deforestation of tropical rainforests has led to tremendous loss of biodiversity, which is a cornerstone of ecotourism.

To combat poverty and environmental degradation, it is necessary for RPs involved in ecotourism development to realise the necessity for *authentic*

¹ Many definitions of ecotourism exist (see (Wallace 1996, Yale F&ES Bulletin Series Number 99 1996) for instance), but in general ecotourism refers to tourism activities that benefit the development of local people and the preservation of Nature.

² 'Sustainability' refers to all RPs receiving a negotiated benefit from ecotourism development. Inherent in ecotourism development are the costs attached to the tourism industry. Sustainability therefore refers to the mitigation and equitable distribution of social and environmental costs, in order to strive for the long-term benefits offered by the social, biophysical and economic sectors of environment (Fuggle 1998).

³ *The ecotourism equation* (Yale F&ES Bulletin Series Number 99 1996) highlights the track record of ecotourism projects.

⁴ Southern Africa, like many other regions in the developing world, offers valuable ecotourism opportunities. Ecotourism is thus often tagged onto larger development projects in order to contribute towards the economic sustainability and conservation of the natural environment. Yet such a *tag on* approach to ecotourism development may result in inappropriate intervention and project failure.

⁵ The role players (RPs) include all the individuals involved in the ecotourism development process, including communities, government officials, donors and private sector operators. The different RPs come from differing viewpoints and all have to fulfil their role in making the equitable ecotourism equation work.

*participation*⁶. Most RPs, including both local people and outsiders, lack sufficient understanding of authentic participation and access to basic environmental information and expertise. By providing access to such basic knowledge and expertise, a broader collective knowledge base can be formulated by authentic participation and planning adaptively⁷. Decision-making can therefore become more informed and strengthen the search for sustainable outcomes. The facilitation of access to this broader base of knowledge is thus necessary at all levels of interaction within the process of ecotourism development.

Ecotourism development provides opportunity for much learning at the interface of Western and indigenous (or local) knowledge bases in particular. The interface between these two bases of knowledge is evident when the ecotourist meets the local person for instance. Such encounters often resulting in confusion and misinterpretation⁸ between the parties. This leads to reinforcement of embedded power relations between local people and outsiders, often resulting in dislocated relations leading ultimately to dissent and disrespect⁹. Such relations drive a wedge between the two bases of knowledge, thus creating obstacles to the sharing of information and learning experiences.

Facilitation at this interface is thus essential to build relationships that will improve the flow of knowledge between RPs. Research and literature on facilitation is not common, and emerges from many bodies of literature. Community participation is an extensive body of literature in which process facilitation is an integral concept. This study touches on this body of literature, which is important in raising awareness of authentic participation in development. A comparative analysis of two case studies, one in South Africa and one in Madagascar, highlights the necessity of process facilitation as a group

⁶ Community participation can take on many forms ranging from communities being merely informed of ecotourism development to communities being in control of ecotourism development (Lane 1997). 'Authentic participation' refers to the type of participation in which local people have control and ownership of the ecotourism development process.

⁷ 'Adaptive planning' refers to planning with people where local people have control over "*agenda setting, resource allocation and controlling processes*" (Pretty 1997). In contrast top down planning most often excludes local people.

⁸ Local ecotourism guides play a key role in managing the interface between the ecotourist and the local person, providing access to knowledge to both ecotourists and local people. The role of ecotourist guides is therefore important for the development of responsible ecotourism.

⁹ "... *the Third World tourism industry will be threatened by many of the problems that have plagued other outward-orientated development strategies in the South during the post-war era. These problems include excessive foreign dependency contributing to a loss of local control over resources and substantial overseas leakage of tourism earnings; the lack of articulation between tourism enclaves and domestic economic sectors, producing low multiplier effects and spread effects; the reinforcement of neo-colonial patterns of socio-economic and spatial polarisation; environmental destruction, often involving non-renewable resources and foundation assets; and rising alienation among the local population of host communities due to the unequal distribution of the costs and benefits of tourism and the perceived loss of cultural identity and social control to outsiders*" (Brohman 1996:66)

effort among a diversity of individuals at all levels of society to spread information to other RPs.

If information is not shared, ecotourism most often leads to the unequal distribution of the costs and benefits attached to tourism development (Brohman 1996). The outsiders are most likely to receive the financial benefits while the local people must bear the long-term costs. Outsiders thus exploit local people, based on an unbalanced power relation. This is evident in many ecotourism destinations in the developing world, including the case studies. Sharing information thus contributes towards normalising power relations.

The study aims to explore process facilitation and focusses on three main objectives. These objectives include assessing the relations and institutional arrangements between RPs, assessing the flow of information within the networks and finally comparing the institutional arrangements and RPs for each case study. These aspects were studied in the Richtersveld region in north-western South Africa, well known for diamond mining. The historical trend of mining in South Africa has denied the local people access to financial benefits or development opportunities. The local economy is thus dependent on mining, which employs approximately half of the Richtersveld population. The diamond mines are scaling down as the non-renewable diamond stocks have become depleted. The region thus faces a rising issue of unemployment, which will place added pressure on the land. Alternative livelihood strategies therefore need to be developed in order to avoid the poverty trap and environmental degradation.

The second case study of process facilitation was conducted in the Masoala region in north-eastern Madagascar, focussing on the three main objectives mentioned. Local people face a similar scenario to the Richtersveld, as the local economy is also controlled by outside concerns that have no long-term interest in the region. Commercial logging, commercial fishing and tourism development currently bring benefit to a minority, while the majority of local people face limited access to the local economy. The long-term costs are however borne by the local people, who may have to face living in a degraded environment that can no longer support the rising population.

The findings of the study show that improved access and flow of information between RPs leads to more authentic participation and integration of ecotourism development into local development planning. Four lessons emerge from the study including:

1. A lack of government support of authentic participation in ecotourism development will impede the local development process by narrowing the funding possibilities and thus allowing current resource use patterns to continue contributing towards poverty and environmental degradation.

2. A lack of funding to the grassroots level relates directly to a lack of access to information at the grassroots level, resulting in local people being at the mercy of those who have information and the funding. This may lead to a lack of alternative livelihood options that may sustain local communities, leading to increasing dependence on natural resources to support a growing population.
3. Dislocated relations between role players provide an obstacle for authentic participation by severing the flow of information, thus hindering a collective search for sustainable projects, in which all parties gain their share of the benefits from the ecotourism industry.
4. Points of concentration in the participation network place increased importance on individual institutions to facilitate the spread of information. When such bodies experience a lack of resources, communication within networks may break down, impeding the development of responsible ecotourism. Knowledge will thus not be shared and power relations remain unbalanced. This provides a window of opportunity for unmanaged natural resources to be over-exploited by commercial interest groups wanting to meet global demands for raw materials and mass tourism products, for instance.

Process facilitation is an intangible and difficult to study. Conclusions drawn from this study suggest that effective process facilitation relies heavily on the spread of knowledge through sharing information throughout the overall development system of RPs (including communities, institutions, the private sector, donor agencies and government). Thus it should involve a common effort by many individuals searching for an alternative form of implementing authentic participation and human development. When properly facilitated, ecotourism can provide benefits to all RPs, and contribute towards the equitable distribution of the costs attached to the tourism industry. Ecotourism can thus remain a useful tool for responsible development, provided that knowledge is facilitated from the earliest steps of a project so that the needs of the various interest groups can be balanced in a sustainable manner.

1. Introduction to Responsible Ecotourism Development¹⁰

1.1 The burning issue in responsible ecotourism development

The growing ecotourism market is demanding new destinations that offer an authentic wilderness experience. Ecotourism projects that have been successful in providing alternative livelihood strategies and preserving the natural environment are however rare. Despite this knowledge, the growing ecotourism market continues to motivate development projects to adopt ecotourism as a viable option, in order to contribute towards economic sustainability. Unfortunately, the emphasis on economic sustainability often overrides the social and natural sustainability that are also key components of responsible ecotourism development.

If local people lack alternative livelihood options, they have no alternative but to make use of the available natural resources that may result in deleterious resource use patterns. The central issue is thus whether ecotourism can in fact be developed in a manner that is not detrimental to the natural and social environments that are unique to wilderness areas. Ecotourism development is thus faced with the challenge of providing alternative livelihood strategies to local people. This study focuses on the facilitation of information transfer in meeting this challenge.

1.2 Whose needs must be met through responsible ecotourism development?

In the ecotourism industry, like in other branches of tourism, the client pays for a service. It is therefore accepted that the client's needs must be met. This line of thinking results from a market driven approach to tourism development, in which emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of the tourist alone are met. This is however problematic, as it focuses solely on the economic aspect of development, and ignores the value and impacts to the natural and social environment. The result is usually tourism development focussing on short-term economic gain, which leads to the destruction of the natural and social environment in the long-term¹¹.

¹⁰ Responsible ecotourism development refers to ecotourism development that ensues in a framework of social, natural and economic sustainability. Such development is not possible without the local people of the host community playing an integral role in controlling and managing ecotourism development (Drake 1991, Lane 1995).

¹¹ Nosy Be and Ile St. Marie are two examples of mass tourism destinations in Madagascar that has resulted in local people suffering the long-term costs of tourism development. Both destinations host a large number of hotels that are mostly foreign owned. These hotels and the guests that are attracted have a significant impact on the local natural and social environment. The result of a low spread in the tourism earnings has denied local people the opportunity to

Many ecotourism projects continue to share the unfortunate attribute that the benefits accrue to a minority of outsiders, while the local people suffer the long-term social and environmental costs (France 1997).

An alternative approach to ecotourism development must therefore be formulated that will reconcile the environmental¹² costs and benefits attached to ecotourism development. "*Local participation is a necessary component of sustainable development generally and ecotourism specifically.*" (Drake 1991:132). Indications thus show that for development projects to be sustainable, the needs of local people must be incorporated through their participation. This immediately highlights a paradox, as ecotourism development has historically focussed on the needs of the tourist.

It is therefore necessary to consider approaches through which the needs of local people and ecotourists can be reconciled in order to contribute towards environmental preservation. Both of them have much to gain: The ecotourist is getting an unforgettable experience and the local person acquires much needed financial benefit. The challenge is to balance the equation so that ecotourism can be sustainable by conferring advantages to both sides over a long period of time. At the heart of achieving this balance lies a thorough understanding of how the industry works, its costs and benefits, and an equitable transfer of information in both directions so that power relations can be balanced.

access the local tourism economy, and thus limited their livelihood to exploiting natural resources. The over-exploitation of resources has resulted in local people having to explore other options, like sex tourism, drug peddling and theft. The type of tourism development on Nosy Be and Ile St. Marie has thus resulted in significant negative impacts on the lives of those who receive little benefit from the tourism industry as a whole.

¹² Environment refers to the holistic definition, which includes the social, natural and economic environments. The political environment, which is fundamental to the success of sustainable development efforts can be viewed as a subset of the social environment.

2. The Role of Knowledge

2.1 What is lacking for responsible ecotourism development?

The question arises whether those who engage in ecotourism development are knowledgeable of the possible negative impacts to the natural and social environment. This includes not only the proponents of the development project, but all role players (RPs) including hotel owners, ecotourism operators and ecotourists for example. Most often these RPs lack sufficient access to information and activities driven by financial gain only inevitably contribute to the over-exploitation of local resources.

Despite the knowledge that is available, sufficient access to information is thus missing from the practice of ecotourism development. Current approaches to ecotourism development replicate mistakes that have been made in the past. The dominant perception that currently drives this form of development practice is that 'outsiders know better'. *"Lack of community participation in projects can therefore be the result of professionals' assuming the role of knowledgeable specialists who do not take the users' views into account because users do not 'know enough' to make decisions"* (Eyben 1995:197). Clearly such a lopsided perception of knowledge cannot contribute towards achieving sustainability, as it has resulted in an ever-widening poverty gap and increased environmental degradation. It thus remains necessary to facilitate access to information in order that the process of ecotourism development can take the views and knowledge of all RPs into account.

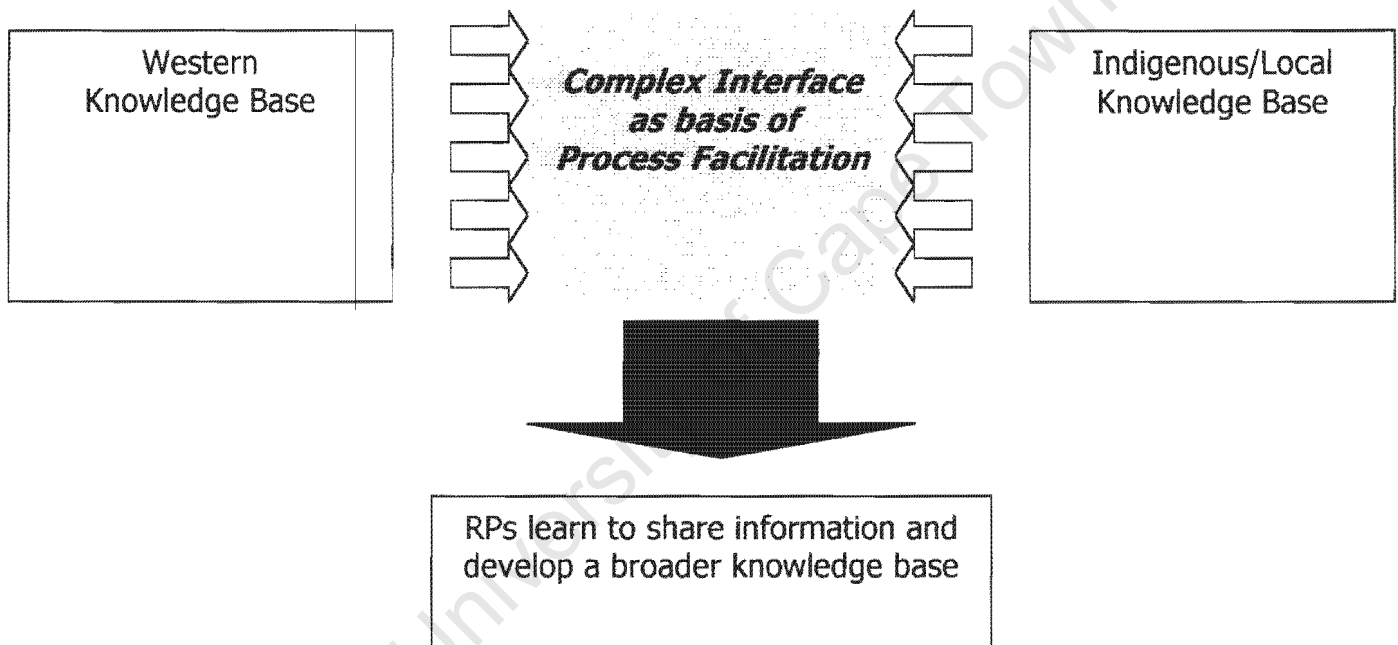
A strong knowledge base can contribute towards sustainability through strengthening environmental knowledge and mitigating the negative environmental impacts of ecotourism development. A weak knowledge base is however dangerous, as actions conducted with the best intentions can be detrimental to local people and the environment¹³. Knowledge is therefore like any tool, and can either be put to good or bad use. The aim of process facilitation should be to explore ways in which collective knowledge can be put to use to fulfil a local need, most often an alternative livelihood, and thus preserve biodiversity.

¹³ The evidence of development driven by economics alone can be found on the ground, and in an extensive body of literature documenting the impacts of post-war interventions over the last four decades. A good example of how knowledge is necessary for responsible tourism development was documented in Mozambique, "... where the local developer was bulldozing the primary dune in order to improve access to the beach from his resort. He was completely unaware of the impact of his actions to the natural environment. Once he was made aware of his actions, he regretted not knowing this before he had started" (Odendaal pers. com. November 1999, Grange and Odendaal 1999)

2.2 What is a broader knowledge base?

Western and indigenous (or local) knowledge bases interact within a complex and dynamic interface. Process facilitation can bring RPs to new heights of understanding of these broader complexities involved in ecotourism development¹⁴. A simple diagram illustrates the role of facilitation within the complex interface existing between Western and indigenous (or local) knowledge. Through engaging in this process of learning and adaptive planning¹⁵, RPs can acquire skills that will contribute towards the sharing of information, the broadening of a collective knowledge base and steer development towards self-reliant outcomes.

Figure 1: Western and Indigenous-Local Knowledge Bases interact within a Complex Interface.



A broader knowledge base draws from both past experience and current information, global and local knowledge, as illustrated above by the merging of

¹⁴ For instance, ecotourism development projects involve a number of RPs from national, provincial and local government. Other RPs include funders, private sector operators and community organisations. Furthermore, tourism development is known to be multi-sectoral in nature, bringing primary, secondary and tertiary benefits and costs (France (ed.) 1997). It is within the complex system that binds these RPs that knowledge must be shared.

¹⁵ "Adaptive planning thus implies that local people participate in both agenda setting and resource allocation and controlling processes. In order for this to be achieved the acquisition of knowledge must occur through use of an improved compendium of alternative planning approaches and systems of inquiry" (Pretty 1997:158).

Western and indigenous knowledge. This interface can occur at all levels of society¹⁶.

Access to information can inform decision-makers, tourism planners, managers and local communities on how to modify future intervention drawing from the mistakes learnt from the past. This authentic participation is necessary in order to adapt and learn to innovate solutions to the increased complexity of the modern world.

The increased complexity is a result of many processes that are often concurrent. The current form of governance in South Africa is to devolve development and environmental responsibility to the local level. This is in line with the new policies formulated in South Africa since 1994. This has created much *action space*¹⁷ at the local level, as the change in governance structures has left the local people confused, with more responsibility and a lack of access to even the most basic knowledge and expertise. The general awareness of the new forms of governance in South Africa is generally low¹⁸ and has created a window of need to approach development and conservation from a fresh perspective. But this window has also opened up space to exploit local people, who generally remain ignorant of macro development processes. In Madagascar a similar lack of knowledge of ecotourism development exists among at the local level. Outsiders who have access to such knowledge therefore take the opportunity to cash in on emerging ecotourism development opportunities¹⁹ and over-exploit local resources.

Other factors contributing to the increase in complexity in the advancement of technology that can now connect people across the world more efficiently than ever before. The global village allows more people to produce information faster than has ever been possible on the Planet. The increasing population size has placed more strain on non-renewable resources, thus contributing to the rise in global conflict. The pace of change that is now faster than ever before in recorded history fuels this conflict. In the same manner local people have a lack of access to utilise technology, which opens the door to exploitation by outsiders.

¹⁶ The interface between Western and local knowledge is particularly evident when an ecotourist meets a person from the local community. The interaction often leaves both in a state of confusion after an intense moment of misinterpretation of purpose and intentions.

¹⁷ 'Action space' refers to the opportunities that have become available in the new democracy of South Africa (Barbeton 1998).

¹⁸ Many poor South Africans have emerged from an inadequate educational system, and thus lack the knowledge of even their most basic rights as embedded in the 1994 Constitution.

¹⁹ Co-ventures are popular management arrangements between private sector operators and local people. Often however, due to the differing economies of scale, local people end up settling for a minority share of the benefits, while the majority share and thus control resides with the outsider or private sector operator.

A way must be found to use the vast amount of knowledge currently available on the planet effectively to combat poverty and environmental degradation. In order to achieve this, role-players from government to local people and including practitioners must be bound together in an effort to share their knowledge in order that it may be applied where and when it is appropriate and relevant. Information sharing therefore lies at the heart of process facilitation in tourism development. Inherent in information sharing is the participation of all RPs, particularly the local communities whose livelihoods are tied closely to the land and ecotourism.

2.3 What does the literature have to say about participation?

Arnstein identifies the essence of the hidden paradox in participation that still pervades ecotourism development to this day. *"There is a critical difference between going through empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process. ...the fundamental point that participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit"* (Arnstein 1969:216). The distribution of such power does imply a transformation on the part of those who currently hold onto power. In a similar manner, local people must be prepared to take on responsibility and control of local development. The necessity of this transformation and balance of power is however necessary to promote true progress. *"True progress toward an ecologically sound environment and a socially just culture will be initially expensive in both money and effort, but in the end not only will be mandated by shifting public values but also will be progressively less expensive over time. The longer we wait, however, the more disastrous becomes the environmental condition and the more expensive and difficult become the necessary social changes"* (Maser 1996:xv).

This illustrates clearly that development lies in the process of transformation within individuals and communities in society. *"Development is a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilise and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations"* (Korten 1990:67 in CDRA 93/94).

It is thus necessary to facilitate the spread of information among RPs in the ecotourism development process in order to improve governance²⁰ and environmental management. For this process to occur, it is necessary for people

²⁰ Good governance is a concept hotly debated in the current literature. However, in ecotourism development, 'good governance' is the ability of the society to foresee emerging obstacles and opportunities, and plan overcome and utilises then optimally (Nelson 1995).

to be given the opportunity to learn, and through interacting with other people on an equal basis, develop a broader collective pool of knowledge. Such participation in development is however rare (Chambers 1997, Kothari 1993, Pretty 1997).

Community participation has been categorised into four levels, ranging from being informed²¹ to initiating action (Lane 1997:183). *Informing* refers to a process where the control resides with an outside control agency, and local people are merely informed about projects and programs. *Consultation* refers to a process where the knowledge of local people is recognised, and the outside control agency requests advice. The decision making power still resides within the outside agency. *Decision-making* participation refers to the process where local people have some control, but the ultimate power may still reside within the outside agency. In the form of participation where local people *initiate action* the power to control process resides within local people.

Authentic participation therefore refers to participation where local people are in control over local resources and the local development process. Such participation is conducive to the process of transformation and strengthening of civil society to improve governance and address the global issue of rising poverty and environmental degradation.

In order to address poverty and environmental degradation with any amount of seriousness, it is thus necessary to facilitate processes of authentic participation that spread information and create alternative livelihood opportunities for those who impact heavily on biodiversity.

2.4 What does the literature have to say about process facilitation?

The literature specifically on facilitating process is rather sparse and scattered. The topic is however addressed indirectly in literature dealing with mediation, conflict resolution, organisational development and public/community participation. For effective adaptive planning of ecotourism, Jamal and Getz propose a three-stage model through which collaboration in community-based tourism can develop (1995). The three stages include *problem-setting*, *direction-setting* and *implementation*. The first stage involves the RPs setting the problem for themselves, as opposed to an outside expert explaining to them. The second stage involves all RPs agreeing on a direction along which to proceed, and the

²¹ At the very heart of sharing information lies an inherent problem that information derived from a scientific knowledge base has little meaning to a local person for instance, Innovative techniques must therefore be adopted in order that information can be shared among RPs in a manner that meaning is attached to information as it flows in both directions.

third stage involves the implementation²². Reed goes further to explain that "*power imbalances and legitimacy issues related to the stakeholders can inhibit both the initiation and success of a collaboration*" (1995:190-191 in 1997:569). The conclusion drawn is thus that power imbalances must be normalised in order for effective collaboration or adaptive planning to occur. Process facilitation is thus a key tool in balancing power relations between RPs.

Other literature on process facilitation takes on an individualistic perspective and focuses on the facilitator as an individual change agent. The CDRA adopts this view of facilitation when proposing a five-stage process of facilitating transformation of organisations (1998/1999). The five stages include *establishing relationships* with individuals, *gaining understanding* of the context, *facilitating transformation*, *grounding and supporting implementation* and *review*. This literature clearly deals with inter and intra personal relations and growth.

A six-stage process of facilitation is developed throughout the course of the study and draws from literature and observation in the field. This process is described in the following section, and leads to an audit of the development facilitators in the case studies. This audit is detailed in later sections of this document.

2.5 Facilitating towards the ideal ecotourism development process

The approach to process facilitation that has been studied aims to achieve the following ideal process:

Facilitating towards the Ideal Process

The *ideal process* involves trustworthy and respectful relations with RPs based on balanced power relations. This is necessary for RPs to collaborate at all levels of the development hierarchy, and keep local people well informed in order to build knowledge at all levels of society. All RPs should be aware of the need to address conflict within this transformational process of balancing embedded power relations, in order that decision makers are encouraged to devolve control and responsibility. Integrated planning needs to be initially driven from the ground and lock other RPs into the process according to criteria set at the local level. Such integrated planning is only possible through consistent communication and access to information at all levels of environmental governance, planning and management.

²² This three-stage process is of immense value when used alongside logical framework analysis (LFA). This has been used in each of the case studies in order to form and guide new ecotourism development bodies. Vision and mission statements, along with the main objective, key aims and specific tasks have been formulated with such bodies in each of the regions.

The flow of knowledge among RPs has been facilitated in each of the case studies through following a conceptual six-stage process. Process facilitation can be described through considering the purpose of each of the six stages. These are summarised as follows:

Table 1: The six stages of purpose in process facilitation

| Stage | Purpose |
|---|--|
| 1. Facilitate relationships between RPs | Relationships are necessary to realise change in development, which is not possible without a dedicated and focussed effort by a large group of individuals within a diversity of societal organisation. |
| 2. Facilitate awareness and understanding | Awareness is necessary in order that people at all levels of development can understand the reality of global poverty and environmental degradation. |
| 3. Facilitate transformation | Poverty alleviation and environmental preservation will only be realised if there is a gradual change in approaches to development. |
| 4. Plan for the future | Current actions can have a long-term detrimental effect on ecological and social systems, which can be avoided through integrated planning focussing on the distant future. |
| 5. Support implementation | When new ways of implementing development projects are tried, it is expected that RPs will face new problems. To avoid mistakes made previously, implementation should be well informed and guided by visions, objectives and measurable aims. |
| 6. Review and distribute information | New approaches to implementing development are especially critical to monitor and learn from experience that has been gained. Such knowledge should be shared to inform other RPs of the possibilities of mistakes that can be avoided and obstacles overcome. |

These steps of process facilitation have been derived from the facilitation literature, as well as interaction with facilitators and personal experience in the field. These steps are by no means sequential, and can be entered and exited at any level, including skipping a few if necessary. These steps do however provide a conceptual framework by which to pose questions and evaluate the role of the facilitator in spreading information among RPs. This process of facilitation forms the bases of the audit conducted in section 5.2.

3. A simple proposition for testing the role of information sharing in the ecotourism development process

In the previous section the case was made that information sharing is vital for ecotourism development to be effective in achieving the aims of meeting local needs and preserving the environment. Through sharing information, RPs on all sides will be in a stronger position to develop an industry that has self-reliant and ecotourism projects that are sustainable.

The question thus remains as to how information sharing in the facilitation process can be tested. Bear in mind that information is a neutral concept that has many different origins. Information can for instance be derived from either Western or local knowledge bases, as has been illustrated.

Hence a simple proposition is posed as an entry point into investigating process facilitation making use of knowledge gained from the literature survey and the case studies.

Proposition

By facilitating the sharing of information, ecotourism development can be re-routed towards RPs sharing a common vision of balanced power relations and achieving self-reliant outcomes and sustainable projects.

If the access to this information is poorly facilitated, ecotourism projects run the danger of failing to achieve collaboration between role-players and thus may lose the opportunity to be a tool in addressing poverty and environmental degradation.

Two case studies in the Richtersveld region in South Africa and the Masoala region in Madagascar are developing ecotourism destinations and provide a context to explore the proposition stated above. The case studies are introduced in the following section.

4. Introduction to the Case Studies

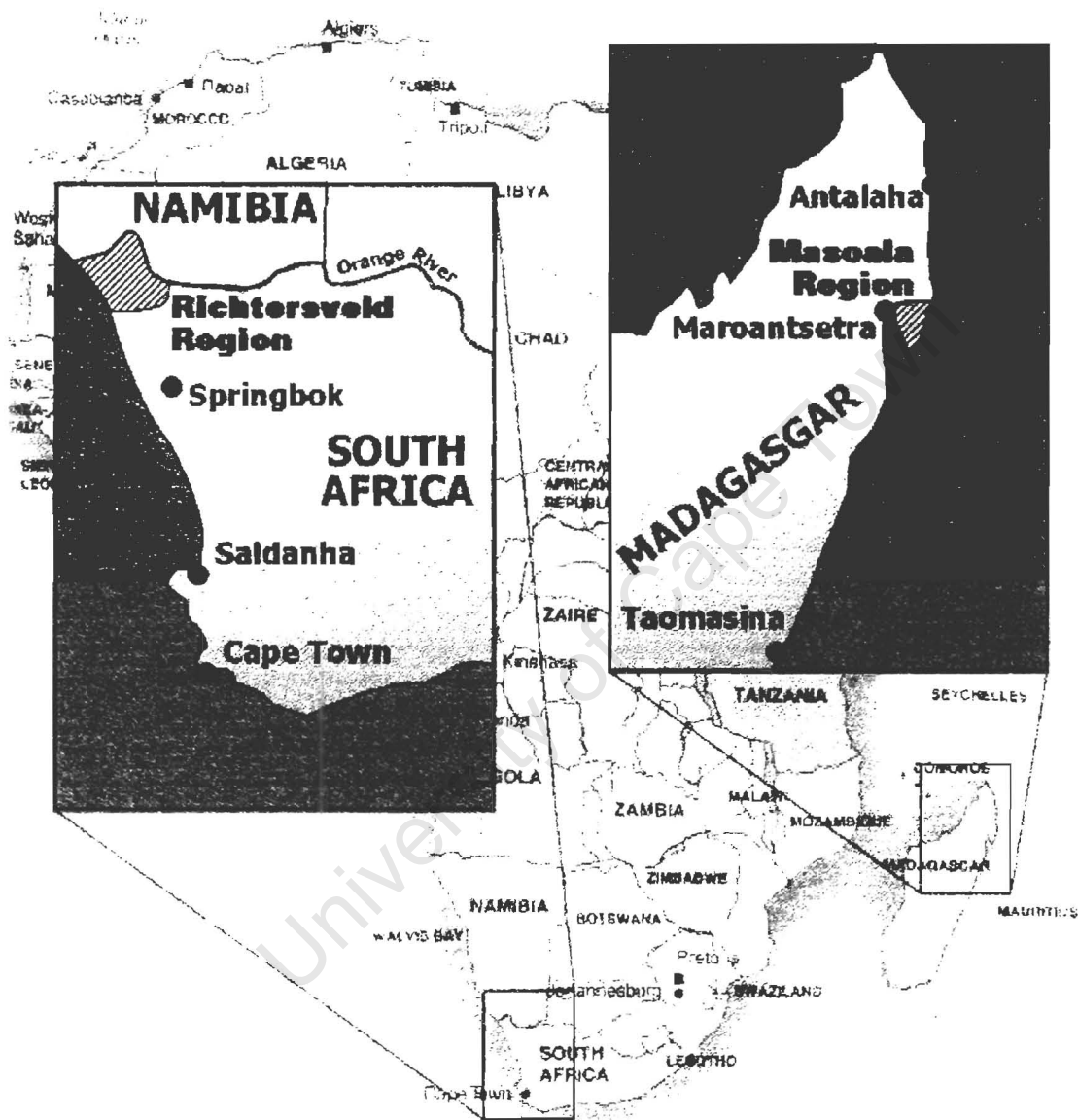
4.1 A brief description of the Richtersveld region in South Africa

The Richtersveld region is located in the north-western corner of South Africa, lying along the Atlantic coast and below the Orange river. Over two thousand years ago indigenous Nama people inhabited the banks of the Orange River. In 1948 the 'Bosluis Basters' moved into the Richtersveld, escaping from the scourge of the apartheid elsewhere. The area was then declared under the apartheid government to a 'coloured' reserve, conferring communal access to the land. The diamond mining industry is the dominant economic sector and is threatened by the possible depletion of diamonds. This means that several thousand people face losing their employment in the short to medium term. The region only receives 50mm of rain per annum, so agricultural development is not a good possibility. The Orange River has a reliable source of water, yet this river already has two major dams upstream, and the estuary at the mouth is already highly degraded. Agricultural development will thus have to focus on water saving techniques, which are capital intensive and are questionable, as far as sustainability is concerned. Mari-culture is a good possibility, as this stretch of the South African coast remains the most fertile in the world. Successful mari-culture operations already exist along a similar coastline in Chile. Ecotourism, which is a growing industry, is another good development option. Community-based ecotourism is therefore being developed along with other possibilities, to avoid the looming condition of abject poverty and land degradation.

4.2 A brief description of the Masoala region in Madagascar

The Masoala region lies in the North-eastern corner of Madagascar spanning the area around the Masoala peninsula. The Betsimisaraka people inhabit and have traditional ownership of arable land on the Masoala peninsula to farm rice, cattle and other cash crops. The rainforest on the Masoala peninsula is the largest remaining wilderness area in Madagascar and has been declared a national protected area. The region has a diversity of natural resources that fetch varying prices according to the demand of the global economy. Although the isolation of the region has left it in a near pristine state, it also protects commercial operations from over-exploiting natural and human resources. Currently the logging of tropical hardwoods and traditional tavy agriculture has a tremendous impact on the integrity of the tropical ecosystem. The forest is being destroyed; the shallow tropical soils are being washed into the lagoons; and silt and fishermen/women are destroying the coral systems. These valuable natural assets have however attracted many tourists to the region. Responsible ecotourism development is thus essential if the people of the region are to be

left with a healthy environment and any hope in the future. Yet ecotourism development is *ad hoc* and controlled by a minority of elite. The local people thus face the reality of losing access to the growing tourism industry and suffering long-term environmental costs attached to unplanned development.



Map 1: The Richtersveld region in South Africa and Masoala region in Madagascar (not drawn to scale)

4.3 Why the Richtersveld region and Masoala region are relevant case studies

The case studies in the Richtersveld region in South Africa and the Masoala region in Madagascar have been chosen for the similarities that occur in each area.

- Both have a high biodiversity and endemism. The tropical rainforests and coral reefs in Masoala are highly productive systems and host some of the highest biodiversity in Madagascar. The Richtersveld region is the highest diversity mountain desert in the world, and hosts a spectacular selection of succulent plants.
- Unsustainable utilisation of resources occurs in both regions in the form of surface diamond mining and logging respectively. The pressure on the land is therefore increasing with the increase in local population who lack livelihood options alternative to natural resource utilisation.
- Poverty is increasing in both these rural regions, related directly to unemployment and land degradation.
- Ecotourism is viewed by both the governments of South Africa and Madagascar as growing sector of the national economy, and thus place much hope is placed in drawing revenue from the industry.
- A common group of development facilitators has been active for a number of years in each of the regions.
- Both destinations are ecotourism destinations that are in the initial stages of development.

The case studies further inform a valuable comparison for two specific reasons:

- A common group of development facilitators²³ has been active in each region for a number of years, and
- The ecotourism development process in each of the regions is emerging from development frameworks that remain socio-politically isolated from one another.

²³ Eco-Africa has been active with research and assisting in planning and ecotourism development in both the regions for a number of years.

A comparative assessment can highlight how local development processes are unique to a specific context, dependant on a number of external socio-economic, political and natural processes.

4.4 Study method

The ecotourism development process was observed in each region for a period of fourteen months that included seven months of fieldwork. During this fieldwork the roles and relationships between RPs was observed, in order to establish the institutional configurations of the local ecotourism industry. The remainder of the study period included continual communication with key individuals including international funders and NGOs, government officials, private sector operators, local NGOs, community based organisations and local people, including emerging entrepreneurs. The author had direct contact with RPs from all these levels on institutions. These observations were strengthened by a multi-sectoral literature survey, including literature on organisational capacity building, community participation, mediation, planning, conflict resolution, development theory, environmental ethics and adult education.

4.5 Objectives of the study

The study has the following three objectives:

1. The study assumed that responsible ecotourism development would involve a wide range of RPs. It was therefore necessary to assess who all the key RPs in responsible ecotourism development were in each case, and position them in relation to one another.
2. A case has been made that for responsible ecotourism to occur, information should be shared between all RPs in order that a collective base of common knowledge can be formulated. Many RPs are involved in the responsible development of ecotourism, and it was attempted to assess the transfer of information through process facilitation.
3. The final objective was to compare the processes that have been followed in the two case studies thus far to gain insight on the process of facilitation and the responsible development of ecotourism.

Achieving these main objectives was limited by a number of factors, detailed in section 4.6.

It is hoped that this study will shed light on the degree of responsible ecotourism development achieved in each case, and provide insight into the way forward.

4.6 Limitations to the study

Many limitations were inherent in this study. Among the obvious limitations are that the development process is ongoing.

1. Both destinations feature ecotourism development frameworks in the infant stages of formulation.
2. Many other livelihood processes exist in each region, like mining for instance. Some of these processes are contrary to ecotourism development, while others may assist. It was thus very difficult to determine the cause and effect of events within ecotourism development, which is inextricably linked to other livelihood options.
3. The flow of knowledge is intangible and difficult to assess or measure in units. The effectiveness of knowledge distribution also depends on many other factors, including appropriate use of media and the readiness of local people to assimilate outside knowledge into their knowledge bank.
4. Limited documentation on the history of each of the regions exists.
5. In order to quantify a study of this nature, inherently implies simplifications and assumptions that cannot take all factors into account. The assessments carried out in this study are therefore aimed to be more qualitative and relative, than quantitative.

Ecotourism development is an ongoing process intertwined into the evolving development process among local people. Ecotourism development is in the infancy stage in both case studies. This study is therefore limited, in that no 'end result' has materialised within the 14-month observation period. In order to observe more concrete results, the study will have to be extended to a number of years.

The flow of knowledge is intangible and thus difficult to measure or monitor. The monitoring of the spread of information is further complicated by the nature of the local context, which is a fabric of intertwined socio-economic, political and natural processes. Knowledge itself is a vague concept that has a differing reality to each person. What knowledge base has the most wisdom for instance. Information emerging from Western knowledge and local knowledge can differ significantly as it relates to often-contradictory philosophies and realities (Chambers 1997).

Limited documentation of the development history exists for each of the case study regions. The available information resides in the oral history of each area. As is well known with the documentation of oral history, much room is left open for individual interpretation and differing accounts of historical events.

The nature of process facilitation is itself intangible and very much dependent on individual approach and the personal philosophy of the facilitator. Taking all these limitations into account, the approach to the study was therefore to observe relations between RPs in both development processes within the context of ecotourism development.

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5. Assessing the role of Process Facilitation in Spreading Information in each of the Case Studies

5.1 A comparative institutional network assessment for ecotourism planning in the Richtersveld and Masoala regions

It has been debated that information sharing is vital to the responsible development of ecotourism. In order for information sharing to occur between RPs, it is necessary to facilitate both access to information and the building of relationships. These two components of process facilitation are assessed for each of the case studies through conducting an institutional network assessment. The institutions involved in ecotourism development in each region are assessed in their effectiveness to share information with other role players. This part of the institutional network assessment identifies obstacles that impede the flow of information between role players. In order to visualise these flows of information, a participation network illustrates the linkages within a network diagram in each case. The institutions have been categorised according to four levels of institutions involved in ecotourism development, including international NGOs/funding agencies, government structures, private sector and local community. A comparative assessment between the two networks highlights strengths and weaknesses for information flow within each of the networks. This institutional assessment identifies what obstacles impede the effective facilitation of access to information within the ecotourism development processes in each case study.

5.1.1 Institutional assessment of ecotourism planning in the Richtersveld region in South Africa

The RPs in the Richtersveld region are described in the following tables in terms of their effectiveness in acting as bodies of spreading information among other RPs in the ecotourism development process. Table 2 describes the role of each institution in spreading information.

The institutions described are all involved in responsible ecotourism development in the Richtersveld region. The actions of the institutions were observed and relationships noted focussing how each institution spreads information into the participation network, described later. An objective assessment of whether the institution is effective or ineffective is made, in order to reveal if the spread of information is hindered by obstacles, which have been identified.

Table 2: Institutional Assessment of RPs involved in Ecotourism Development in the Richtersveld region

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|---|---|--|
| <p><i>Northern Namaqualand Tourism Task Group (NNTTG)</i></p> | <p>The <i>Northern Namaqualand Tourism Task Group (NNTTG)</i> was formed as an interim body to initiate and guide tourism development in the Richtersveld at the grassroots level. The aim of this institution was to spread information and build capacity of local people. The NNTTG has spear headed tourism development in the region, and formed vital links between the four villages in the Richtersveld. Tourism development is now active in all the four towns of Eksteenfontein, Kuboes, Lekkersing and Sanddrift. This institution was successful in holding regular monthly meetings to communicate and spread information to the all village representatives in the Richtersveld.</p> | <p>Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs</p> |
| <p><i>Eksteenfontein Women's Association (EWA)</i></p> | <p>The <i>Eksteenfontein Women's Association (EWA)</i> was proactive and insightful in developing a guesthouse in Eksteenfontein, prior to the development of the NNTTG. The women in this group run an authentic guesthouse, and have become actively involved (along with the LDF) in the development of another guesthouse and environmental education centre within the proposed Rooiberg community conservancy²⁴. This institution is a private guesthouse operator, and does not spread information as one of its activities. This group of women does however have a wealth of knowledge of providing a tourist service and can share this with other RPs.</p> | <p>Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve</p> <p>Obstacle: Lack of opportunity</p> |

²⁴ The Rooiberg community conservancy is a tentative name for a concept to apply in an area that will most likely be developed into a communal conservancy or multiple use area. The Rooiberg area is one of the biodiversity hotspots in the region that is tentatively listed as a World Heritage Site. This project is in the process of being planned by the some local people.

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Rooiberg Committee</i> | The <i>Rooiberg Committee</i> is an amalgamation of local people from the EWA and LDF. This committee is currently developing the Rooiberg conservancy concept, that is being hindered by the approval of funding by national government in the Department of Environmental and Tourism (DEAT) ²⁵ . This committee is responsible for the development of the Rooiberg guesthouse, environmental education centre and conservancy. The collaboration of individuals on this body improves the sharing of information in making a success operation of the recently completed Rooiberg guesthouse, contributing towards the current wealth of knowledge. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Lack opportunity |
| <i>Kuboes School</i> | The <i>Kuboes School</i> is involved in monitoring biodiversity of the endangered <i>Aloe palansii</i> located on a hill within a biodiversity 'hotspot' within the Richtersveld region. The school has interacted with teachers from the USA, and is busy corresponding with students in the USA, among a few other environmental projects. The flow of information between the teachers and students can be facilitated through exchange visits, dependant on funding. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information Possibility to improve Obstacle: Regular interaction and funding |
| <i>South-North Tourism Route Interim Task Group (ITG)</i> | The <i>South-North Tourism Route Interim Task Group (ITG)</i> has been formed to establish an association of operators interested in responsible tourism development along the S-N tourism route between Cape Town and Windhoek in Namibia. The interim body will establish an association to direct and initiate tourism development amongst communities in the western and north-western regions of South Africa. Linkages with similar initiatives across the border in Namibia have already been established. This association is to be well linked with other regional and national tourism institutions, as well as global markets, and aims to network and share information among members along the S-N route. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Access to funding |
| <i>Local Development Forums (LDFs)</i> | The <i>Local Development Forums (LDFs)</i> can be described as the footsole of government. These forums are responsible with local development in all sectors of the economy. The forums experience a lack of access to relevant information and experience regarding responsible development of ecotourism. The bodies are institutionally weak and lack access to resources, but have strong linkages into the local community. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Lack resources and capacity |

²⁵ The PDFA GEF proposal was submitted to the DEAT 24 months prior to February 2000. The approval for funding has been delayed due to reshuffling of the national ministry. This is delaying development in the Richtersveld region.

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Local Transitional Council (LTC)</i> | The <i>Local Transitional Council (LTC)</i> is responsible for the governance of the Richtersveld region. This council experiences a lack of access to information regarding integrated development. The Integrated Development Process (IDP) was initiated in January 2000, in response to preparing regional plans that have been legislated in concurrence to the reduction in municipal areas in South Africa. The IDP is a tool designed for authentic participation of local communities. The IDP, once funded, will fulfil a vital function in spreading information to other RPs in the Richtersveld region. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Obstacle: Lack resources and capacity |
| <i>Northern Cape Department of Environment (NCDE)</i> | The <i>Northern Cape Department of Environment (NCDE)</i> is responsible to monitor and regulate activities impacting on the environment within the province. This department currently suffers a lack of resources. The support of this provincial department is thus essential in order that strong linkages can be developed between provincial and local government structures to aid monitoring, regulation and flow of information with local development initiatives. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Lack resources and capacity |
| <i>Department of Environmental and Tourism (DEAT)</i> | The <i>Department of Environmental and Tourism (DEAT)</i> as a national government ministry is responsible for formulating environmental legislation that is conducive to authentic participation. The ANC government has been effective in rewriting South African legislation since 1994. The South African legislation is now the most progressive in the world regarding the focus on sustainable development. The current legislation provides the necessary guidance for sustainable development, but is inaccessible at the local level, due to a lack of access and understanding of legal frameworks. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Lack resources and capacity to translate policy to the ground |
| <i>South African National Parks Board (SANP)</i> | <i>South African National Parks Board (SANP)</i> is under a contractual agreement with the Richtersveld people to lease the Richtersveld National Park (RNP) ²⁶ as a protected area. According to local people, the management of this park is not successful, and a management plan has yet to be drawn up 7 years after the inception of the park. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs Potential to improve Obstacle: Problematic co-management structure |

²⁶ The social ecology function of the RNP serves as a link to local communities, as well as the joint management board that had been established on the co-management model.

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|--|--|--|
| <i>TRANSFORM, World Bank, Global Environment Fund (GEF), NORAD and DANSED, GTZ and IDT</i> | <i>TRANSFORM, World Bank, Global Environment Fund (GEF), NORAD and DANSED, GTZ and Independent Development Trust (IDT) are all funding agencies supporting local development of ecotourism in one or another direct or indirect form. Without funding, authentic participation will simply not be possible. The World Bank has funded a distance learning course for coastal zone management that aims to provide access to information relevant and necessary at the local level. NORAD has approved funding that will be used to improve access to information regarding the development of ecotourism as an alternative livelihood option for local people.</i> | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs |
| <i>Greendevlopment Foundation and Connected Cultures</i> | <i>Greendevlopment Foundation and Connected Cultures are involved in ecotourism marketing and cultural exchange programs with the NNTTG and the Kuboes School. The interaction between these NGOs and local people has been fairly limited, despite the potential that exists. This potential can be realised through securing funding.</i> | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs |
| <i>ALEKKOR Diamond Mine</i> | <i>ALEKKOR Diamond Mine is a parastatal organisation that currently implementing the decommissioning of its diamond mining activities. A large number of employees thus face losing their jobs, and the mine has lacked any form of post-mining development. Relations between ALEKKOR and the Richtersveld people are strained, evident in land claims currently under consideration on the diamond areas by the Richtersveld people. Very little flow of information currently exists between ALEKKOR and other RPs in the region. The mining activities are detrimental to ecotourism activities.</i> | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Obstacle: Dislocated relations with Richtersveld people |
| <i>TRASHEX Diamond Mines</i> | <i>TRASHEX Diamond Mines is a private diamond mining company that leases the rights to mine diamonds from the Sanddrift community. Due to embedded relations between the mine and local people, relations are strained to say the very least, and little flow of information or co-operation exists between TRANSHEX and the local people. The mining activities are detrimental to ecotourism activities.</i> | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs Obstacle: Dislocated relations with Richtersveld people |

5.1.2 Institutional network assessment of ecotourism planning in the Masoala region in Madagascar

The RPs in the Masoala region are described in the following tables in terms of their effectiveness in acting as bodies of spreading information among other RPs in the ecotourism development process. Table 3 describes the role of each institution in spreading information follow.

The institutions described are all involved in responsible ecotourism development in the Richtersveld region. The actions of the institutions were observed and relationships noted focussing how each institution spreads information into the participation network, described later. An objective assessment of whether the institution is effective or ineffective is made, in order to reveal if the spread of information is hindered by obstacles, which have been identified.

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Table 3: Institutional Assessment of RPs involved in Ecotourism Development in the Masoala region

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Teachers Association and Youth Group</i> | The <i>Teachers Association and Youth Group</i> have worked collaboratively and produced environmental education materials in close co-operation with the local NGO Feon'ny Ala (FA). These resources are being used as local environmental education resources, as well as being exchanged with school students in the USA as part of a cultural exchange through Connected Cultures in Connecticut. This link provides valuable exchange of information teachers and youth in Madagascar and the USA. | <p>Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs</p> <p>Obstacle: Lack of funding</p> |
| <i>University of Toamasina</i> | The <i>University of Toamasina</i> has recently established a Masters course in Environmental Resource Management. This Department is collaborating with FA to undertake study tours to the Masoala region, and become involved in projects that can meet local needs and provide access to knowledge at the grassroots level. | <p>Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other RPs</p> <p>Obstacle: Contact still to be made</p> |
| <i>Feon'ny Ala (FA)</i> | <i>Feon'ny Ala (FA)</i> is a grassroots NGO that has formalised programs in environmental education and ecotourism development in the Masoala region. The NGO has struggled to grow, yet managed to conduct many environmental education projects and fieldtrips over the past few years. The NGO has recently been awarded a small grant for the IUCN Rainforest Program to work with teachers and students and produce environmental education resource materials to be used locally. FA is about to embark on a larger program of taking knowledge to the rural villages along the Masoala peninsula, and link them into the small, but established ecotourism route. A workshop will be held in March 2000 to initiate a process of planning with local people from the villages on the peninsula. | <p>Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs Possibility to improve</p> <p>Obstacle: Lack of resources and capacity</p> |

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Ambodilatra School</i> | <i>Ambodilatra School</i> was created by FA, before it became a formal NGO. The school has been funded over the last four years by the profits from ecotourism trial runs ²⁷ that were conducted to the Masoala peninsula. This schools has provided basic education to 18 students since its inception. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other role players Obstacle: Lack of resources and capacity |
| <i>OIDA and GRIFFIDA</i> | OIDA and GRIFFIDA are local registered NGOs interested in local development issues. GRIFFIDA focuses on gender issues, and has linked with the guide association to form OIDA. Both groups are ready to embark on collaborative projects with FA. Both these organisations lack access to funding. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information with other RPs Obstacle: Lack of resources and capacity |
| <i>Maroantsetra Ecotourist Guide Association (MEGA)</i> | The <i>Maroantsetra Ecotourist Guide Association (MEGA)</i> is a private association of guides who currently guide ecotourists around Maroantsetra and Parc Masoala. The guides provide a high quality service and have much experience in dealing with interactions between ecotourists and local people. The guides have recently published a brochure detailing a code of conduct for ecotourists. The guides thus play a key role in spreading knowledge and facilitating complex interactions. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information Obstacle: Lack of information and marketing |
| <i>Kayak Masoala</i> | <i>Kayak Masoala</i> ²⁸ is a private partnership between Kayak Africa and two ecotourist guides from Maroantsetra. This private sector operator has been committed to develop ecotourism in an adaptive manner, and contribute towards local development and environmental preservation through bringing expertise and capital to the process. Such community private public partnerships (CPPPs) are a direct product of authentic planning and the sharing of knowledge ²⁹ between RPs in ecotourism development. | Result: Effective in spreading information and potential ti improve Obstacle: Government authorisation |

²⁷ Eco-Africa was responsible for conducting ecotourism trial runs along the Masoala peninsula in the mid nineties. Refer to Odendaal 1996.

²⁸ Kayak Africa owns a 60%share, and two local entrepreneurs own a 20% share each.

²⁹ Such CPPP arrangements are being firmly driven by the national government in South Africa (Community Public Private Partnerships Conference "Partnership for Growth" 16 to 18 November 1999 Johannesburg).

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Antalaviana camp</i> | The <i>Antalaviana camp</i> has recently been established in a CPPP model between Kayak Masoala, FA and the private landowner at Antalaviana. Contracts between the three parties are currently being finalised. Here ecotourism can support an entire family, provide finances to support a local school and generate finance for community development ³⁰ . The camp can form a useful node in providing information regarding tourism to local people and ecotourists, but is currently not well utilised for this purpose. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other role players Obstacle: Lack infrastructure for communication |
| <i>Traditional government</i> | <i>Traditional government</i> has been integrally involved in the development of the present ecotourism route. This route has been developed through implementing a series of trial runs over recent years. All profit generated by these trial runs has supported a primary school at Ambodiletra for over four years. Traditional government provides a strong network to spread information to local people. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information³¹ with other role players |
| <i>Greendevlopment Foundation, Connected Cultures and IUCN</i> | <i>Greendevlopment Foundation and Connected Cultures</i> are NGO located in the North, and provide FA with access to their knowledge and funding agencies. These two NGOs are also collaborating with FA with cultural exchange programs between the youth in Connecticut and Masoala. The <i>IUCN Rainforest Program</i> has funded FA with its first small grant to develop environmental education materials locally. The upcoming ecotourism-planning workshop in March 2000, will provide the opportunity to develop more extensive plans for the future of ecotourism development in the region. | Assessment: Effective in spreading information to other RPs |

³⁰ The differing economies of scale allow a few US dollars to go a far way in the Masoala peninsula. For instance, it costs US\$33 to attend a year of undergraduate university. A small amount of money applied appropriately at the relevant time in the right place can thus make a huge difference.

³¹ Rural Malagasy culture allows for respectful relations to occur on all levels of society, and is conducive to the spread of relevant and appropriate information.

| Institution | Actions in Spreading Information to other RPs | Assessment and Obstacle |
|------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Project Masoala</i> | <i>Project Masoala</i> is a collaborative conservation and development NGO between Wildlife Conservation Society and CARE International. This NGO is experiencing problems with community driven development, and in some areas has experienced dislocated relations, and even conflict with local people ³² . The flow of information between the project and local people in thus not effective. | Assessment: Ineffective in spreading information to other role players Obstacle: Dislocated relations with local people |

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³² It has been recorded that local village people from Ambanizana along the western coast of Masoala have dragged dead lemurs up and down the main street in defiance of the conservation efforts of project Masoala.

5.1.3 A comparative assessment of the institutions in the case studies

The findings from the institutional assessment are summarised below in Table 4. Three primary obstacles are identified that restrict the spread of information between role players.

Table 4: Comparison of Obstacles Identified through a Comparative Institutional Assessment

| Obstacles experienced in the Richtersveld region | Obstacles experienced in the Masoala region |
|---|---|
| 1. Dislocated relations between the diamond mines and local people | 1. Dislocated relations between Project Masoala and local people |
| 2. Lack of resources and capacity within government institutions to fulfil their responsibilities | 2. Lack of infrastructure and information at local level |
| 3. Lack of access to funding at the local level to implement projects | 3. Lack funding and capacity at local level to engage in projects |

The lessons learnt with this comparison have been combined with the lessons learnt from the comparative participatory network assessment that follows. The lessons learnt have been summarised in section 5.1.5.

5.1.4 A comparative assessment of the institutional networks in the case studies

The networks in each of the case studies have been established by Eco-Africa³³ working collaboratively with individuals within institutions at all levels of the developmental hierarchy³⁴. Facilitators within the institutions at all levels have been active in forging further relationships and strengthening existing ones through working collaboratively and sharing information with other RPs. These networks have evolved over a number of years through connecting individual people, and working with one person at a time. By their very nature these networks are continually evolving and each of the network figures thus illustrates a 'snapshot' at the end of the 14-month study period ending in February 2000. These networks have been illustrated by considering institutions at differing levels of the dominant development hierarchy. These institutions have therefore

³³ Eco-Africa is a development consultancy focussing on livelihood creation, especially in the fields of nature and culture based tourism, coastal zone management and communal conservancies. This company also does extensive consultation and training work in Southern Africa, as well as other countries in Africa and South America.

³⁴ The 'developmental hierarchy' refers to the current arrangement of institutions within the development field, which represents the conventional top-down power structure associated to Neo-classical economics. This conceptual arrangement is commonly understood within the field of development practice (Chambers 1997).

been arranged according to local level, government, private sector and funding/international NGO categories.

A comparative study of the network characteristics that feed or impede the flow of information will reveal network strengths and weaknesses. This shows that the network configuration can improve or constrict the flow of information between RPs.

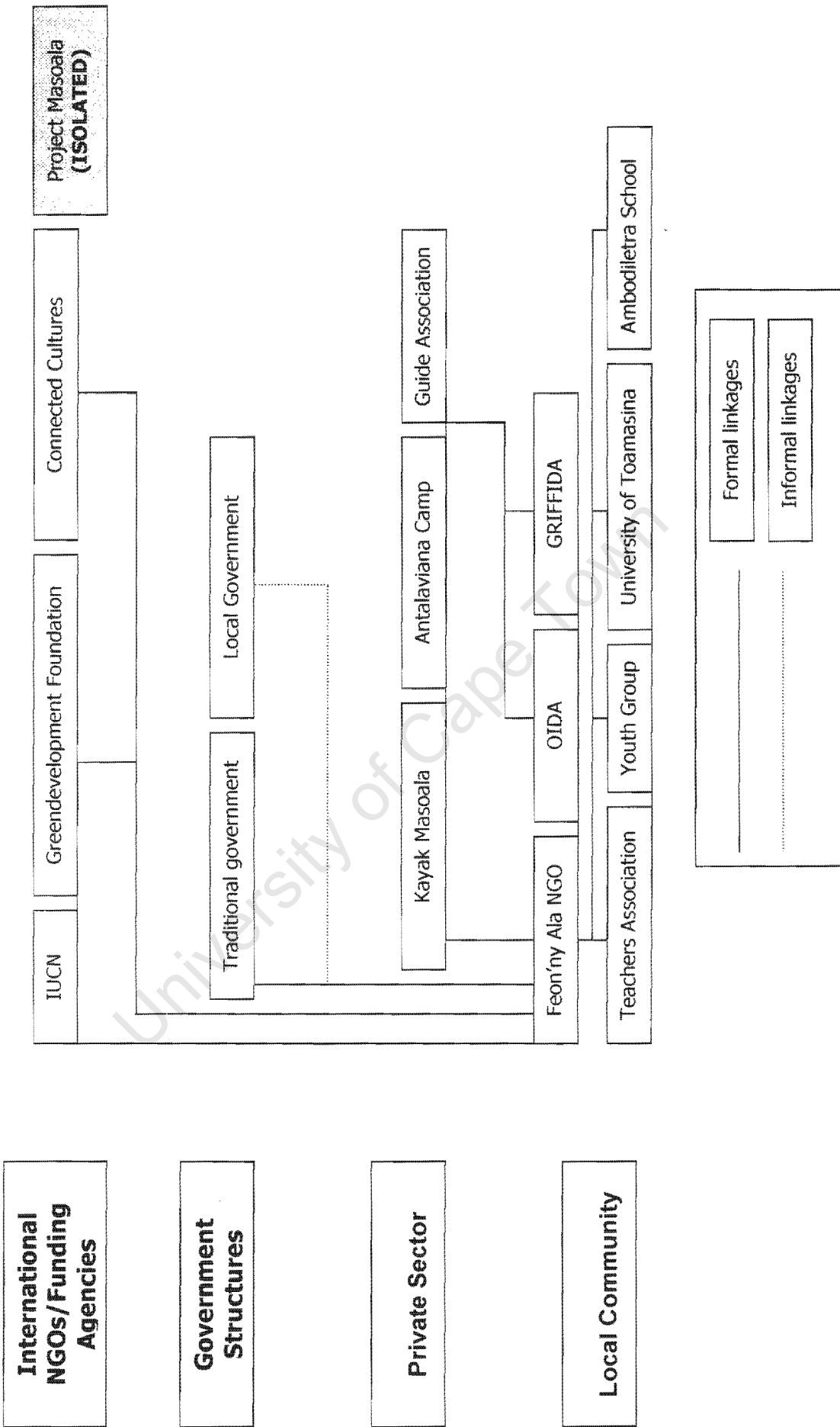
Figure 3 represents the institutional linkages in ecotourism planning in the Richtersveld reveals a network comprising of RPs at all levels, and highlights the dislocations that exist between the majority of RPs and the diamond mines.

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Figure 4 represents of the institutional linkages in ecotourism planning in the Richtersveld reveals a network comprising of RPs at all levels, and highlights the dislocations that exist between the majority of RPs and Project Masoala.

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Figure 4: Participation Network for Ecotourism Development in the Masoala region.



The following comments arise from comparing the two participation networks:

- a) 18 institutions are locked into ecotourism development in the Richtersveld region, compared with 15 in the Masoala region.
- b) 8 funding agencies involved in the Richtersveld region compared with 3 in the Masoala region, and have 4 government institutions locked in the Richtersveld region, compared with 2 in the Masoala region.
- c) The Richtersveld region has a strong representation of *funding agencies*. These agencies are essential in providing financial access to local community structures in order to facilitate the spread of information. The Masoala region has an evident lack of available funding, and results in responsible ecotourism development being hindered.
- d) Both the Richtersveld and Masoala region is characterised by the presence of two small *international NGOs*, Greendevlopment Foundation and Connected Cultures, who provide support in ecotourism marketing, donor sourcing and cultural exchange through running programs with schools in the USA.
- e) *Government* support is essential for effective ecotourism development. In the context of both case studies, governments experience a lack of understanding of responsible ecotourism development and resources to govern effectively. Corruption among individuals is a factor that leads to many failed projects and relations between local communities and funding agencies³⁵. Good governance is thus essential for effective local development and environmental protection. The Richtersveld region is characterised by government support including local, regional, provincial and national. The Masoala region however has less support from government institutions³⁶, and only traditional and local government feature in the network. Increased governmental support is thus required in the Masoala region.
- f) The *private sector* has brought valuable capital, knowledge and skills to the ecotourism development process in the Masoala region. Through working with local people the operator aims to add value to the ecotourism product and provide local people with the control and ownership required for authentic participation and effective governance. Such an operator is missing from the Richtersveld region³⁷.

³⁵ In many examples of conventional development, one has to wonder who is actually corrupted. Development agencies often accumulate huge financial needs to support a large staff of well paid outsiders. This situation has a significant role in preventing the maximum percentage of funding in reaching the grassroots level. Corruption thus occurs at all levels.

³⁶ GEF funding was funnelled into Madagascar in the early nineties through the national government structure. The result of this strategy is a lack of funding reaching the grassroots level. A large percentage of the funding has been utilised by governmental institutions and international NGOs.

³⁷ Much potential exists for building partnerships between private sector and local community institutions or entrepreneurs in the development of ecotourism ventures (Community Public Private Partnerships Conference "Partnership for Growth" 16 to 18 November 1999 Johannesburg).

- g) The *local community institutions* are well linked into women groups, youth groups, educational and private sectors in both cases. This increases the opportunity to become self-reliant and integrated into the local economy.

These comments are summarised in Table 5 below by identifying strengths and weaknesses in each of the networks.

Table 5: Comparison of the Participation Network Strengths and Weaknesses for each case study

| The Richtersveld region | The Masoala region |
|--|--|
| Network STRENGTHS | Network STRENGTHS |
| 1. Strong representation of funding agencies (8 in total) | 1. Small NGOs from the North work in collaboration with local people |
| 2. Small NGOs from the North work in collaboration with local people | 2. Strong private sector involvement in the form of CPPPs |
| 3. Strong representation of government agencies (4 in total) | 3. Local community institutions well linked into a women's association, youth groups and schools |
| 4. Local community institutions well linked into a women's association, youth groups and schools | |
| Network WEAKNESSES | Network WEAKNESSES |
| 1. Little private sector involvement in ecotourism development | 1. Little representation of funding agencies (3 in total) |
| | 2. Weak government support of ecotourism development (2 in total) |
| | 3. Many links originate from FA, which place strain on this already under-resources local NGO |

5.1.5 Lessons emerging from the assessment of the institutional networks

The lessons emerging from the institutional network assessments are drawn from section 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 and follow:

1. Access to funding at the local level is essential if control and responsibility of development and environmental management are to be effectively devolved to the local people.
2. Small NGOs based in the North can facilitate understanding of responsible ecotourism development at that end of the ecotourism and funding end of the chain.

3. Government support is essential to make ecotourism development programs a success in terms of meeting local needs and preserving the environment.
4. Good private sector involvement can bring immense value to ecotourism development process. On the other hand private operators can also exploit local people, and disrupt authentic participation³⁸.
5. Network linkages into all sectors, ages and sexes of local society are essential for the transformation of conventional paradigms to responsible ecotourism development.
6. NGOs must be wary not to constrict the flow of knowledge and access to information within the process. NGOs can adopt principles of authentic participation in order to avoid constrictions and hindering progress.
7. Supportive legislation facilitates authentic participation in ecotourism development, as is the case in the Richtersveld region.
8. Process facilitation involves a mass effort by a large group of dedicated individuals at all levels of the development hierarchy, who aim to improve the flow of information and broadening of knowledge at all levels of

³⁸ It is thus necessary to clarify relationships between private sector and local communities.

5.2 Auditing how process facilitation has built participation networks

A common approach to process facilitation has been followed in each of the case studies. Involvement by Eco-Africa in the Richtersveld and Masoala regions has differed considerably. The work resulting in the participation network in The Richtersveld region has taken between 2 to 4 years to build. The participation network in the Masoala region has taken between 4 to 6 years to build. Prior to these periods, these networks did not exist.

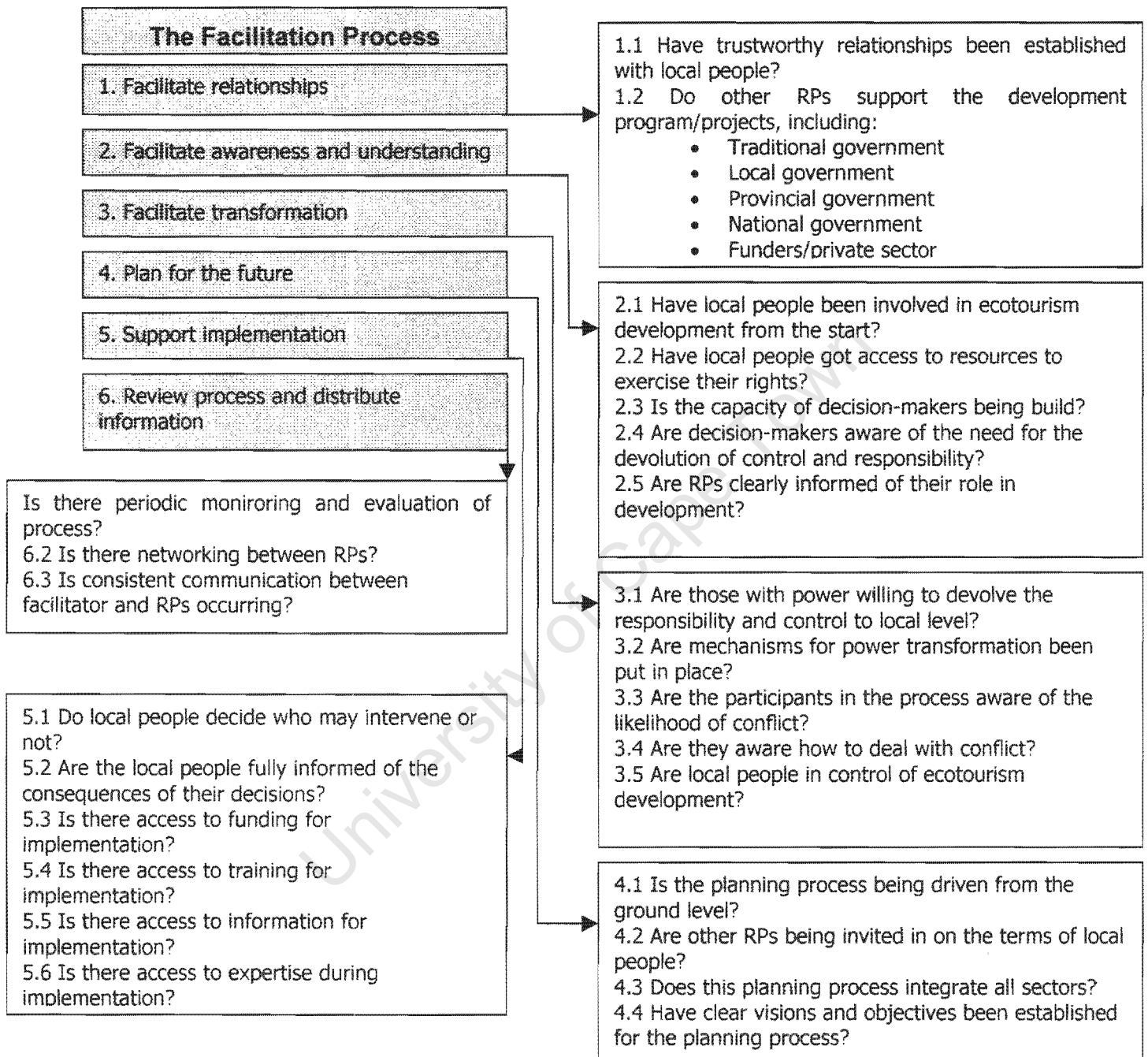
The facilitation process followed by process facilitators in each of the case studies is illustrated in Figure 2, which follows. This facilitation process has been formulated through the course of this study, and draws from the literature and observation in the field. The process can be conceptualised as comprising of 6 stages, described in more detail in section 2.5.

The six stages describe the six dimensions of the facilitation process. It is not intended that these steps are followed rigorously. This model is conceptual, and differs when applying it to reality. Or the sake of explanation however, it can be conceptualised that each stage can be pursued simultaneously, some requiring more or less attention depending on the needs of the local people.

Key questions are probed at each of the stages to determine the status of process facilitation in achieving the *ideal process*³⁹. These questions will highlight how effective process facilitation has been in dealing with the aspect of access to information. Obstacles in the facilitation of information spread are identified, summarised per case study in order to draw comparison in Table 8. Figure two illustrates the six stages of process facilitation, and leads each stage off into a number of key questions that extract the process obstacles from the case studies.

³⁹ Refer to section 2.5.

Figure 2: Auditing the role of a facilitator/s in spreading information.



The six stages of process facilitation are described, and key questions relating to each stage are posed in order to place into tabular format. This will assist in identifying the significant obstacles hindering the flow of information.

5.2.1 Evaluation of the role of process facilitators in spreading information in the Richtersveld region, South Africa

Table 6 identifies the obstacles that prevent the spread of information in the ecotourism development process in the Richtersveld region. Key questions posed identify obstacles in the process.

Table 6: Identifying Obstacles in the Facilitation Process in Spreading Information among RPs in the Richtersveld region

| Questions | Answer ⁴⁰ | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|--|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. Facilitate relationships | | | |
| 1.1 Have trustworthy relationships been established with local people? | Yes | EA has been invited to facilitate for numerous local organisations, and local government. EA also has facilitation contract with GTZ. | |
| 1.2 Do other RPs support the development program/projects, including: | | | |
| • Traditional government | NA | | |
| • Local government | Locked | EA has facilitated the initiation of the IDP process with the Transitional Council. | |
| • Regional government | Locked | Working relationship with the Namaqualand Regional Council Tourism Department | |
| • Provincial government | Locked | Working relationship with Dept. of Environment. Dept. of Economic Affairs and Tourism not yet on board. | |
| • National government | Locked | Working relationship with the Directorate of Cultural and Local Natural Resource Management, DEAT. | YES ⁴¹ |
| • Funders/private sector | Locked | GEF ⁴² , NORAD ⁴³ , GTZ ⁴⁴ , WB ⁴⁵ | |

⁴⁰ The 'Answer' column reflects the opinion of the facilitator. Local people should also answer these questions. It is therefore necessary that local people also get the opportunity to answer the questions in this evaluation.

⁴¹ The PDFA GEF proposal was submitted to the DEAT 24 months prior to February 2000. The approval for funding has been delayed due to reshuffling of the national ministry. This is delaying development in the Richtersveld region.

⁴² Community-based tourism development is a key component of the community-based conservancy for the Rooiberg area.

⁴³ NORAD funding of R300 000/annum X 3 years for community-based tourism development has been secured for the Richtersveld.

⁴⁴ EA is about to complete the facilitation with GTZ.

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|---|-----------|--|-------------------|
| 2. Facilitate awareness and understanding | | | |
| 2.1 Have local people been involved in ecotourism development from the start? | Yes | Eco-Africa has supported initiatives that are locally run and owned. | |
| 2.2 Have local people got access to resources to exercise their rights? | No | The current leaders are aware of their rights. | YES ⁴⁶ |
| 2.3 Is the capacity of decision-makers being build? | Yes | Local government has initiated the IDP process. | |
| 2.4 Are decision-makers aware of the need for the devolution of control and responsibility? | Yes | This is the foundation of the IDP process. | |
| 2.5 Are RPs clearly informed of their role in development? | Partially | Institutional clarity lacks on all levels of governance, due to the recent introduction of full democracy. | YES |
| 3. Facilitate transformation | | | |
| 3.1 Are those with power willing to devolve the control and responsibility to local level? | Partially | The IDP stipulates that control and responsibility must be devolved to the local level. This remains largely unfamiliar to RPs | |
| 3.2 Are mechanisms for power transformation in place? | Yes | The IDP makes provision for this | |
| 3.3 Are the participants in the process aware of the likelihood of conflict? | Partially | Conflict has been dealt with as per normal | |

⁴⁶ Local people are not aware of their rights, and are continually exploited for their ignorance. National legislation has not been related into local level transformation.

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|
| 3.4 Are they aware of how to deal with conflict? | Partially | Conflict is inherent to local society, and is dealt with accordingly and subtly | |
| 3.5 Are local people in control of the process | Yes | Local control of integrated development is one aim of the IDP, and strong local institutionalisation is present | |
| 4. Plan for the future | | | |
| 4.1 Is the planning process being driven from the ground level? | Yes | The IDP has been adopted as a relevant framework to continue planning from the grassroots level. | |
| 4.2 Are other RPs being invited in on the terms of local people? | No | The local people are in the process of organising themselves, but intend to set conditions for outsider participation | |
| 4.3 Does this planning process integrate all sectors? | Yes | The IDP is an integrated planning process | |
| 4.4 Have clear visions and objectives been established for the planning process? | Partially | The facilitators are playing an integral role in the current planning process in order to build local capacity and formulate visions and objectives through the IDP | |
| 5. Support implementation | | | |
| 5.1 Do local people decide who may intervene or not? | No | The Richtersveld has a long history of outsider intervention, and this has become largely accepted | YES |
| 5.2 Are the local people fully informed of the consequences of their decisions? | Largely | The decision-makers in the Richtersveld have good knowledge of the broader issues of development | |
| 5.3 Is there access to funding for implementation? | Limited | Funding is pending and due to come within months | YES |
| 5.4 Is there access to training for implementation? | Limited | Dependant on funding | YES |

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|---|---------|--|-----------|
| 5.5 Is there access to information for implementation? | Limited | Dependant on funding | YES |
| 5.6 Is there access to expertise during implementation? | Yes | Dependant on funding | |
| 6. Review and circulating information | | | |
| 6.1 Is there periodic monitoring and evaluation of process? | No | The ecotourism development process is in the initial stages on implementation, and M&E has not yet been out in place | |
| 6.2 Is there networking between RPs? | Yes | Many workshops and constant communication between RPs occurs | |
| 6.3 Is consistent communication with RPs occurring? | Yes | Eco-Africa communicates regularly on a daily basis with RPs involved in the Richtersveld region | |

Refer to Table 8 for a summary of the obstacles identified in this exercise.

5.2.2 Evaluation of the role of process facilitators in spreading information in the Masoala region, Madagascar

Table 7 identifies the obstacles that prevent the spread of information in the ecotourism development process in the Masoala region. A question is posed that relates to each stage of the facilitation process. Through answering and substantiating each question, obstacle are identified.

Table 7: Identifying Obstacles in the Facilitation Process in Spreading Information among RPs in the Richtersveld region

| Questions | Answer ⁴⁷ | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|--|----------------------|---|-----------|
| 1. Facilitate relationships | | | |
| 1.1 Have trustworthy relationships been established with local people? | Yes | Good relationships have been established with FA, the guide association, OIDA, GRIFFIDA and the teachers and youth groups | |
| 1.2 Do other RPs support the development program/projects? | | | |
| • Traditional government | Yes | Traditional government has been involved in ecotourism planning from the outset | |
| • Local government | Informally | Discussions have been conducted with local government | |
| • Regional government | Informally | Discussions have been conducted with regional government | YES |
| • Provincial government | NA | | |
| • National government | Informally | Discussions have been conducted with national government | YES |
| • Funders/private sector | Yes | Private sector has been locked in. Relations with funders need to be strengthened | YES |

⁴⁷ The 'Answer' column reflects the opinion of the facilitator. Local people should also answer these questions. It is therefore necessary that local people also get the opportunity to answer the questions in this evaluation.

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|---|-----------|--|-----------|
| 2. Facilitate awareness and understanding | | | |
| 2.1 Have local people been involved in the process from the start? | Yes | The ecotourism development process has involved guides from the outset | |
| 2.2 Have local people got access to resource to exercise their rights? | Limited | Local people rely largely on tradition and have limited power and knowledge to oppose the unsustainable use of resources | YES |
| 2.3 Is the capacity of decision-makers being build? | No | Lack of access to funding, and no regional planning frameworks exist | YES |
| 2.4 Are decision-makers aware of the need for the devolution of control and responsibility? | Partially | The conventional approach to development dominates in Masoala | YES |
| 2.5 Are RPs clearly informed of their role in development? | No | Issues of management over resources and land inhibits clear relationships between RPs | YES |
| 3. Facilitate transformation | | | |
| 3.1 Are those with power willing to devolve the control and responsibility to local level? | No answer | | |
| 3.2 Are mechanisms for power transformation in place? | No | No formal processes of power transformation exist | YES |
| 3.3 Are the participants in the process aware of the likelihood of conflict? | Limited | Previous decision making in the region has been top-down, and has marginalised local people | YES |
| 3.4 Are they aware of how to deal with conflict? | Limited | Malagasy culture avoids conflict, believing it is unhealthy | |
| 3.5 Are local people in control of the process? | No | Outsiders control the tourism industry and local commercial resource exploitation | YES |
| 4. Plan for the future | | | |
| 4.1 Is the planning process being driven from the ground level? | Yes | Ecotourism planning was initiated and has been integrated into the local level | |

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|--|-----------|--|-----------|
| 4.3 Are other RPs being invited in on the terms of local people? | Yes | FA has avoided working with Project Masoala, who have marginised local people in their conservation and development effort | |
| 4.4 Does this planning process integrate all the sectors? | No | The planning process remains informal, and no regional integrated planning framework exists | YES |
| 4.5 Have clear visions and objectives been established for the planning process? | Partially | Limited to the FA programs in collaboration with the MEGA, OIDA, GRIFFIDA, teachers and students | YES |
| 5. Support implementation | | | |
| 5.1 Do local people decide who may intervene or not? | No | Intervention and local resource utilisation by outsiders is accepted as an everyday activity | YES |
| 5.2 Are the local people fully informed of the consequences of their decisions? | Partially | Limited to a few local people only | YES |
| 5.3 Is there access to funding for implementation? | No | Project Masoala has a large management contract on the area, and GEF funding is currently tied up in national governments frameworks | YES |
| 5.4 Is there access to training for implementation? | No | Dependant on funding | YES |
| 5.5 Is there access to information for implementation? | No | Dependant on funding | YES |
| 5.6 Is there access to expertise during implementation? | Yes | Dependant on funding | YES |
| 6. Review and circulating information | | | |
| 6.1 Is there periodic monitoring and evaluation of process? | No | This will have to be established with the increase in project implementation. | |

| Questions | Answer | Substantiation | Obstacle? |
|---|-----------|--|-----------|
| 6.2 Is there networking between RPs? | Partially | Limited by the lack of infrastructure and communications | YES |
| 6.3 Is consistent communication with RPs occurring? | No | No communication infrastructure into the Masoala region | YES |

Refer to Table 8 for a summary of the obstacles identified in this exercise.

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5.2.3 Comparative Assessment of the role of process facilitators in spreading information in each of the case studies

The obstacles identified in the exercises in Tables 6 and 7 are summarised below in Table 8.

Table 8: Comparing the Obstacles in the Facilitation Process in Spreading Information among RPs in the each of the case studies

| Obstacles experienced in the Richtersveld region | Obstacles experienced in the Masoala region |
|--|--|
| 1.2 GEF funding is being delayed by bureaucracy at national government level | 1.2 National and regional government is not formally involved in ecotourism development. Funders are also not supporting the participation network in the Masoala region |
| 2.2 Local people don't have access to financial resources, and are thus limited to minimal communication and organisational building | 2.2 Local people don't have access to financial resources, and are thus limited to minimal communication and organisational building |
| 5.1 Outsiders continue to use the Richtersveld resources without much consideration of sustainability | 2.3 Local decision makers are not involved in responsible ecotourism development |
| 5.3 Funding is being delayed by political professes | 2.4 These decision makers are not familiar with decentralised forms of governance |
| 5.4 Access to training is dependant on access to funding | 2.5 Roles and responsibilities of all RPs remains relatively unclear, and no framework binds then into a common vision |
| 5.5 Access and spread of information is dependant on resources, including funding | 3.2 No formal power transformation mechanisms exist |
| | 3.3 Conflict is not dealt with, and avoided |
| | 3.5 Outsiders retain control over local resources |
| | 4.4 No regional integrated planning has occurred |
| | 4.5 Local development is not guided by a common vision for the future |
| | 5.1 Local people do not control intervention or local development |

| Obstacles experienced in the Richtersveld region | Obstacles experienced in the Masoala region |
|--|--|
| | 5.2 Very few local people have a broad knowledge base of development issues |
| | 5.3 No funding has been secured for implementation |
| | 5.4 No funding is available to support training |
| | 5.5 Access and spread of information are hindered by a lack of resources, especially funding |
| | 5.6 Access to expertise is dependant on availability of funding |
| | 6.2 Networking restricted by a lack of communication infrastructure and resources |
| | 6.3 Communication with RPs restricted to field interaction only, as communication links are ineffective in the Masoala |

Through conducting a common auditing exercise in each case study, six obstacles are identified in the Richtersveld region compared to eighteen in the Masoala region.

5.3 Summarising the results of the case study assessments

The findings from sections 5.1 and 5.2 are summarised in Table 9 in order to illustrate the relative difference between the ecotourism development process in each of the case studies.

Table 9: Comparing some Outcomes of the Facilitation Process in the each of the case studies

| Criteria | Richtersveld region | Masoala region |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Number of institutions involved in authentic participation | 18 | 15 |
| Number of funding agencies involved | 8 | 3 |
| Number of government levels involved | All | Half |
| Funding available | Yes | No |
| Government support | Full support | Very little support |
| Participation network strong points | 4 | 3 |
| Participation network weak points | 1 | 3 |
| Obstacles identified through assessing the role of the process facilitator | 6 | 18 |

By all accounts of the information above, the Richtersveld region has a stronger participatory network, and through the effort of many facilitators within the ecotourism process most likely will be able to re-root ecotourism development in the region. The facilitation of access and sharing of information has been significantly boosted through the availability of:

1. Funding
2. Government support
3. National and regional integrated planning frameworks conducive to authentic participation

The Masoala region has lacked considerably in these three aspects, and as a result the facilitation of access and sharing of information has been restricted by all the obstacles identified thus far. Process facilitation has thus not yet been successful in re-rooting ecotourism development in the Masoala region, due to these obstacles experienced within the process.

6. Conclusions

Through investigating the main objectives of the study and taking the limitations into account, it can not be proved with any certainty that either one or the other of the cases can be developed into a sustainable ecotourism program or project. Both are work in progress, and only the future can tell the final outcome.

Yet, it can be said that the Richtersveld region has attained a degree of stability through uniting more RPs into a common vision to take on the responsibility of integrated planning, management and preservation of the land that they live on. This stability has been achieved through the local people of the Richtersveld becoming involved in authentic participation of ecotourism planning as well as overall development of the region. It is highly unlikely that an outside tourism operator could come into the Richtersveld to exploit the ignorance of local people by setting up *ad hoc* operations.

The Masoala region has less of a degree of stability, and the future for this region is truly unpredictable. Outside interest group in the Masoala region continue to over-exploit local natural resources and management efforts are not taking local people into account. A high likelihood thus remains that an outside tourism operator can exploit the ignorance of local people in this region by making deals with entities that are not part of the knowledge management framework.

These networks of RPs all contribute towards the facilitation and spread of information, thus building a common vision to develop in alternative ways. These networks, however rudimentary, provide a check on the activities of outsiders to the region. The network therefore plays an important role in monitoring development activity, building local governance and strengthening civil society.

There are many reasons why the spread of information in the Richtersveld is easier than in the Masoala peninsula. Essentially more resources have been available to bind people together in a common effort to make use of all existing systems and facilitate the flow of shared information through them. The only concrete manner to measure the flow of knowledge may after all reside in counting the number of RPs involved in the responsible ecotourism development process, in order to assess the width of and spread of information through the participatory network.

Despite the future uncertainty of the sustainability of ecotourism development projects in the case studies, effort can be applied in specific places to move process forward. In the Masoala region great effort must now be applied to make links with government, the sensible private operator and the sympathetic

donor, in order that they may talk with one another and too become a facilitators. In the Richtersveld region, effort should be out into involving local people in monitoring and evaluation of the emerging ecotourism industry. This will promote the establishment of sustainable operations, as well as the spread of authentic participation to other sectors of the economy.

The final lesson is, unlike the days of old, there are no longer single heroes or facilitators, but rather a group of facilitators distributed across the spectrum of RPs, and including local communities, funding agencies and informed government agencies, each doing their part in spreading knowledge.

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Information Sources

Fieldwork

The Lubombo Mountains, Swaziland – 6 weeks
The Masoala region, Madagascar – 14 weeks
The Richtersveld region – 3 weeks
Field office, Cape Town – 33 weeks

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Projects visited in addition to case studies

Makuleke, Pafuri Triangle, Kruger National Park, South Africa

Shewula, Lubombo region, Swaziland

Goba community, Goba region, Mozambique

Projects studied⁴⁸

Protecting Indigenous Coral Reefs and Sea Territories, Miskito Coast, RAAN, Nicaragua

Reinforcing Traditional Tenure: Wildlife Management Areas in Papua New Guinea

Annapurna Conservation Area: Empowerment, Conservation, and Development in Nepal

⁴⁸ These articles can be sourced in Stevens 1997.