

**THE PRIVATE SECTOR-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP IN
ECOTOURISM: THE CASE OF UMNGAZI RIVER BUNGALOWS,
EASTERN CAPE.**

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DECLARATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Social Science in the School of Environmental Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Social Science in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously, for any degree or examination in any other University.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AA	Accommodation Association
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CCA	Conservation Corporation Africa
CROP	Community Resource Optimization Programme
DEAET	Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DME	Department of Minerals and Energy
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Tourism
ECTB	Eastern Cape Tourism Board
FTTSA	Fair Trade in Tourism in South Africa Trademark
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
HDG	Historically Disadvantaged Groups
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IES	International Ecotourism Society
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INR	Institute of Natural Resources
LDC	Less Developed Countries
MIDP	Municipal Integrated Development Plans
NGO	Not-for-Profit Organization/ Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	Newly Industrialized Countries
NT	New Tourism
PPT	Pro-Poor Tourism
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programmes
SA Tourism	South Africa Tourism
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SANParks	South African National Parks
SDI	Spatial Development Initiative
SDP	Spatial Development Plan
SME	Small-Medium Enterprise

SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TA	Tribal Authority
TDC	Transkei Development Corporation
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UN-WTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VFR	Visiting Friends and Family
WB	World Bank
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WUDP	Water Usage Development Plan

ABSTRACT

Ecotourism has increasingly been adopted in many countries as a responsible and sustainable form of tourism. The role of the private sector in ecotourism development and specifically the involvement of communities in their activities, is of interest given that the global system of development and neo-liberalism, advocates for an increased involvement of the private sector in developmental activities. This thesis aims to explore the relationship between the private sector and surrounding communities in the ecotourism sector using Umngazi River Bungalows in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, as a case study. Literature on neo-liberalism, ecotourism, community participation, and stakeholder theory was used to provide the theoretical framework for the study. A multi-strategy methodology approach was adopted in the study with qualitative and quantitative methods being used. Data analysis included basic quantitative statistical analysis and Dey's approach of grouping responses for qualitative analysis. The thesis distinguished between three types of ecotourism and social responsibility projects at Umngazi River Bungalows, including service infrastructure, income-generating, and philanthropic projects. It was concluded that those projects where the hotel had substantial operational control were more successful than those that were fully community driven. The hotel was found to practice soft ecotourism. The management of the hotel and communities were proactive in ensuring that the natural environment was protected. The hotel has a positive and open relationship with its employees and the tribal authority in the area, and a conspicuous absence of government involvement as a key stakeholder in the operation of ecotourism in the area was noted. It was also concluded that full participation was not necessarily achieved through involvement in decision making structures, but that communities appeared to be content with the other forms of participation.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism has played a significant role economically in developing countries and its impacts on the environment, individuals, and communities have been well documented in the literature (Mowforth and Munt 1998; Fennell 1999; Wearing and Nel, 1999; Diamantis, 2004). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2008a), tourism contributes to employment, wealth creation, and foreign exchange earnings, especially in developing countries. Negative effects of mass tourism in many of these countries in the past, have led to a shift towards conducting tourism which focuses on unique experiences related to environmental, socio-cultural, and economic considerations.

Ecotourism is a new form of tourism that emphasizes “minimum environmental impact; minimum impact on and maximum respect for host cultures; maximum economic benefits to the host country’s grassroots and; maximum recreational satisfaction to participating tourists” (Hetzer, 1965 cited in Fennell, 1999, p. 31).” Ecotourism has a strong focus on the conservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources that tourism is based on, as well as the human components that interact with these resources (Fennell, 1999). Ecotourism has been recognized as the fastest growing form of tourism in the latter part of the twentieth century (Weaver, 2001) and was adopted in many countries with the hope of mitigating the effects of mass tourism.

Government, the private sector, and civil society organizations, have all been involved in the planning and implementation of development in rural areas, where most ecotourism activity tends to occur. These three arms of society have also recognized that, in order for ecotourism and other development in these areas to be successful, the involvement of different stakeholders, especially local communities, is vital in all stages of planning and development (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Reid, 1999; Fennell, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). However, it has been difficult to achieve these goals. Studies conducted on community participation in tourism have concluded that minimal

participation by communities in decision-making is evident with the latter mainly involved in the supply of goods, services and labour (Tosun, 2000; Mitchell and Reid, 2001). In other cases, it has been shown that decision-making is not necessarily the only avenue that ensures communities participate fully in ecotourism and that benefits, like employment and other community benefit initiatives, can also be seen as forms of participation (Li, 2006). Private sector players are viewed as stakeholders who are focused on achieving their own goals, rather than being promoters of rural development and community empowerment.

This study explores the relationship between the private sector and surrounding communities in the ecotourism sector. Umngazi River Bungalows is a hotel located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, which offers nature-based activities to its tourists. It is established within the Vukandlule, Cwebeni, and Sicambeni communities and is a major provider of employment opportunities and other benefits to these communities. Umngazi River Bungalows has been chosen as a case study to explore relationships between the private sector and communities, the degree of community participation in operation of ecotourism ventures, and whether the hotel practices ecotourism principles in its operation, as stipulated by ecotourism principles, because the hotel has a close relationship with the communities that surround it. The hotel is also located on an undeveloped part of the Eastern Cape coastline, and the local communities are reliant on the hotel for sources of income.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ecotourism has increasingly been adopted in many countries as a responsible and sustainable form of tourism. Although there is no one universally accepted definition of ecotourism, criteria have been developed by which the implementation of the principles of ecotourism can be measured and assessed (Wearing and Nel, 1999; Diamantis, 2004). Most studies in South Africa have focused on the implementation of ecotourism in protected areas (Reid, 1999; Mosidi, 2003), sustainable or responsible tourism (Spenceley, 2001; George, 2007), and the development of additional natural resource management tools to aid ecotourism goals (Hauck and Sowman, 2003). The documentation of case studies where ecotourism, specifically, has been evaluated in

terms of its implementation are few. As development in rural areas intensifies and the demand for environmental protection by tourism stakeholders increases, it is important to further document how tourism businesses are operating in these areas, and whether the principles of ecotourism are being implemented. It is, however, important to acknowledge that since the advent of ecotourism, questions have been raised about whether this form of tourism is rhetoric. Other forms of natural resource management in the tourism industry have emerged, such as co-management, which has been lauded as a tool that can inform natural resource management through its inclusion of various stakeholders in the management process (Hauck and Sowman, 2003).

The role of the private sector in ecotourism development has been seen as one where the sector's profit oriented motive drives choice and operations of development (Fennell, 1998; Scheyvens, 2002). Regulation and business ethics have informed decisions of some private sector operators to involve relevant stakeholders in their operational activities, especially the surrounding communities. In a study that seeks to investigate the relationship between the private sector and communities in ecotourism, there is need to explore whether the private sector can involve communities without much governmental or external intervention.

Literature has often concluded that true participation by local communities in ecotourism development can only be achieved if they are involved in decision-making regarding the operations of business ventures (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Fennell, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). Some researchers have questioned this and provided empirical evidence of cases where communities are content with less involvement in decision-making (Li, 2006). Understanding about the level of participation that is deemed acceptable in ecotourism operations should be developed and this forms a focus of this study.

Umngazi River Bungalows provides a useful case study for investigating whether ecotourism is practiced by ventures outside protected areas. Umngazi River Bungalows is not identified or classified by its owners or other stakeholders as an ecotourism project. However, it displays many of the characteristics of ecotourism projects and

hence it is being evaluated as an ecotourism project case study in this thesis. The hotel is located in a pristine, rural environment providing a base for ecotourism activity. It is also located within three rural communities and is the only substantial source of economic opportunity in the area. This makes an investigation into its role in the upliftment of these communities, as well as the degree of participation of the latter in the operations of the hotel, possible. The case study also helps to put the local ecotourism development and practice of the private sector into perspective with regard to community perceptions of participation.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between the private sector and surrounding communities in the ecotourism sector using Umngazi River Bungalows in the Eastern Cape Province, as a case study.

To achieve this aim, a number of objectives have been set out to align with the theoretical framework, methodology, and analysis of the study. These objectives are as follows:

1. To identify the various ecotourism and community projects Umngazi River Bungalows is involved in

This objective provides a summary of the community projects within the three communities that interface with Umngazi River Bungalows. The levels of operational control the communities and the hotel exercise in these projects are explored.

2. To identify key stakeholders within and outside Umngazi River Bungalows and to explore the different relationships between these actors

This objective uses stakeholder theory to determine who the main stakeholders are regarding how Umngazi River Bungalows is operated. The different kinds of relationships that have been established among stakeholders are explored.

3. To examine the degree of participation in the operation of Umngazi River Bungalows by the three surrounding communities

This objective aims to determine the type of participation community stakeholders fall under using Pretty's typology on community participation.

4. To explore the extent to which Umngazi River Bungalows ascribes to the notion of ecotourism

This objective uses a summary of the components of ecotourism to determine the degree to which Umngazi River Bungalows incorporates the tenets of ecotourism in its activities.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the topic of the research, outlines the statement of the problem, and provides the aims and objectives of the thesis. It also outlines the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework, which comprises the body of literature within which the study is set. Literature on neo-liberalism and the network society is provided. This literature provides an overarching body of theory within which the study is contextualized and explains how the three arms of society interface with each other. It also explains the significant role of the private sector in development in a neo-liberal society. Theory on ecotourism as a sub-sector of tourism is discussed. The origin, definitions, components, and impacts of ecotourism are briefly outlined and a brief review of some global ecotourism case studies is provided. A critique of ecotourism as a model of natural resource management is provided. Community participation literature is provided and Pretty's typology of participation introduced, and finally, stakeholder identification theory is discussed.

Chapter 3 provides information on tourism and ecotourism in the global and South African contexts. The role of government in tourism development in terms of regulation is provided. The pro-poor tourism strategy that emphasizes the role of private sector in poverty reduction is discussed. The chapter discusses the role of the private sector in responsible tourism, and provides information on tourism in the Eastern Cape and the Wild Coast. It concludes by discussing Umngazi River Bungalows as the case study

chosen for this study. Information on the hotel's historical background, its tourism product, and the surrounding communities are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 provides an outline of the methodological approach used to conduct the qualitative and quantitative research in order to achieve the set aim and objectives. The research employs both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, which are explained in this chapter. The researcher's experiences, research ethics, and limitations faced in the research process are outlined in the chapter.

Chapter 5 provides the results and discussion components of the study where the outcomes of the data analysis process are provided. The chapter integrates theory with practice to provide a context within which community participation and ecotourism can be examined.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis with a summary of the key findings and recommendations for the practice of ecotourism and implementation of community participation principles.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Ecotourism has been in practice since the late twentieth century, and its tenets have been adopted by governments, the private sector, and communities as a way of ensuring natural resource management while providing economic benefits to local economies through tourism (Fennell, 1999). Conservation, protection of natural, social, and cultural environments, the involvement of local communities, adherence to the principles of sustainable development, ensuring guest satisfaction, and providing education are all principles of ecotourism (Weaver, 2001). Often, the human and cultural elements of tourism are overlooked, but it is increasingly being appreciated that local communities cannot be left out of the ecotourism package (Weaver, 2001). Relationships between government, communities, and the private sector have been formed to aid in the production of ecotourism experiences that reflect ecotourism principles.

The private sector has often been seen as a self-serving, profit-oriented entity with no regard for the social needs of society. However, in some cases, the private sector has formed successful relationships with either the government or communities based on mutual benefits. The involvement of communities in ecotourism activities is important in ensuring that their voices are heard in decision-making so as to ensure success in sustainable natural resource management. However, this does not mean that decision-making is the only form of participation by stakeholders, especially community stakeholders. Li (2006) argues that some communities may be content with other forms of benefits, such as employment.

This chapter provides the theoretical framework that informs this study. It begins by discussing neo-liberalism, which provides the context within which the current societal structures and processes play out. Ecotourism, community participation, and stakeholder identification theories are then discussed as the main theories that inform the study.

2.2. Neo-liberalism

The workings of the global economy are dictated by specific global economic approaches. Advanced since the 1970s, neo-liberal thinking stresses “the importance of economic rationalism and efficiency, market liberalization, and a minimal role for the state in the functioning of global society” (Scheyvens, 2007: 239). Neo-liberal ideas have been supported by key international organizations, such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), key politicians such as Thatcher and Reagan, and academic think tanks.

Economic growth is a goal that world nations aim to achieve and one that is advanced through neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism is advocated in the name of “efficiency, competitiveness, innovation, individual freedom, deficit reduction, and revenue generation”, and has been adopted by both developed and developing countries (Haque, 1999: 204). It shapes the identities, ways of thinking, and action plans of nation states and continuously influences the type of policies adopted by governments. The neo-liberal agenda advocates for less regulation by the public sector (Harvey, 2006). The state is seen as a development facilitator that puts mechanisms in place to ensure a favourable environment for the operation of markets or the private sector. As a result, most government policies are now “focused on enhancing economic efficiency and international competitiveness” as opposed to ensuring “full employment and an inclusive social welfare system” (Larner, 2000: 4). Policy documents are “framed in the language of choice, flexibility and the market” even in countries where free market policies are inherently unpopular (Larner, 2000: 7).

Advocates of the neo-liberal agenda believe that the “market is the optimal space for production and distribution of wealth and the optimal vehicle for social mobility” (Haque, 1999: 203). The market has a very significant role to play in the neo-liberal economy with “market based policy options” characterizing “policy programmes of social, democratic and conservative governments” (Larner, 2000: 7). Deregulation and privatization are encouraged in this system where, for instance, the market is expected to provide public goods and services that were previously provided by the state (Haque, 1999). The emphasis of economic liberalization and openness to increased competition,

especially in developing countries, has created and strengthened the role of the private sector in these economies.

Greater accessibility to finance and capital, a favourable policy environment, and private ownership of resources have facilitated an increase in the flow of private sector investment in rural areas (Moure-Eraso, 2003). This has enabled, amongst other things, the creation of employment and local economic development in these areas. However, many of these enterprises tend to adopt top-down managerial systems allowing limited participation of various stakeholders in their operations (Moure-Eraso, 2003). This is so especially because neo-liberal thinking focuses on the self-regulation of the market, although the current trend in the private sector is one that aims to encourage stakeholder involvement. The private sector, especially in the natural resource management sector, as this thesis will demonstrate, has realized that community buy-in of their operations is key to ensuring the protection of natural resources, which most of these businesses are based on. Moreover, in most cases, the key to attracting consumers, in this case ecotourists, to a natural resource based business has proved to be dependent on the relationship these private sector operators and the community have, as well as the manner in which natural resources are conserved and protected.

Within the neo-liberal economy, concerns of social issues are “mostly based on voluntarism” where the private sector and other agencies are expected to self-regulate their activities usually through their own internal social responsibility programs (Moure-Eraso, 2003: 1043). Emphasis on corporate responsibility and pro-poor development under the auspices of neo-liberalism has, however, acted as motivation for increased private sector involvement in dealing with social issues. In terms of the natural environment, the neo-liberal model “advocates for the limitless use of natural resources with emphasis in the use of non-renewable energy sources” (Moure-Eraso, 2003: 1044). The approach tends to subordinate environmental and social factors to economic factors and promotes “short term returns on investment and continuous growth preferably in unregulated settings” (Moure-Eraso, 2003: 1042).

The tourism sector is both facilitated and enabled by the neo-liberal paradigm. Tourism is enabled by neo-liberalism since its success depends on “an open economic environment that facilitates free movement of capital, labour and consumers” (Schilcher, 2007: 58). On a local level, ecotourism ventures draw communities into the global economic system by providing employment. Communities are also exposed to globalization through exposure to tourists and tourism’s multicultural society, which may promote peace and understanding, respect and interdependence or create needs within these communities that did not exist prior to the exposure, lead to questioning of local traditions and culture and create a conflict of identities (Schilcher, 2007).

International tourism organizations have been advocating community development within this economic approach. They have also been encouraging the private sector, government, and civil society organizations to adopt community development as a form of local economic and social development. This study focuses on the interface between the private sector and communities within this new world order, neo-liberalism. Increased access to information in the neo-liberal society has led to the formation of different networks especially within society, government, not-for-profit organizations, and the private sector. These networks and relationships are the focus of the next section.

2.3. Relationships in the Network Society

The availability of information is now shaping the functioning of human experiences and activities and has led to the creation of societal networks. According to Castells (1999: 500):

“Networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operations and outcomes in processes of production, experiences, power, and culture.”

The neo-liberal economy is organized around networks of capital, management, and information that form its roots in productivity and competitiveness. However, the “network-based societal structure is highly dynamic, open,” and provides a stage for the dramatic organization and re-organization of power relationships in society (Castells, 1999: 502). Seeing that the role of the state has been reduced to that of a facilitator in

the neo-liberal society, the emergence of the network society has meant the formation of different and new relationships between the three arms of society: communities, the state, and the private sector (see Figure 2.1). It is these relationships that this study will explore.

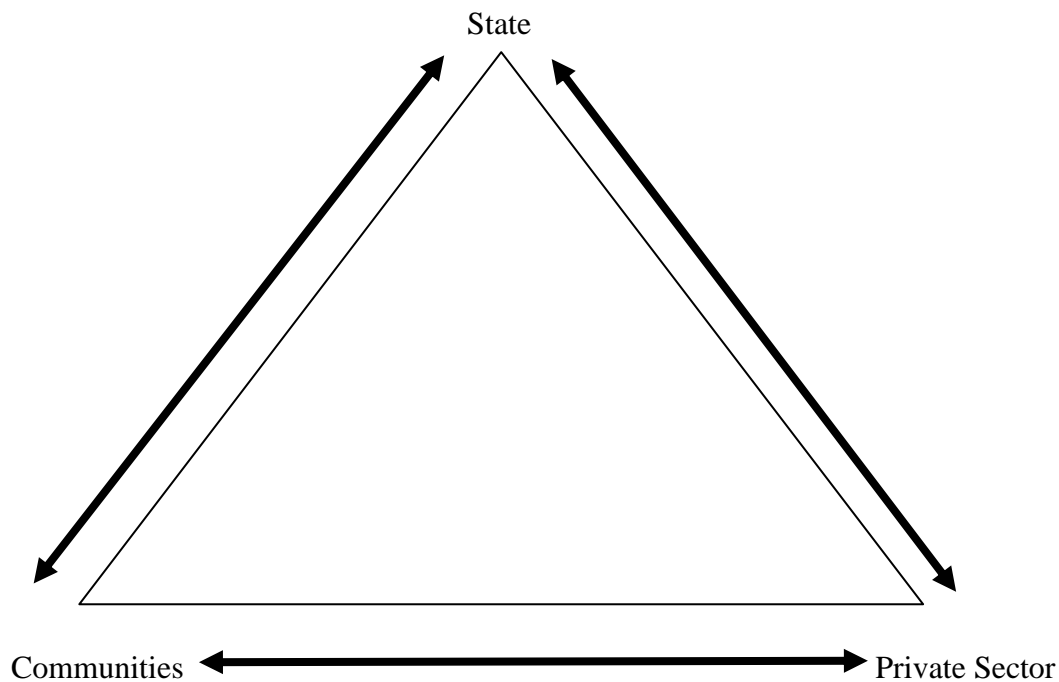


Figure 2.1: The relationship between the state, communities and the private sector

The private sector is now structured in a manner that allows interconnectivity with fellow businesses, consumers, governments, communities and other societal groups. Communities have more access to information and are increasingly forming groups among themselves to ensure they are correctly represented in decision-making forums, in both government and private sector structures. Government structures are increasingly forming relationships with the private sector, such as in public-private partnerships to ensure efficient service delivery and inclusion in policy making processes. Governments are also increasingly advocating for an increased role of communities in developmental activities through legislation and by including communities in decision making forums. The private sector and communities are also forming mutual relationships based on the interests of private sector players and community forums. All these relationships aid economic and social development, especially in developing countries. This study will show how such a relationship has

been formed between the communities and a private sector actor in a tourism venture in the Eastern Cape.

The emergence of these relationships confirms that top-down government policy making has been challenged by a new way of thinking. This thinking appreciates that boundaries to policy making are now fluid and that cooperative efforts are essential to addressing policy issues (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). For the purposes of this study, policy is what governments, private sector, and communities choose to do or what they choose not to do (Obasi, 1999). The choice by an ecotourism venture to involve communities in their activities, for instance, can be referred to as policy.

Effective relationships between different sectors of society are necessary for sustainable natural resource management and the achievement of sustainable development goals (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2005). This study focuses on the nature of the relationship formed between the private sector and communities. Existing relationships between these two entities are often inequitable, with the private sector having more bargaining power while indigenous people are forced into compliance with set protocol and conditions (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2005).

The growing need for a mutual relationship between communities and the private sector, especially in tourism, is motivated by a number of factors. Communities usually lack the skills and expertise to establish and operate tourism projects and need assistance with this (Scheyvens, 2002). The private sector is increasingly finding it a lucrative opportunity to operate in rural areas near local communities who often own land and social capital (Ashley and Jones, 2001). Changes in tourism market trends, where tourists are demanding sophisticated and new experiences, including ethical and cultural components, are also fuelling the need for a mutually beneficial relationship (Ashley and Jones, 2001). Natural resource management projects often provide a source of livelihood for communities as will be shown in this study. Private sector investors are keen to facilitate this and local economic development. The success of this relationship relies on the ability of both sets of stakeholders to understand and respect each other's

environmental conditions, in terms of culture, business motives and other characteristics. There is need to recognise the cultural diversity of communities, and that there are usually competing interests within communities. In addition, communities need to be supported through the inclusion of existing social capital and strengths of communities in the operations of natural resource management projects.

In order to implement natural resource management tenets, the different arms of society have adopted various management techniques and principles over the last few decades, each proposing a different set of best practice rules. The following section discusses ecotourism, which has emerged as a form of tourism that seeks to employ nature conservation and preservation principles in natural resource management while ensuring economic and social benefits for the stakeholders involved.

2.4. Ecotourism

There has been a paradigm shift in how tourism is viewed as a result of influence by the environmental movement and the tangible dis-benefits of mass tourism (Weaver, 2001). The term ecotourism has been used since the latter part of the twentieth century to denote a better form of tourism that embraces sustainability principles. Ecotourism business ventures have the potential to not only “boost local jobs and economic growth” but also contribute to empowerment and skills enhancement of local people (Loon and Polakow, 2001: 902). This type of tourism appreciates that ventures can have negative impacts on the environment, culture and people of an area and seeks to mitigate these effects. This section provides a brief background on the origins of ecotourism, defines the concept, discusses the various components of ecotourism, and provides examples of global case studies where ecotourism is practiced.

2.4.1. The origins of ecotourism

Humankind has always dominated nature because of religious, research, and socio-economic reasons (Wearing and Nel, 1999). The need to conserve some natural areas as a result of increased overuse was felt as early as the seventeenth century, in Britain. By the turn of the twentieth century, America had become aware of the need to utilize resources efficiently. The conservationist perspective, which embraced a long-term

vision of the careful utilization of natural resources, was adopted by some sections of American society (Fennell, 1999). This was succeeded by romanticism and environmentalism, where nature was not only seen as a provider of physical and spiritual resources but also when emerging environmental problems were blamed on the lack of proper management of natural resources (Fennell, 1999). Ecotourism can be seen as an extension of this green philosophy. It uses the tenets of environmentalism and sustainability to link ecology and the economy. Generally, the concept is thought to have evolved as a result of the general dissatisfaction with the negative approach to tourism development that often led to over-exploitation of natural resources.

The word 'ecotourism' can be traced back to Hetzer (1965) who identified four important principles that would guide the adoption of a responsible tourism approach. These were "minimum environmental impact; minimum impact on-and maximum respect for host cultures; maximum economic benefits to the host country's grassroots and maximum recreational satisfaction to participating tourists" (Hetzer, 1965, cited in Fennell, 1999:4).

At the same time, the terms 'eco-development' and 'ecotours' had emerged in the western world with the latter tours being evident in Canada, where ecozones were developed around the Trans-Canada highway (Fennell, 1999). Ecotourism may also have been practiced long before, as seen in the wildlife-based safaris of Africa, and historical tours by the American Museum of Natural History that date back to the mid-nineteenth century (Orams, 1995). The term emerged in academia in the mid 1980's, with the advent of sustainability in the global arena, and has since become a major component of the tourism industry. It has, however, been largely associated with protected area management, although tourism industry players in unprotected areas have, recently, adopted its principles (Weaver, 2001). This case study explores one such case where a tourism industry player has established a family hotelsurrounded by three communities and where some the principles of ecotourism have been implemented.

2.4.2. Defining ecotourism

There is a general lack of consensus amongst practitioners and institutions about a precise definition of ecotourism, and this has led to a variety of definitions being adopted. Ceballos-Lascuráin (1987 as cited in Weaver, 2001) was the first person to coin a definition for the term that was consequently adopted by Boo in a 1990 publication, *'Ecotourism: the potentials and pitfalls'* (Weaver, 2001). Budowski (1976 as cited in Weaver, 2001) had, however, previously used the word in an article where he suggested tourism and the natural environment could adopt a relationship of “mutual benefit” (Weaver, 2001: 3).

Ecotourism can be seen as a form of alternative tourism where ecological, cultural, and social sustainability, education, and guest satisfaction are emphasized (Wearing and Nel, 1999). This understanding informed Ceballos-Lascuráin's definition as cited in Fennell (1999: 30), which sees ecotourism as “travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and future) found in these areas.”

The Ecotourism Society (Western, 1993, as cited in Fennell, 1999: 40) defines ecotourism in a softer manner recognizing that the strict goals set by some practitioners are hard to achieve. It sees ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of the local people.” The ecotourism ideal is about “attracting visitors for the “right” reasons and not simply the promotion of tourism for the sake of the tourist dollar at the expense of a community's natural and cultural attributes” (Wearing and Nel, 1999: 75). This perspective was used by Scheyvens (2002: 11) to define the term as one that supports tourism forms that are “small scale, minimize environmental and cultural interference, and which prioritise community needs, community involvement and community interests, rather than being based on an agenda of economic growth which often of primary benefit” (Scheyvens, 2002: 11).

Laarman and Durst (1987, as cited in Fennell, 1999: 34) suggest soft and hard types of ecotourism based on “guests' levels of interest in natural history and the physical rigour

of the experience.” Fennell and Eagles (1990, cited in Fennell, 1999) have developed an ecotourism framework that sees the management of ecotourism as the key distinguishing factor from other forms of tourism. The natural resource is seen as the principal component of the ecotourism experience, and the service industry and visitors are seen as managers of the process or experience. The framework recognizes the need to manage the process or experience from a resource, community, industry, and visitors’ perspective to ensure success.

What has happened regarding an ecotourism definition, just like that of tourism, is that many authors associate definitions with contexts, such as economics, time, space, place, and whole system models. The definition, though, depends on who is operationalizing the concept and for what purposes. For the purposes of this study, the definition by Fennell (1999: 43) is adopted:

“Ecotourism is a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experience and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low impact, non-consumptive, and locally-oriented (controls, benefits and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to conservation or preservation of such areas.”

2.4.3. Components of ecotourism

The definitions of ecotourism are comprehensive and often ambiguous, as stated above. With no specific definition accepted, criteria or principles are often used to provide guidance on what product can be termed as ecotourism. Ecotourism practitioners and organizations use these principles to provide a definition for the term. Ecotourism is different from other forms of tourism as it stresses the importance of including ethical, educative, and sustainability components in the tourist experience (Fennell, 1999). In order for ecotourism activities to be successful, all relevant stakeholders must be involved. It has the potential to provide economic benefits to rural communities while ensuring the natural environment is not destroyed. In general, the ecotourism experience is defined when there is minimal impact on the natural environment, an educative component is emphasized, conservation and preservation of natural and cultural resources are key to the experience, local hosts participation in decision making is embraced, economic benefits that augment traditional practices are derived from the

activity, and provision for an opportunity for all stakeholders to understand natural and cultural areas is ensured (Fennell, 1999; Wearing and Nel, 1999; Diamantis, 2004). Four key components of ecotourism are discussed below.

a. Nature-based

For an activity to be termed as ecotourism, it must be based on either the protected or unprotected natural environment. This environment should be relatively undisturbed and pristine. An activity can have a narrow focus of nature, such as wildlife viewing, although rehabilitation of natural areas can also be termed as ecotourism. The outcomes of the ecotourism experience should ensure minimum disturbance to the environment and ecosystem protection (Orams, 1995). Ecotourism also incorporates the cultural component of tourism, since most of the world is relatively disturbed by the humans (Weaver, 2001). Indigenous cultures that have existed with the non-human components are therefore emphasized in this component, such as the San of Southern Africa. The cultural component could be used by businesses as a way of diversifying the product, although this has to be done in a sensitive manner. Since ecotourism is practiced mostly in “more remote, less developed tourism areas, cultural disruptions and environmental degradation” are to be guarded against (Scheyvens, 2002: 68). Where nature and culture are protected and conserved, ecotourism can be the “most powerful tool for protecting these environments” (Scheyvens, 2002: 68). The extent to which the activities of Umngazi River Bungalows are based on nature and culture are explored in this thesis.

b. Sustainability

This is considered a criterion that distinguishes ecotourism from conventional mass tourism (Weaver, 2001). Ecotourism ventures must be small in scale, and preservation should be integrated in their plans where the natural and cultural places are protected and safeguarded from overexploitation (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004). Consciousness on the use of resources for the fulfilment of the ecological, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability must be clearly communicated to all relevant stakeholders. Economic sustainability will ensure that positive economic impacts from ecotourism contribute to the general standards of living, infrastructural, and other related developments within the area while curbing economic leakages. Ecotourism

operators have more at stake with regard to environmental sustainability as the environment plays a greater role in the success of their operations (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004). The unique, sensitive ecosystems that are the base for ecotourism should be protected at all times. Social sustainability in ecotourism advocates visitor management techniques, such as carrying capacity and pre-trip education. This ensures interactions between visitors and hosts and safeguards community norms and practices (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004).

c. Locally-oriented

Research on the impacts of tourism economically, socially, and ecologically shows that local communities in less developed countries often do not gain substantial benefits from tourism activities. This is because tourism businesses are controlled and operated by a few key actors, either based in more developed countries or the upper class of the less developed countries (Fennell, 1999). The majority of the population therefore remains impoverished. It is now “recognized that to neglect rural communities, which are a part of the ecotourism system itself” (Reid, 1999: 35) could result in the communities feeling “powerless in the face of development” and the inability to “influence development” within their surrounds (Diamantis, 2004: 36).

Ecotourism emphasizes the involvement of local people in a manner that ensures they are not exploited by the industry. The practice of ecotourism also stresses the importance of proper communication on the positives and negatives of ecotourism development to all relevant stakeholders, especially local communities. A successful implementation of ecotourism will often ensure communities are actively involved in the decision-making process and that their “involvement is not imposed from outside but rather a community-oriented approach” is adopted (Reid, 1999: 35). The nature of involvement of local communities in decision making forums within Umngazi River Bungalows is investigated in this study. It must be appreciated, though, that “active engagement of local people in the ecotourism development process is a complex issue and not just a matter of selling outside intentions to communities” (Reid, 1999: 35). Local people should be viewed as key conservationists and contributors to the

successful operation of an ecotourism venture. A good relationship between the developer and communities is therefore important.

d. Educational component

The ecotourism experience includes an “element of formal or informal learning, education or appreciation about the natural attractions” (Weaver, 2001: 11). Ecotourism should aim to educate and inform the locals and domestic and international travellers on the importance of natural areas before, during, or after the experience. This will promote a “better understanding, awareness and appreciation of the natural and cultural environment” (Diamantis, 2004: 12). Ecotourists have a desire to learn about the nature and culture of an area. The extent to which this happens at Umngazi River Bungalows is examined in this thesis. Interpretation should therefore form part of the ecotourism experience. However, this does not always take place and hence ecotourism activity often achieves some but not all its objectives. The degree to which an activity achieves ecotourism objectives can be used to determine the degree to which the activity can be classified as ecotourism. However, for any activity to be termed as ecotourism, it should at least “satisfy conservation and development objectives” (Lindberg et al, 1996: 543). This study seeks to explore the extent to which Umngazi River Bungalows has adopted ecotourism principles in its activities.

2.4.4. A review of some global ecotourism case studies

Government, private sector and civil society stakeholders have adopted ecotourism principles in the operations and management of tourism experiences. Weaver (1999) concluded that ecotourism activity was predominant in Less Developed Countries (LDC's) with Costa Rica, Kenya, Ecuador, and Belize leading as case studies. This section provides a brief review of two case studies where the private sector is involved in successful ecotourism management at the local level and one study where ecotourism management is thought to have been unsuccessful.

In the book, *‘Ecotourism: Management and assessment,’* authors Johansson and Diamantis (2004), provide two case studies of private sector ecotourism ventures operated at the local scale in Thailand and Kenya, whose governments have promoted

ecotourism as a tool to promote conservation and rural development. An evaluation of how these ventures were fairing with regard to adhering to ecotourism principles is also provided in this text. Lisu Lodge, a small-scale business entity, is located in northern Thailand and is owned and managed as part of the Asian Oasis Collection private sector players (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004). The land on which the lodge is owned is leased from the surrounding Lisu village, and its buildings resemble the village's architecture. The managers, employed from the community, collaborate with the village elders in the operations of the lodge to ensure authentic tourist experiences. Fact sheets and trained guides are used to ensure that tourist interactions with both nature and culture are sustainably managed (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004).

The Il Ngwesi Lodge is located in northern Kenya and is a communally owned ranch where local people work at and manage the operations of the lodge on a day-to-day basis. Local building traditions were used to construct the lodge with material sourced locally. Profits from the ranch are divided amongst local community households and various community facilities, including schools and health facilities, have been established as a result of the initiative. Visitor-host interaction, greater understanding and conservation of nature, and traditions and cultures have also resulted from the collaboration (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004).

Johansson and Diamantis show that the two lodges were able to ensure local community participation in the ventures through employment, which allowed them to enjoy financial benefits that accrued from their involvement in ecotourism related activities. The two lodges also demonstrated sustainable tourism development through the “use of carrying capacity management, and involvement of stakeholders in the planning and development processes” of the ecolodges (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004: 302). They are small in scale and work hard in ensuring social and cultural sustainability through the inclusion of stakeholders in planning processes. Education is provided to tourists in a variety of forms with family visits being utilized to encourage visitor-host interactions, and therefore a process of learning about nature and culture is actively encouraged at both lodges. These case studies also provide a good point of departure for

marketing the ecolodges to potential ecotourists given the processes involved in maintaining ecotourism principles.

In other cases, attempts to incorporate ecotourism in development have been unsuccessful. The Playa de Oro project, based in the northern Esmeraldas in Ecuador and largely funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through a not-for-profit organization (NGO), CARE-Subir, is one such example (Wood, 1998). The project provided tour guide and accommodation services to ecotourists who visited the village. Infrastructure, including cabins and a dining area, and training were provided by CARE-Subir but due to a lack of commercial representation, in the form of a tour operator, the operations of the project contributed limited economic benefits. The participation of community members in meetings was limited and responsibilities for implementation of the project seemed to be controlled by the NGO and other external players (Wood, 1998). Culture was not part of the guided tours and knowledge on flora and fauna was provided superficially by guides.

The Playa de Oro project provides an example where the management of an ecotourism business is ineffectively done, the participation by local communities inadequate, and the appreciation of flora and fauna by both hosts and visitors is not fully exploited. It also provides a glimpse of some of the problems and limitations that can be associated with ecotourism where it is not managed well. Indeed, ecotourism as a concept and natural resource management tool has been criticized by some who have seen it as a marketing ploy of the tourism industry as opposed to a conservation tool, as is discussed in the next section.

2.4.5. Ecotourism: a critique

Firstly, the ecotourism industry is often seen as one that has potential to provide economic, social, and environmental benefits and it has been suggested that it is the fastest growing sector in tourism (Fennell, 1999). Due to a lack of a precise and agreed definition on the term and that of sustainability, as well as quantitative data on its perceived contributions, these perceptions could be viewed as lacking and merely speculative (Weaver, 1999). This lack could have contributed to the fact that there are

few comparative studies that aim to evaluate ecotourism's role in the conservation and preservation of species and natural areas. Secondly, Weaver (1999) contends that the economic contributions of ecotourism are based on an assumption that ecotourists have higher incomes than other tourist groups, and are more likely to spend money in the localities of the activities they engage in, as they are perceived as sensitive to local development (Fennell, 1999). Most studies conducted of ecotourism practices focus on the destination impacts of ecotourism and often do not take into consideration the sustainability issues associated with long haul travel and scenic tours such as carbon emissions from travel, and anthropogenic influences to scenic areas. These often have significant negative environmental and wildlife impacts, which are often not accounted for.

The implementation of ecotourism is assumed to incorporate issues of morality and ethics. However, the realities are that some ecotourism ventures are likely to be short-term profit oriented; ecotourists may only be concerned with highly rewarding experiences while economic benefits may be the major motivating factors for participation by communities (Scheyvens, 2002). In other cases, communities, although economically benefiting from an ecotourism venture, may find that these benefits are menial and seasonal, resulting in exploitation. This is especially true in cases where communities are unaware of their bargaining or worker rights, and where the right channels of stakeholder participation have not been followed by a developer. These reasons could potentially override the importance of ecotourism as an ethical form of tourism (Weaver, 1999). Lastly, the success of ecotourism relies on previously undeveloped environments, which are sensitive to tourism impacts. It could further be argued that since ecotourism encourages development in these pristine environments, in the hope that this development does not adversely harm the environment, it in fact contributes to the destruction of natural resources in those environments (Weaver, 1999). This is especially so in cases where developers use ecotourism as a marketing ploy, rather than a tool for natural resource management.

As discussed in this section, ecotourism is a form of responsible and sustainable tourism that aims to ensure the protection of natural environments. It is also a principle that is

criticized for its idealism and if not practiced correctly could lead to more destruction of natural environments and cultures, than their protection and conservation. Community participation was identified as an important principle of ecotourism given that most ecotourism activities take place in community settings. The next section discusses the concept of community participation and links participation to stakeholder identification, which provides an understanding as to how different stakeholders are chosen to represent the views and opinions of others.

2.5. Community Participation

Local communities in developing countries benefit less from tourism because they have “less control over the ways in which the industry is developed, they cannot match the financial resources available to external investors and their views are rarely heard” (Mowforth and Munt, 1998: 237). At the same time, participation has become a key approach for many organizations, including the private sector, NGO’s, government, and other civil society organizations, as part of their quest to fulfil sustainable development goals. Community participation is essential for the long-term success of a venture, especially where the tourism venture occurs within the surrounds of indigenous communities. It is believed that, where adequate community participation exists, ‘more equal distribution of benefits’ and decision-making that is likely to “meet the needs of the local communities” can be achieved (Tosun, 2000: 617). The initiation of a community-wide dialogue in communities regarding tourism development is the most challenging phase in community-oriented projects (Reed et al, 2004). Often tensions arise in communities as they try to understand the process of decision making, especially how to access it and why certain choices are made and not others. Different community members will have different interests regarding how participation should take place and will exert power or influence in the process of tourism development (Pearce et al., 1996).

2.5.1. Defining community participation

The definition of community participation is also as contentious as that of tourism or ecotourism. At the heart of the confusion, is the definition of the word ‘community’. According to Mowforth and Munt (1998), a community can be defined by scale, sector,

interest, and level of power. They stress the importance of defining a community on a case-by-case basis. Power dynamics among community members can lead to cases where the marginal poor are not be represented adequately, leading to uneven distribution of benefits (Naguran, 1999). Communities should not be viewed as homogenous entities, as conflicts, misunderstandings, and differing interests occur among different community members who may perceive tourism activities in different ways.

Community participation in the tourism process can be understood to mean “the involvement of individuals within a tourism-oriented community in the decision making and implementation process” of these tourism activities (Pearce et al, 1996: 181). For a better understanding of community participation, Pearce et al (1996: 184), provide some critical questions that need to be asked especially by those who intend to involve communities in tourism activities, including: “what are the goals of community participation, what are the obstacles to community participation, how is the process of participation carried out, and what sort of outcomes can be expected from the processes?” Arnstein (1969, cited in Tosun, 2000: 494) defines citizen participation as “the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens to be deliberately included in the future. It is the means by which they can induce significant social reform, which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.”

The private sector is rarely seen as a facilitator with regard to the empowerment and development of communities due to its perceived profit-oriented motive (Scheyvens, 2002). In understanding the levels of community participation where the private sector is involved, questions regarding whether this sector is involving communities in tourism control are vital. Because of their lack of skills, finances, and business experience, communities are unlikely to enter agreements with the private sector on a level playing field. Imbalances in power relationships often exist where the private sector wields more power which they use in negotiating agreements, the outcome of which may favour their interests.

2.5.2. Pretty's typology on participation

Participation in tourism by community members varies with “power, objectives, and expectations from community participation”, and shapes the attitudes of community members with regard to the participation process (Tosun, 2006: 501). A number of researchers have attempted to construct models that could be used to measure degrees of participation (Ainstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995 as cited in Tosun, 2002). Pretty's model (1995) “allows for differing degrees of external involvement and local control, and reflects the power relationships between them” (Pearce et al, 1996: 184).

The typology identifies different levels of participation, from manipulative to self-mobilization participation, and reflects on how actively involved local people should be in the operations of a venture. The typology simplifies participation by looking at whether communities are passive or active in their participation endeavours (Scheyvens, 2002). Ideal community involvement is achieved with movement down the table. The self mobilization level is the ideal participation level, while manipulative participation denotes where the communities are not involved in decision making at all. Communities can fall under one or several levels, but it is of vital importance to understand the stage of tourism development, as well as local conditions, when applying any community participation model. Table 2.1 below describes the various levels of participation according to Pretty's model.

Table 2.1: Pretty's typology of participation

Typology Type	Characteristics of the typology
1. Manipulative Participation	Participation by communities is in the form of pretence. Community representatives may sit on the venture's boards or committees but since they are not unanimously elected from the communities, they have no real power to effect or implement any decisions
2. Passive Participation	Although external professionals (tourism experts and tourism establishments' managers) may convene meetings for consultation purposes, this is seen as a procedural undertaking. Generally, communities are told what is to be done or what is expected of them and their responses are seldom considered in final decision-making
3. Participation by Consultation	This participation level is still facilitated by external agents, for instance, private sector investors and tourism planners, who define problems and gather relevant information from community members, but are not obligated to account for people's views and therefore, there is no shared decision making.
4. Participation for Material Incentives	Here, communities contribute resources, in terms of labour, in return from material goods, for instance, money or food. The learning process excludes communities who are seen to have no real stake with regard to the end result. Therefore, in the case of private sector practitioners, there would be no obligation to involve communities in decision-making processes
5. Functional Participation	Participation by external agents is seen as a means of achieving project goals. The involvement of communities may be interactive and shared decision-making may be evident but only after external agents have reached the major decisions.
6. Interactive Participation	Community participation is a right, The people are involved in the development of action plans; multiple perspectives are sought by external agents and considered in decision-making. Communities have a stake in maintaining practices and structures and take control over how available resources are used.
7. Self-mobilization	Communities initiate projects independent of external agents who are only sought for material and technical advice. Communities have full control over resource use. This level of participation needs a strong support framework from all other relevant stakeholders and may challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.

Adopted from Mowforth and Munt (1998:242)

2.5.3. Multiple avenues for community participation

Different researchers take different positions with regard to how participation by local communities in tourism should be viewed. In their study of Peruvian island tourism, Mitchell and Reid (2001) argue that the ability to control and influence the operations of

the tourism industry by communities is usually limited, with community benefits being in the form of income. They argue that in order for communities to protect natural and cultural resources, full integration in tourism planning and management is not only essential but also necessary. Scheyvens (2002) argues that communities exhibit different levels of involvement in the tourism industry. They are either directly or indirectly involved in ecotourism activities. This involvement is determined by the degree to which they are involved in the control of the activities that take place, whether benefits accrue to them significantly, the levels of economic leakages, and whether the ecotourism venture is locally owned.

Tosun (2000), on the other hand, contends that local people have been able to receive more benefits, economically, from tourism ventures without necessarily getting involved in decision-making. This stand is also taken by Li (2006), who in the study of the Jiuzhaigou Biosphere Reserve in China, concludes that despite weak participation, local communities were benefiting economically from family hotels set up for tourist use and entry fees from the reserve and that they were content with this form of participation. In this particular case, the management of the reserve possessed the know-how on “balancing short and long term benefits”, which included ensuring sustainable natural resource management as mandated by the national government, while ensuring financial benefits accrued to local communities from tourism (Li, 2006: 140).

Management played a pivotal role in ensuring that employment and other due incomes accrued to family hotel owners and community households. Regarding their role in decision-making, village committee members did not seem concerned with how decisions were made regarding the operation of the reserve. Improvements in standards of living within the communities were of more importance than involving community members in decision making. Asked about representation in the reserve’s management committee, the village committee members were in agreement that employed residents were sufficient as community representatives in the committee. This example reveals a community that accepts weak participation as a result of efficient management of an ecotourism venture where other benefits accrue to them. This reflects the trust they have in the know-how of the managers of the venture (Li, 2006). The current research

explores the communities' responses to ecotourism benefits in an ecotourism project in the Eastern Cape.

“A stake in ownership of a tourism venture by local people does not necessarily equate to control over the venture's operations” (Sinclair et al, 1992 as cited in Schyvens, 2002: 191). Therefore, communities could end up receiving token benefits from these types of partnerships. Decision-making is not necessarily the only avenue that ensures that communities participate in ecotourism and receive benefits from this type of tourism. Employment and other community-wide benefits can be seen as satisfactory forms of participation.

2.5.4. Limitations to adequate community participation

A study done by Tosun (2000) in Turkey, where respondents were asked questions related to their expected nature of participation in tourism, concluded that most wished to be consulted in some way to ensure they were part of the process. Although local agencies supported the idea of consultation, they did not expect communities to play a pivotal role in decision-making. In fact, data from interviews revealed that some of the agencies were “opposed to the idea of community participation” (Tosun, 2006: 500). Tosun (2000) discusses operational, structural, and cultural limitations that prevent communities from adequately engaging in tourism activities.

At the operational level, highly centralized planning and management of the industry, especially in developing countries, limits participation by local people. A lack of information by communities about their role in tourism development and the process of participation inhibit communities from adequate involvement. A lack of coordination between the public and private sectors, with overlaps of responsibilities and unclear guidelines on participation procedures, also contributes to these limitations. With regard to structural limitations, lack of tourism expertise by tourism planners who could assist communities in understanding the participation process, questionable attitudes by professionals who lack information on tourism in communities, domination of community elites, top-down decision making, a lack of trained human resources within communities, and the high cost of training communities on tourism expertise are stated

as major limitations. Tosun (2000) also views cultural limitations, especially those related to low levels of awareness in local communities about the importance of tourism and general apathy towards participation, as the main cultural challenges to proper participation. However, if communities own land or have access to a key resource, then this can be seen as a key bargaining power in the tourism development process (Scheyvens, 2002). These issues are explored in this thesis in the context of participation of the communities at Umngazi River Bungalows.

It might seem sensible to conclude that the more participation from local communities, the better, but this might not be desired by external agents within an ecotourism activity. “It should be accepted that community participation, as citizen power, is not a simple matter but involves different ideological beliefs, political forces, administrative arrangements, redistribution of wealth and power, and varying perceptions of what is possible” (Tosun, 2000: 626). Forms of participation should be compatible with the needs, ambitions, and expectations of the local communities (Buanes et al, 2005). All in all, the principle of participation is “easier to promote in theory than it is to put into practice at the local level” (Mowforth and Munt, 1998: 240).

Linked to the issues of community participation as discussed above, is stakeholder identification and salience. Whether a community participates actively or inactively in the development of ecotourism, is largely dependent on who is chosen as a stakeholder by the management of an ecotourism venture. It becomes important therefore to take a keen interest in the process through which stakeholders are chosen, who chooses them, and how this influences decision making. This thesis uses literature related to stakeholder participation in the business or private sector to understand the process of stakeholder identification. This literature is adopted because of its relevance to the nature of activities that Umngazi River Bungalows undertakes and will aid in a better understanding of private sector, community, and environment relationships.

2.6. Stakeholder Theory

“The complexity of balancing ecological goals with social and economic goals suggests a decision making model in which policy makers are a part of the negotiating process

rather than the centre of the constellation of decision making” (Long et al, 1996: 3). The process of identifying stakeholders can be complex due to the fact that different individuals have different and often competing objectives. Failure to engage stakeholders can not only lead to a rejection of proposed development but also hinder the success of an existing one. Stakeholder engagement encourages empowerment and capacity to influence development by various individuals and entities (Mosidi, 1996).

According to Araujo and Bramwell (1999: 356), a stakeholder is “any person, group or organization that is affected by the causes or consequences of an issue.” A more comprehensive definition is provided by Long et al (1996: 2) who view stakeholders as “individuals and groups that have an involvement or investment in a venture’s decisions and in its social and economic exchanges.” Stakeholders in natural resource management include citizens, companies and their shareholders, employees, customers, communities, and government policy makers. This thesis identifies the different stakeholders who play key roles in the operations of Umngazi River Bungalows.

According to Mitchell et al (1997: 855), “persons, groups, neighbourhoods, organizations, institutions, societies, and even the natural environment are generally thought to qualify as actual or potential stakeholders.” “Being identified, or conversely, not being identified, as a relevant stakeholder is an essential first step that affects the whole process of involving participants in decision making and its outcomes” (Araujo and Bramwell, 1999: 357). The determination of stakeholders should take into account a number of questions including: “which stakeholders should be involved in an issue, how and when, what is the nature of the different stakeholders, which of the stakeholders can and want to contribute in the process?” Phillips and Graham (1998: 228)

2.6.1. Stakeholder identification and salience

The identification of stakeholders is very important for operational, technical, and political reasons. Stakeholder theory distinguishes stakeholders from non-stakeholders. It acknowledges that managers of ventures tend to choose to attend to the needs of particular stakeholders as a result of diverse, dynamic and complex considerations

(Mitchell et al, 1997). In the case of ecotourism, where the private sector plays a key role the manager group, in most cases, comprises the owners and the operational managers of the ecotourism business. Mitchell et al, (1997) have researched how to distinguish stakeholders from non-stakeholders and why managers choose to attend to particular stakeholders in their claims. Stakeholder theory aims to answer “which groups are stakeholders deserving or requiring management attention, and which are not” (Mitchell et al, 1997: 855) by understanding the stakeholder identification and salience process.

Stakeholder identification deals with who has a legitimate claim to be considered a stakeholder by managers, while stakeholder salience, considers who actually becomes a stakeholder in the operation of a business and whose claims and demands are, in fact, attended to by management. In the case provided in this thesis, literature on stakeholder identification and salience aids in understanding the relationship between the owners, managers, the people who live within Umngazi River Bungalows, and the government authorities that govern the area around the ecotourism venture.

The theory identifies legitimacy, urgency of claims, and power as three attributes that are critical in understanding stakeholder identification and salience. Legitimacy relates to “perceptions that the interests or claims of a stakeholder are appropriate or desirable, with these perceptions being based on socially constructed values and beliefs” (Araujo and Bramwell, 1999: 360). It answers questions regarding who has a legal, moral, or presumed claim on decision making in the case of a business. A person may have a legitimate claim on the venture, but if they do not have power to enforce their will or perception that their claims are legitimate, achieving salience from managers will be difficult (Mitchell et al, 1997). Legitimacy is based upon a social construction on one or more social level of analysis and reflects who “gains rights through power and voice through urgency” (Mitchell et al, 1997: 870). Essentially, the choice for legitimate stakeholders is based on a perception that an individual holds an important societal position(s) in relation to a particular project.

Urgency of claims relates to the “degree to which stakeholders claims call for immediate attention” (Mitchell et al, 1997: 870). An inadequate involvement of affected parties can heighten potential conflict and reinforce inequalities (Araujo and Bramwell, 1999). This attribute addresses questions regarding whose claims demand immediate attention from managers. Urgency exists when a claim is of a time-specific nature and critical to the stakeholder. When combined with legitimacy, urgency allows for access to decision-making channels, but if combined with power, it could lead to biased stakeholder action. If combined with both power and legitimacy, it may lead to “reciprocal acknowledgement and action between stakeholders and managers” (Mitchell et al, 1997: 871). Power is a crucial variable in a theory of stakeholders-manager relations as it is often used in the form of resources to achieve a desired objective. It addresses questions regarding who is in the position to influence the decisions of a venture.

An individual or entity may, consciously or unconsciously, be in possession of any of the attributes but may not choose to enact any implied behaviours. In other words, an individual may possess power to impose a will on a firm, but unless there is an awareness and willingness to act upon this, they are not considered a stakeholder of the venture (Mitchell et al, 1997). According to the theory, managers and owners are the only entities that enter into contractual obligations with all other stakeholders and have the upper hand with regard to decision-making in the venture. Ultimately, they make decisions as to who becomes a stakeholder and who does not, regardless of how much power, legitimacy, and urgency these may have. Stakeholders that win managers’ attention are those that the latter perceives as salient (Mitchell et al, 1997).

Stakeholders can then be categorized into definitive, expectant, and latent stakeholders depending on the attributes they possess. Definitive stakeholders possess “power, legitimacy and urgency and have an unequivocal claim on the attention of managers” (Mikalsen and Jentoft, 2001: 283). They are considered highly salient stakeholders, and managers have a clear mandate to attend to their immediate claims. Expectant stakeholders possess “two of the three attributes and have a more ‘active relationship’ with the managers” (Mikalsen and Jentoft, 2001: 283). They are considered moderately

salient stakeholders that ‘expect something’ with regard to stakeholder engagement and their expectations matter to management, but they may not be the most important stakeholders that managers relate to. Latent stakeholders possess only one attribute and are viewed as having low salience. More often than not, they are ignored in the stakeholder-manager relationship, and managers do not necessarily feel obligated to engage them (Mikalsen and Jentoft, 2001). This thesis explores the level of power, legitimacy, and urgency the Umngazi River Bungalows stakeholders have.

Management must not only pay attention to those people that possess all three attributes but also those stakeholders that hold power and are likely to impose their will for immediate action. Ventures therefore need to widen their attention beyond the obvious stakeholders. The model has it that “entities with no power, legitimacy, or urgency in relations to the firm are not stakeholders and will be perceived as having no salience” by managers (Mitchell et al, 1997: 873). It is flexible and provides for movement from one category to another if an individual acquires or loses an attribute.

2.6.2. Focusing on power

Power is everywhere, embedded in all situations and is produced from moment to moment in relations (Cheong and Miller, 2000). “Individuals and groups get whatever they get because of what they and others do, the way society is structured, and the rules and conventions that govern the accepted way of doing things” (Dowding, 1996: 1). Power is not only found in formal institutions but also in informal ones and can be determined by resources and competition among stakeholders (Bramwell, 2006). It is, therefore, a major variable that determines who stakeholders are, and how managers choose to respond to their various claims. Ecotourism is “held together by active sets of relations in which the human and the non-human entities continuously exchange properties” (Van der Duim, 2007: 964). In recent literature (Allen, 2003; Coles and Church, 2007), it is argued that power is found in every person and that each entity chooses to use it in a particular manner depending on his or her circumstances, aim, and objectives. Power is not held but exercised, whether collectively or by a single person (Allen, 2003), and cannot therefore be seen as a result of the decisions of an individual, rather it emanates from multiple relations and forces (Coles and Church, 2007).

Resources play an important role in the development of power relations even though they may be “unused, misused or simply given away” (Church and Ravenscroft, 2007:173).

An examination of the partnerships formed by ecotourism stakeholders cannot ignore political, social, and economic processes that are evident among these stakeholders. This is explored in this thesis as the socio-economic context within which Umngazi River Bungalows is situated is a key factor in defining the power relations in the ecotourism venture. Various stakeholders will push for specific agendas in the ecotourism development process shaping the kinds of relationships that are developed. Given that power is not held by a specific entity, stakeholder identity should look closely at the different interests and their characteristics within the network. Ultimately, the process of stakeholder identification and engagement should contribute to more informed decision making, enhance debate, and provide real opportunity for stakeholders to influence the decision-making process (Phillips and Graham, 1998; Hall, 2003).

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a theoretical framework to explore the business-community-environment relationships at Umngazi River Bungalows in the Eastern Cape. Neo-liberalism was introduced as the main theory that provides a context within which societal relationships are based. Neo-liberal thinking has governed societal actions, especially with regard to economics, since the 1970s. It is based on the idea that markets should be at the centre of economic growth, with a reduced role for the state, the latter acting as a facilitator of economic activity. As a result of this thinking, the private sector has become a key sector in the quest for economic growth in both developing and developed countries. The chapter then discussed the relationships between the private sector and communities in the context of the network society. The network society has emerged as a result of increased globalization and information dissemination. This has necessitated the formation of cooperative relationships in society, especially if developmental activities are to be successful.

The chapter has considered the origins of ecotourism as a form of natural resource management that emerged in the 1980s, which focuses on conservation as well as the achievement of sustainability principles through tourism development. There is no concise definition of the term ecotourism hence the broad principles adopted in this approach are applied in this study. Four main principles were discussed in this chapter including that ecotourism should be nature based, incorporate sustainability, be locally oriented, and should provide education to guests and other stakeholders. Through ecotourism, environmental, economic, and social benefits should accrue to stakeholders, especially the local communities that surround the ecotourism venture. Ecotourism case studies were provided to show how ecotourism has been implemented in developing countries.

Theory on community participation was introduced. Communities are perceived as important stakeholders for ecotourism ventures, and their involvement in the latter's operations is important for success. However, these stakeholders have often been ignored in developmental activities and, where they are involved, this has been insufficient. Pretty's (1995) typology of participation provides a model that can be used to measure the degrees of community participation in ecotourism ventures. The section introduces a different view on community participation where decision-making is not at the centre of full participation. Using the work of Li (2006), the section argues that some communities can be content with receiving other benefits, such as employment. This section also examined a number of factors that contribute to inadequate community participation, including a lack of information by communities, non-commitment by government agencies, and a lack of coordination among different agencies on participation procedures.

Finally, stakeholder identification and salience theory was discussed. The ability to distinguish stakeholders from non-stakeholders in ecotourism is important if an examination of participation issues is to be undertaken. Legitimacy, urgency of claims and power were discussed as attributes that can be used to identify stakeholders. Based on these attributes, definitive, latent, and expectant stakeholders are identified as categories of stakeholders that managers and owners of ventures need to pay attention

to. This chapter provides the framework of analysis for community-business-environment relations at Umngazi River Bungalows. The next chapter present the background to the case study.

Chapter 3

TOURISM, ECOTOURISM AND THE CASE OF UMNGAZI RIVER BUNGALOWS

3.1 Introduction

Tourism is the world's largest and fastest growing industry employing over 240 million people worldwide (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). The majority of these people live in the developing nations where tourist activity contributes significantly to economic growth (George, 2007). Tourism "cuts across the conventional sectors of society and requires inputs of economic, social, cultural and environmental nature" (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997:1). Defining the term is difficult due to its diversity, and most researchers and institutions choose to use certain definitions that suit their specific purposes (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). Tourism in the mid-twentieth century started off as a fragmented industry with all the individual components marketing their products and services independently. With the introduction of industrialization, globalization and the resultant increases in the numbers of travellers from all different classes of society, the tourism sector has become more integrated.

The advent of sustainability and its advocacy in relation to a long-term development vision has also provided the sector and travellers with new challenges. The need for destination management has become crucial. The growth of ecotourism and other types of New Tourism (NT) have stemmed from this kind of thinking, coupled with the emergence of new travellers that are environmentally conscious and demand quality experiences. This chapter provides background information regarding the tourism industry globally and in South Africa. The historical origins of the industry in South Africa and the role of government in providing the support mechanism for the industry to operate smoothly is discussed. Pro-poor tourism (PPT) is discussed as a strategy that is increasingly adopted to encourage the role of the industry in poverty reduction. The role of the private sector in South African tourism is also examined. Ecotourism in South Africa and the Eastern Cape Province is briefly introduced and lastly, information on Umngazi River Bungalows, the case study chosen for this study, is provided.

3.2 Global and South African Tourism: An Overview

Global tourism has grown steadily since the Second World War and is increasingly seen as the world's largest industry, having overtaken other major industries like oil and automobiles (Palmer and Viljoen, 2000). It is estimated that the global number of domestic and international travellers is well over one billion, that travel and tourism contributes 10% of the world Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and that the travel industry creates 240 million jobs globally (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2008b). According to WTTC (2008b), the contribution of tourism to economic activity globally is expected to continue.

Travel and tourism is a significant economic activity in the European Union region contributing to employment and wealth creation (WTTC, 2008b). China is expected to "become the second largest travel and tourism economy in the world by 2017," and in terms of exports, capital, investment, GDP and jobs, it contributes significantly to the economic activity of the African continent (WTTC, 2008b: 6). France and China are ranked as the top travel and tourism destinations globally with Rwanda and Senegal among the fastest growing destinations (WTTC, 2008b). The growth of global tourism is linked to globalization, technological advances, the emergence of newly industrialized countries (NICs), and increasing accessibility of destinations. Intra-regional tourism and political changes in several world countries have also contributed to this increase in global tourism (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997).

The South African tourism sector has grown steadily since 1994 as a result of political change and the realization of the potential of the industry to contribute to economic growth and employment creation. South Africa's nature, cultural and historic sites and beaches are key attractions for visitors. Travel and tourism contributes an estimated 120 billion rand to the country's GDP annually, with international arrivals exceeding the 9 million visitors mark in 2007 (South African Tourism Strategic Research Unit, 2008). Most travellers state leisure as the major reason for visiting South Africa and this is motivated by holiday, shopping and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR). The average length of stay is estimated to be 7.9 nights and Gauteng and the Western Cape Provinces are the most popular domestic destinations (South African Tourism Strategic Research

Unit, 2008). The United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, the Netherlands, France and neighbouring Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries are ranked the top source markets for South Africa, according to South African Tourism Strategic Research Unit (2008). In order to further understand these trends, an understanding of the historic context of tourism in South Africa is important, which is the focus of the next section..

3.3 Historical Context of Tourism in South Africa

Tourism has evolved from being largely exclusive to specific groups in society in historic times to attracting wide clusters of tourists in globalization era, and this has been aided by inventions and progression in society. The South African tourism industry emerged with the development of railway infrastructure during the Second World War, with spa and health resorts being developed along the coastal regions of the country in the twentieth century (Saunders and Barben, 2007). At this stage, tourism and travel was considered a privilege for the wealthier classes of society, and not much in terms of legislation was put in place to govern the sector. Under the apartheid government, tourism was considered a low priority by the government, although infrastructure development and an economic boom would have served as attractions for tourist activity (Saunders and Barben, 2007). Tourism marketing, at the time, was exclusively geared towards the international high-income group with South African promotional agencies set up in various countries with the mandate to attract this group. Since tourism during this period was non-developmental, both tourism ownership and participation was limited especially for the historically disadvantaged groups (HDGs) who included the black African, coloured, and Indian population groups (Frey, 2007). Domestic travel by HDGs was limited as a result of lack of disposable income and access to facilities, and travel was therefore predominantly done by the white racial group. By the late 1970s, and as isolation from the international community grew, and with civil instabilities rife, international tourists became wary of visiting the country and many of the South African promotional agencies in various countries began closing down.

In post-apartheid South Africa, tourism has emerged as a top sector in the economy, contributing significantly to the earnings of the country. Niche segments have emerged within the industry allowing for diversification of the tourism product (Nel, 2007). Increasingly, the HDGs are participating in the sector as both players and travellers. This is as a result of commitment by government and enactment of policies, such as the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Tourism Charter and Scorecard (2005 as cited in Frey, 2007), which states that tourism can only “be able to reach its economic, social, and environmental objectives if a broader base of South Africans is involved, and has an understanding of the tourism sector” (Frey, 2007: 323).

In addition, responsible tourism was adopted in the 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa as the form of tourism endorsed by all key stakeholders to be implemented by the sector. According to the White Paper, responsible tourism is:

“a proactive approach by tourism industry partners to develop market and manage the tourism industry in a responsible manner, so as to create a competitive advantage. It implies tourism industry responsibility to the environment through the promotion of balanced and sustainable tourism and focus on the development of environmentally based tourism activities. It implies the responsibility to respect, invest in and develop local cultures and protect them from over-commercialisation and over-exploitation. It also implies the responsibility of local communities to become actively involved in the tourism industry, to practice sustainable development and to ensure the safety and security of the visitors” (DEAT, 1996: Sec 3.4).

The critical role that governments, both globally and nationally, play in enhancing tourism activities is discussed in the following section.

3.4 The Role of Government in Tourism

Tourism provides considerable economic and social benefits to the world population, and intervention by governments has been deemed important to provide necessary support (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). Governments and international governmental organizations establish and influence policy and regulations, provide infrastructure, and promote and market tourism on behalf of the sector (George, 2007). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN-WTO), the International Ecotourism Society (IES),

and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) are examples of top international tourism organizations that work closely with governments and sector players to ensure the smooth operation of the sector. They “advise on policies and best practices to improve tourism planning, education and training and work with governments to maximise the benefits that tourism can bring to the world economy” (George, 2007:152).

In South Africa, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), has the “primary responsibility for tourism development,” but a number of other government departments interact with the sector (George, 2007: 150). South African Tourism (SA Tourism) is the government agency mandated to market international tourism on behalf of the country and focuses on leisure, business, and event tourism as the core segments in its marketing strategy. All nine provinces are represented by regional tourism organizations, with the Eastern Cape Tourism Board (ECTB) in the Eastern Cape Province being relevant to the study. A number of policies at the local, provincial, and national level exist to provide a framework for the operation of the tourism sector. These are briefly outlined below.

3.4.1 The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

Launched in 1994, the RDP programme sought to adopt a “people centred development style” to address past injustices and inequalities (Lester et al, 2000: 248). The programme focused on broad based socio-economic development as a means of achieving economic growth and providing basic needs to the South African population, although its policies were not clearly stated and were seen as unachievable and ambitious by critics (Lester et al, 2000). Community development was adopted to encourage the participation of previously marginalized communities in the development process and ensure much needed employment creation (Binns and Nel, 2002). This need for community development encouraged the potential growth of tourism as a sector that could act as an impetus for development.

3.4.2 The Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR)

Minimal achievement of the RDP, especially with regard to economic growth and attracting foreign investment, led to the adoption of the GEAR macroeconomic policy in 1996 (Lester et al, 2000). The policy set the procedure for increased private sector involvement in economic growth in the country and aims to “achieve high rates of economic growth” (Lester et al, 2000: 254). The policy acknowledges the private sector as the main driver of economic growth with the state viewed as more of a facilitator. The policy paved the way for the implementation of the neo-liberal policies in South Africa, as advocated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) amongst other international organizations. *Tourism in GEAR* was a policy adopted by DEAT to “promote entrepreneurship, community shareholding in tourism and the sustainable use of both cultural and natural resources” (DEAT, 1997 as cited in Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007: 145). These policy guidelines strongly reflect some of the principles of ecotourism, with emphasis being placed on the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources.

3.4.3 White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa

The 1996 White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa is a policy that seeks to address the imbalances and inequalities of apartheid policies by ensuring the generation of employment, foreign exchange earnings, and development of rural areas amongst other benefits through tourism (DEAT, 1996). It acknowledged that tourism had been a missed opportunity for the economy that had not tapped into the entrepreneurship and local economic development potential for the country (DEAT, 1996). The policy recognizes the potential of tourism as an engine of growth in the economy, the important role previously neglected groups can play in the industry, and provides guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders. It also suggests the adoption of responsible tourism to ensure the needs of the present generation and host regions are met without jeopardizing those of future generations, and set a pace for the adoption of sustainable tourism in the country (DEAT, 1996).

3.4.4 Responsible Tourism Guidelines

These guidelines were developed in 2002 and aimed at providing a framework within which the tourism industry in South Africa could incorporate responsible, eco-, and sustainable tourism as envisaged in the 1996 White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism. The policy emphasizes economic, social and environmental responsibility by the tourism sector (Spenceley, 2001). The role of both international and domestic tourism in the economic development of the country and the need to ensure community involvement in tourism development are acknowledged. Sector players are encouraged to develop partnerships with HDGs and to maximize local economic benefits (DEAT, 2002). The guidelines encourage tourism information dissemination to local communities, the involvement of communities in tourism planning and decision-making, sensitivity to host cultures, and social and cultural diversity (DEAT, 2002). Tourism is thus seen as a key driver of community development and poverty reduction, which has encouraged the adoption of pro-poor tourism by some private sector players within the tourism industry. The guidelines also emphasize a proactive approach by the industry with regard to environmental matters, including the conducting of environmental impact assessments prior to tourism developments and maintenance of natural diversity (DEAT, 2002).

3.5 Pro-poor Tourism

Poverty is stated by the UN-WTO as a “global challenge to the tourism industry” (Hall, 2007:1) and can be characterized by “hunger, malnutrition, poor health, lack of access to water and sanitation, lack of participation in education, lack of marketable skills, insecurity and vulnerability” (Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007: 145). The relationship between tourism development and poverty reduction strategies is often referred to as pro-poor tourism (Hall, 2007). Tourism is seen as key in poverty reduction in developing countries, as the latter have tourism assets. It is argued that “the poor can build on the natural and cultural capital upon which tourism is dependent, even if they lack the financial resources” (Ashley et al, 2001 as cited in Chok et al, 2007: 38). Global tourism statistics show that poor developing countries primarily gain foreign exchange earnings from tourism, with the latter contributing significantly to the GDPs of these countries (Hall, 2007). These statistics have provided tangible evidence for the

argument that tourism can and does contribute to poverty reduction significantly in these countries.

The term pro-poor tourism is defined by PPT Partnerships (2004 as cited in Chok et al, 2007:37) as “tourism that generates net benefits for the poor and encompasses the economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions.” People-centred development is encouraged if pro-poor tourism strategies are to be attained (Chok et al, 2007: 39). It seeks to ensure poverty reduction through employment creation and encourages entrepreneurial activity (Schilcher, 2007). Research conducted in a small island in Laos, a Southeast Asian country, concluded that tourism was a significant source of income for many of the island’s residents who had used local capital, with limited capacity support from other tourism stakeholders, to start up businesses (Harrison and Schipan, 2007). Through provision for employment in these businesses, local material and food sourcing, and income redistribution through a village fund, the poor within the community were also thought to benefit from the operation of these private businesses.

In South Africa, “poverty is a multi-faceted problem,” and although pro-poor tourism can play an important role, it cannot be seen as the only avenue for poverty reduction (Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007: 145). The government of South Africa has sought to address historical inequalities that inhibited social development in some parts of the country by introducing key legislation and policies that deal with issues of discrimination and equal opportunity for all society members. Tourism has been promoted as a tool for “community development and poverty alleviation in South Africa because of its potential to provide employment, promote small enterprise development and enterprise ownership” (Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007: 148). The government, tourism associations, and individual operators in South Africa have developed strong support mechanisms and guidelines to ensure the private sector maintains ethical standards in its implementation of responsible and pro-poor tourism.

Ecotourism can play a leading role in the implementation of pro-poor tourism as it firstly has the potential to provide more revenue in a locality than other land uses, which can be used for local economic growth and conservation initiatives (Hill et al, 2006).

Secondly, ecotourism occurs in pristine, natural areas that are often neglected by potential developers due to limited infrastructure. Ecotourism provides an alternative to other types of development in these often rural areas, and provides economic benefits that aid poverty reduction. Lastly, due to the labour intensive nature of ecotourism, employment creation is likely to be a significant benefit in rural areas where unemployment rates are often high (Hill et al, 2006). A study conducted in the Matatiele region of KwaZulu-Natal by Hill et al (2006) concluded that nature-based tourism in the form of a trail project had contributed to poverty reduction through employment of community members as caterers, guesthouse cleaners and maintenance staff, handicraft operators, and suppliers of fresh produce to guests. Skills development and provision of community facilities were potential impacts that could result from the continued implementation of the project.

Critics see pro-poor tourism as a form of neo-liberal policy that fails to address the structural issues related to the North-South divide as well as the internal divisions among developing countries themselves (Hall, 2007). It is argued that this form of tourism requires “considerable time inputs, attitudinal changes and flexibility” by all stakeholders involved and hence it often does not succeed (Chok et al, 2007). It also does not address issues of distributive justice and seeks to “maximize returns for poor people” while ignoring the relative distribution of such benefits. Often pro-poor tourism ventures are operated by external agents and not the members of a community. These external people are more likely to receive more benefits, especially financially, from the venture as compared to the rural poor. The principles of pro-poor tourism also ignore class and self-interest differences that exist among rural communities and assume that all people within the communities are to benefit equally from the benefits of tourism. In effect, “as long as poor people reap the net benefits, this can be classified as pro-poor even if richer people, within these communities, benefit more than poorer people” (Ashley et al, 2001 as cited in Chok et al, 2007: 40).

Lastly, tourism stakeholders are expected to consider “how best to maximize benefits for the local people”, which makes the strategy dependent on the willingness of the non-poor to attend to the issues of the poor while bearing any environmental, social,

economic, and cultural costs as a result (Chok et al, 2007). This poses a challenge, especially where private sector businesses are not willing to incorporate the strategy in their operations.

3.6 Private Sector Involvement in Responsible Tourism

“The tourism industry is rarely identified as an appropriate agent for facilitating the development and empowerment of local communities, largely due its self-serving profit motive” (Scheyvens, 2002: 185). The industry can play a pivotal role in ensuring local economic and other benefits accrue to communities and should not necessarily be seen as “a monolithic entity serving no other purpose than to promote economic growth regardless of the cost” (Scheyvens, 2002: 185). Private sector operators can provide economic linkages to communities who often lack market access for their products. The sector can ensure tourists behave in a sensitive manner towards “local social, economic and environmental conditions” through the provision of appropriate information (Scheyvens, 2002: 190) There is also increasing support and pressure for private operators to adopt responsible tourism guidelines from watchdog institutions, governments, and travellers, with some private operators now “involved in innovative schemes to bring tangible benefits to their host communities” (Scheyvens, 2002: 187). A study by Fennell and Malloy (1999 cited in Scheyvens, 2002), showed that ecotourism operators in the United States and Canada had a heightened sense of ethical conduct and were very likely to follow codes of ethics.

“Many communities simply do not have the important combination of business skills, marketing experience, information on clients or networks to operate” at a level where they can manage and control tourism ventures solely, hence the need for private sector involvement (Scheyvens, 2002: 189). In South Africa, the recognition of communities as stakeholders in tourism and the importance of the private sector in ensuring their inclusion, as well as the need for skilled drivers for tourism development has been emphasised in legislation and policies. In the inaugural conference on Responsible Tourism in Cape Town in 2002, delegates urged tourism businesses to adopt responsible tourism as the guiding framework for tourism operations and to recognise the importance of communities in their operations (Simpson, 2008). The White Paper on the

Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa emphasizes “tourism development driven by the private sector with the government’s role being limited to providing a facilitating contextual framework for its development” (Hill et al, 2006:166). It is therefore clear that in the South African case, the state will play a facilitatory role in tourism development, but the private sector is being seen as the key driver in this sector. The state has included communities by arguing that the private sector must engage with communities in a meaningful way in all tourism development.

The marketing incentives and benefits associated with pro-poor tourism and general concerns for surrounding communities have largely driven private sector practitioners to ensure local livelihood development through their tourism projects (Spenceley, 2003). Conservation Corporation Africa (CCA), “a private company involved in wildlife tourism that operates a number of game reserves in South Africa”, is an example of a company that has involved the surrounding communities in its activities (Scheyvens, 2002: 190). This relationship ensures support for conservation efforts from the communities, which is vital to the survival of the game reserves, while promoting rural development through skills development, provision of community facilities, employment, and entrepreneurship development. Private sector operators, however, “generally respond more quickly and more dynamically to market trends and to perceived opportunities rather than to local social concerns at a particular destination” (Simpson, 2008: 9). Given the strong relationship between the private sector and civil society, there is need for “checks and balances to ensure transparency and inclusiveness”, and this is a critical role the state must play (Simpson, 2008: 10).

3.7 Ecotourism in South Africa

South Africa is a long haul destination and, previously, the high cost and time involved in travelling to the country as well as the unacceptability of apartheid policies, acted as deterrents to travel for both international and domestic travellers (Palmer and Viljeon, 2000). Elite and limited mass tourism were and continue to characterise the tourism industry in apartheid and contemporary South Africa. “South Africa is also a late developer in relation to high tourist volumes and new tourism” as these were not experienced in the pre-1994 era (Palmer and Viljeon, 2000: 227). SA Tourism’s Annual

Report mentioned visiting natural attractions, cultural and historic sites, beaches, and wildlife as popular activities undertaken by foreign tourists. Foreign travellers still make up the bulk of tourists that visit the country for tourist purposes. Ecotourism, in South Africa, was adopted in the early 1990's by tourism sector players that operate in the area of protected area management. Eco- and cultural tourism are closely tied in South Africa; with the climate, scenery, nature, and cultural attractions being major pull factors for international and domestic ecotourists (Through Cyberspace to Nature's Grace, n.d). Eco-lodges, coastal and marine ecotourism, cultural heritage tourism, community-based ecotourism, and sustainability-based ecotourism are all forms of ecotourism that characterize the South African ecotourism sector (Ecotourism, n.d).

The definition of ecotourism in South Africa was first formulated by the South African National Parks (SANParks). Ecotourism was recognized as any tourism that sought to protect living and non-living resources, develop appropriate and environmentally sensitive tourism, and promote social and distributive justice, especially to surrounding communities (Ecotourism, n.d). Local, provincial, national government agencies and organizations, tour operators, local communities, and tourists are seen as key role players within ecotourism in the country. However, the research conducted for this study revealed that DEAT had no division dedicated to ecotourism development and promotion in the country.

Ecotourism in the country has the "potential to contribute to rural communities" upliftment given the realities of rural poverty in South Africa (Ecotourism, n.d: 2). The conservation and sustainable utilization of natural and cultural resources has become a national priority as evidenced by the policies and legislation in place for their protection. Progressive private sector and conservation agencies have also developed innovative integrated conservation community initiatives that provide tangible benefits to communities living in and alongside ecotourism areas (Ecotourism, n.d).

There are different ecotourism arrangements that have taken place in South Africa with regard to the operation of ecotourism ventures. Firstly, there are partnerships between the state conservation agencies and local communities initiated by the state and intended

to provide economic benefits to communities (Ecotourism, n.d). The Pilanesburg National Park managed by the North-West Province's Parks and Conservation Authority is an example of this arrangement, where the surrounding communities receive ten percent of the gate fee, eco-development projects have been initiated, and a community reserve has been established (Ecotourism, n.d). Secondly, the private sector partners with communities in establishing and running tourism ventures. In some cases this occurs on an equitable basis but in others transparency by the private sector is questionable. Conservation Corporation Africa (CCA) represents this type of approach and has ensured the social development of villages adjacent to their lodges in South Africa.

Thirdly, community-driven projects provide a different approach that ensures that communities operate their projects fully. This can be referred to as 'true' ecotourism projects, based on ecotourism criteria. Questions of elitism, imbalanced power relations, and local politics have impacted on some of these projects. At KwaZulu-Natal's Kosi Bay, the non-governmental organization (NGO) Community Resource Optimization Programme (CROP) assists the local community in running a rustic tented camp (Sowman et al, 2003). Here, the community, with the support of an NGO, is in control of the ecotourism project. Lastly, government agencies, local communities, and the private sector have forged partnerships. At Pongola Biosphere Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal, all these parties are stakeholders in a tourism operation where the "local people share in all the benefits that ecotourism offers" (Ecotourism, n.d: 15).

There are many case studies of ecotourism in South Africa. Some of these are reflected in the above sections (Ecotourism, n.d; Palmer and Viljoen, 2000; Scheyvens, 2002; Sowman et al, 2003; Spenceley, 2003). However, "the way tourism statistics are compiled in South Africa makes it difficult to tell how much ecotourism there really is in the country" (Spenceley, 2006: 16). There are indications that ecotourism is being practiced in the country as evident in the many examples and case studies above. The SANParks commercialization process began in 2000 and saw accommodation facilities, shops, and restaurants being developed, owned and operated by the private sector in partnership with historically disadvantaged groups. This "can be considered as a

government led promotion of ecotourism principles” in protected areas (Spenceley, 2006: 17).

A number of facilities in the country have been certified under the Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa Trademark (FTTSA). This certification scheme is based on “fair share, democracy, respect, reliability, transparency, and sustainability” and assists the industry and tourists in identifying responsible ecotourism ventures (Spenceley, 2006: 16). Large companies have shown dedication to conservation and poverty alleviation through community involvement and joint ventures with communities as shown by Wilderness Safaris and Conservation Corporation Africa (Spenceley, 2006). Although not all tourism involving natural attractions can be termed as ecotourism, there are examples in protected areas, on communal land and on private land where ecotourism is evidently occurring in South Africa. This research seeks to contribute to this body of literature through its analysis of a well established coastal tourism project in the Eastern Cape that has strong links with the communities within which it is situated.

3.7.1 Eastern Cape and Wild Coast tourism

During the apartheid era, a number of Acts of Parliament were promulgated to ensure segregation of the different races and native tribes in the country. The Xhosa speaking people were confined to the homeland regions of the Transkei and Ciskei, now known as the Eastern Cape, where land ownership was largely on a communal basis (Lester et al, 2000). Legal and administrative rights were allocated to puppet governments led by traditional leadership under the 1959 Bantu Self-Government Act. Although financial assistance was provided by the central government, these areas remained and still “remain enclaves of poverty” and are often characterized as sources of labour with limited private sector involvement in their development (Lester et al, 2000: 224).

The tribal authorities maintained many of the powers they held during apartheid in the immediate post-1994 era, due to a lack of clarity on local governance and administration. Of importance, the right to allocate land and to authorize developments in their jurisdictions remained in the hands of tribal authorities. The land rights of occupants in this region were and are often “not well defined and protected by law”,

leading to misuse and misallocation of this vital resource (Cousins and Kepe, 2004: 45). Non-community residents, for instance, obtained permission from un-scrupulous tribal authorities to build and occupy land, and this has resulted to the development of illegal cottages along the wild coast in an unplanned manner. DEAT has begun to ensure the rehabilitation of these sites. As a result of high rates of migration of labour in the province, there are high proportions of young and elderly people who rely mostly on remittances from migrant family and relatives as sources of income, who live in this region. Communities rely on natural resource harvesting as a source of livelihoods, such as mussel and mangrove harvesting along the Wild Coast (Lewis et al, 2004). Infrastructure development, in terms of water, electricity, roads, and sanitation is often poor due to historical segregation resulting in underdevelopment in the province (Glavovic and Boonzaier, 2007).

Tourism has been poorly developed in this region, even though the area contains extensive and spectacular coastal natural resource assets. The province has not been a “principal receiver of tourists in either the old or the new South Africa” and has economically been supported by the automotive industry, textiles, and food processing industries (Palmer and Viljoen, 2000). According to SA Tourism’s 2007 Annual Report, only 5.7% of foreign visitors to South Africa visited the Eastern Cape in that year. The report also states that the number of nights spent in the Eastern Cape declined during that period and the estimated total foreign direct spend was R3.5 billion in 2007 (SA Tourism Strategic Research Unit, 2008). “Existing elites constitute a large proportion of tourism in the Eastern Cape,” although the emerging domestic market from HDGs are increasingly visiting the province (Palmer and Viljoen, 2000: 229).

Some of the key tourism attractions in the province include private nature reserves, which combine conservation, culture, and adventure experiences in their tourism product with backpacker tourism, cultural villages, and holiday homes being developed along the coast. In terms of accommodation, the province boasts a variety of establishments including, “game lodges and hostels, guest houses, hotels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, self-catering accommodation, boutique hotels, guest farm stays, and home stays” ([Eastern](#) Cape Tourism Board, n.d: 1). Coastal tourism in the province

offers “considerable potential but requires land restitution, redistribution and tenure reform, improved infrastructure development” and improved relationships among communities, traditional leadership structures, and government authorities largely as a result of previous inequalities in land distribution within the province (Glavovic and Boonzaier, 2007: 10).

There are a number of government agencies and parastatals in the province that are responsible for natural resource and tourism management. DEAT, being the national agency responsible for the “overall management of South Africa’s coastline” (Lewis et al, 2004: 11), plays a role through the implementation of the National Environmental Management Act (No.107 of 1998), the Marine Living Resources Act (No. 18 of 1998), the National Integrated Coastal Management Act (2008), the White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development, and the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) is the custodian of all water resources and is responsible for forestry management in South Africa. This is done through the implementation of the National Water Act (No. 36 of 1998) and National Forests Act (No. 84 of 1998) in the province. The Environmental and Tourism Directorates of the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism (DEAET) are responsible for coastal, fresh water and tourism management in the province. The different districts and municipalities in the province have developed Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Spatial Development Plans (SDPs) and Water Usage Development Plans (WUDPs) that govern developmental plans in their jurisdictions.

Eastern Cape Tourism Board, the regional tourism organization responsible for the development and management of sustainable tourism in the province, considers the Wild Coast an important tourism node and one of the nine tourism routes in the province ([Eastern Cape Tourism Board](#), n.d). The Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) has been developed to provide a principal framework for the development of tourism in the region (Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa, 2001). The SDI focuses on “wildlife and environment-based tourism, and increasing levels of income and employment of HDGs through their improved participation in the

tourism industry in the Wild Coast area” (Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa, 2001: 3). The area has not been rigorously developed and contains a wealth of natural resources. Older family-owned tourism establishments are common in this area. The tourism attractions of the Wild Coast include “diverse natural, cultural and historical riches”, trails, water sports, wildlife viewing, skiing, fishing, and other outdoor activities, a unique blend of cultures, lifestyles, and ethnic traditions (Palmer and Viljoen, 2000; 236). Threats to tourism include sand dune mining and illegal homes along the coast, as well as unresolved land claims in the region (Palmer and Viljoen, 2000). Although all these legal and policy frameworks are in place, implementation is problematic as there appears to be a significant gap between national level ideas and local operations on the ground as this research will show.

3.7.2 Benefits and dis-benefits of ecotourism

Ecotourism is based on the notion that it supports conservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. Environmental benefits include that it emphasizes small-scale development that ensures a reduction of the ecological footprints of developments and, therefore, the environmental impacts of ecotourism. Ecotourism provides an incentive to protect the natural environment through providing finances to conserve these environments, and since the ecotourism product is based on pristine environment, this encourages conservation. Through ecotourism, rehabilitation of modified environments and ecosystem maintenance and enhancement can be achieved. Ecotourism provides environmental education that increases awareness and could reduce unsustainable tourism activities (Weaver, 2001). On the other hand, some of the environmental dis-benefits of ecotourism include that it can lead to destruction of pristine environments through trampling, introduction of exotic floral and faunal species, soil erosion, sedimentation, and coral breakage as a result of inadequate environmental planning.

Ecotourism in South Africa provides a number of economic benefits including the provision of foreign exchange earnings that assist the government in financing development efforts in the country. It contributes to government revenues by providing taxes and duties levied on income, goods, and services purchased by tourists. However,

leakages, such as expenditures on advertising, marketing and commissions paid to agents as well as imports outside the local regions to support the expectations of travellers, are often inevitable. The industry does encourage the substitution of imports with locally produced goods and services, which encourages the generation of income and employment creation for local people. Through employment and income substitution, the ecotourism industry in South Africa provides economic benefits to communities, although issues related to the types of employment opportunities and lack of skilled labour are major constraints faced by the ecotourism ventures in these areas (George, 2007). Ecotourism contributes to local economic development in rural economies of South Africa through employment, corporate social responsibility, and creation of multiple sector dependence for income generation in communities. Ecotourism makes use of natural and cultural resources, which in most cases “have few alternative economic development possibilities” (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997: 75). In South Africa, ecotourism has provided a viable option for development in these areas, further creating and stimulating rural incomes.

Socio-cultural impacts emerging from tourism are influenced by the size of the impact area, spread, and acceptance of tourist activity in the area and ‘basic cultural and religious strengths’ (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997: 75). The involvement of local communities in ecotourism development leads to a sense of ownership of resources and the need to conserve these. It encourages the maintenance of original traditions, ensures cultural continuity and encourages a sense of pride in communities regarding their ways of living (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). Ecotourism can contribute to the renewal, conservation, and protection of traditional lifestyles and customs, as is the case of cultural villages in South Africa (Spenceley, 2006). Ecotourism, like other forms of tourism, can however result in cultural and social intrusion in local communities. Where inadequate interpretation and information is provided to ecotourists, this could lead to changes in the social value system in communities (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). Socio-cultural impacts take longer to be detected and are often difficult to measure.

Ecotourism should “not compromise the ecological or socio-cultural integrity of protected areas and other ecotourism destinations” (Weaver, 2001: 97). Depending on

the scale and management strategies employed by role players, ecotourism can produce more positive outcomes than negative consequences, although the general pitfalls of tourism are attributed to ecotourism as well, such as social and cultural intrusion into local communities (Weaver, 2001). Some destinations use ecotourism as a marketing ploy, while in effect, their activities do not conform to ecotourism criteria. The South African ecotourism industry has an important role to play in poverty reduction through provision of economic, environmental, and social benefits as shown above to local communities.

3.7.3 The emergence of Co-management as a natural resource management approach

Other natural resource management approaches have emerged and have been adopted by various countries, including South Africa. Co-management is a new form of natural resource management approach of using natural resources that ensures development which is sustainable and socially just. It brings together direct users or natural resources and various other stakeholders, such as government to cooperate in natural resource management (Hauck and Sowman, 2003). It is a “holistic partnership arrangement in which government, resource users and other recognized stakeholders, share, according to their respective capabilities and capacities, the responsibility and authority for resource management” (Sowman et al, 2003: ii). This perspective claims that resource users will contribute to long-term sustainability goals if they are involved in the management of natural resources (Hara, 2003: 14). It is thought that through co-management, resource users will gain an understanding about the need to conserve and protect natural resources, and hence the cost of monitoring and control will be largely reduced (Hauck and Sowman, 2003). While ecotourism focuses on both natural and cultural resources and management of these resources in order to maximize the benefits to local communities, co-management, especially in South Africa, is more concerned about the management of natural resources. Co-management also focuses on the relationship between government and local natural resource users and links this with land and natural resource rights, and conflict resolution in the management of these resources.

The Amadiba Community Tourism and Natural Resource Management Project located on the Wild Coast region of South Africa has adopted this approach (Russell and Kuiper, 2003). Tourism was seen as an important component of the project as it would provide tangible benefits, which would then encourage sustainable natural resource management. As the project grew and more stakeholders were involved in its management, the need for a management approach that would ensure formation of partnerships arose. Although there were obstacles relating to politics and securing land, the initiative was seen as an evolution of co-management with trust partnerships being formed among community, government agencies, and not-for-profit organizations. Enforcement of existing regulations and improved understanding of the natural resource management by communities were a result of the project (Russell and Kuiper, 2003). Co-management is, therefore, increasingly being adopted by the tourism industry in South Africa as a model for ensuring natural resource management, although ecotourism principles are still being used in some tourism ventures.

The preceding sections discussed the concept and practice of tourism in general and ecotourism as a subset of tourism. Global and South African statistics were cited to show that tourism and ecotourism in South Africa are key to socio-economic development. The policy framework within which tourism operates was explained with clear linkages between tourism and perceived policy outcomes. Tourism and ecotourism in the Eastern Cape was then discussed from a historical and developmental perspective. The following section discusses the case study chosen for this research, Umngazi River Bungalows, within the framework that was set out in the above sections.

3.8 Umngazi River Bungalows

Umngazi River Bungalows is located on the Wild Coast near Port St. Johns in the O. R. Tambo district in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (Figure 3.1). It is approximately 22 kilometres south of Port St. Johns, and is located within the Vukandlule village and can be accessed via both air and road. The most significant natural resources found within the vicinity of the hotel are the Mngazana estuary, which “contains the third largest mangrove forest in South Africa”, the Indian Ocean on the Eastern side, and the Mngazi River, whose banks border the hotel (Lewis, n.d: 290).

Figure 3.1 situates the hotel within the three significant communities and municipal boundaries.

3.8.1 The historical background

The survey revealed that the hotel site has been in existence since the 19th century when troops from the British garrison in Grahamstown established a fresh water point at Umngazi, which still supplies water to the hotel at present. With the advent of commerce and mining in South Africa, the Leach family established a trade store in 1929 and built a number of small bungalows that mostly attracted visitors from gold mines. In 1977, the family sold the establishment to the then Transkei Development Corporation (TDC). Subsequently, two businessmen from Umtata purchased it. They then asked the Protea Hotel Group to operate it on their behalf. As a result of the political and civil instabilities in South Africa and the Eastern Cape during apartheid and at the time of operation by the Protea Group, the hotel was unable to attract white tourists. Consequently, occupancies dropped and the hotel went into liquidation in 1993. The current owners, “who descend directly from 1820 settler stock in the area” and “whose families have lived and worked on the Wild Coast for the past 135 years,” bought the hotel at the end of 1993 ([Umngazi](#) River Bungalows, n.d).

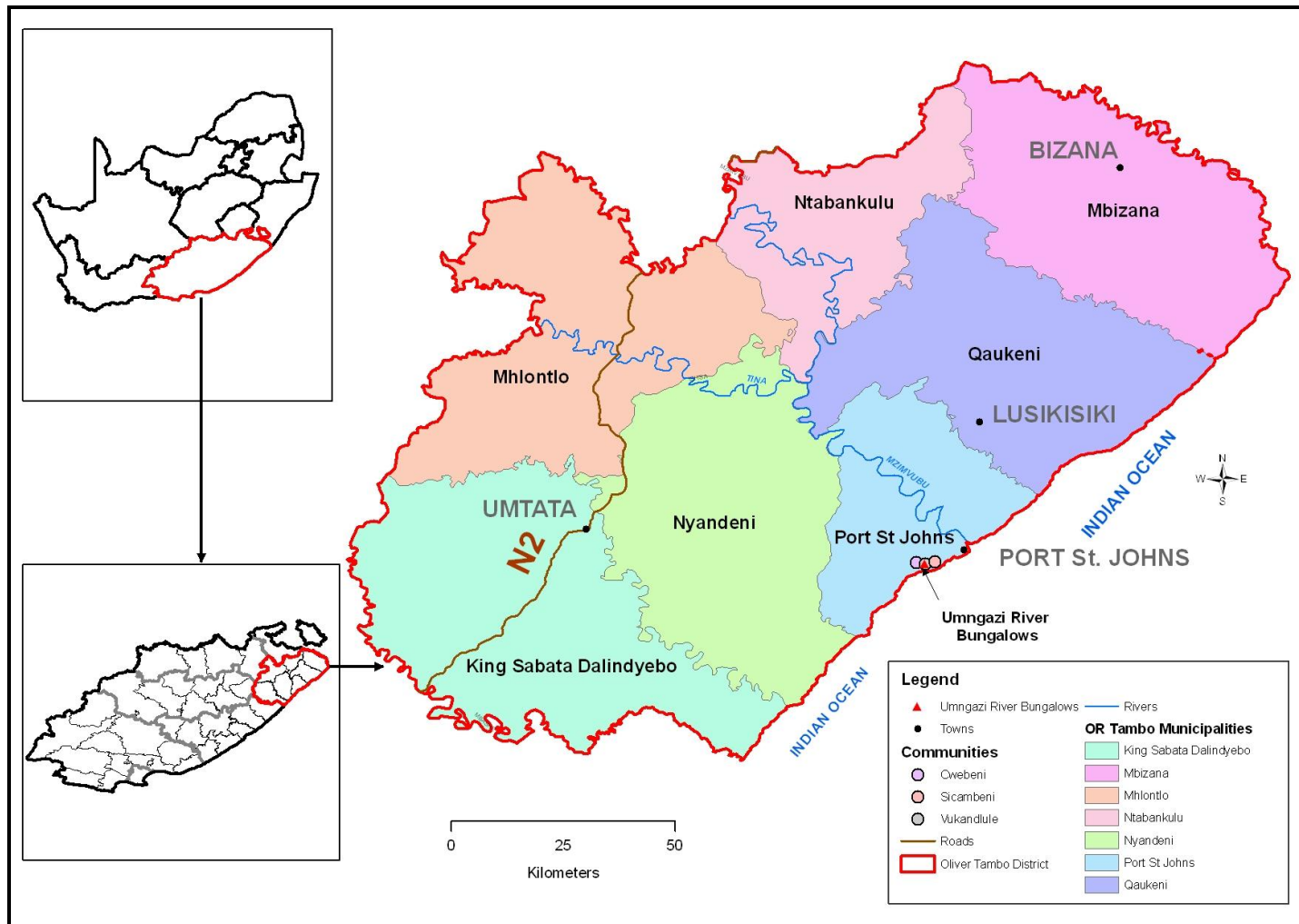


Figure 3.1: Map showing the location of Umngazi River Bungalows in relation to the Cwebeni, Vukandlule and Sicambeni communities

3.8.2 The Umngazi product

Good weather, spectacular scenery, a secluded beach, accessible wildlife (especially birds), good quality accommodation, safety and security, and good service are all part of the product offered by Umngazi.



Plate 1: The Indian Ocean and the Mngazi River, which border Umngazi River Bungalows

A pristine environment consisting of an undeveloped coastline, wilderness areas, and meandering river surrounds the hotel as shown in Plate 1 above. The owners are passionate about the environment and have rich experiences in wildlife and conservation circles, having sat on the Natal Parks and Kenya's Maasai Mara Game Reserve Boards in the past. The crime rate is very low in the area largely as a result of community members' understanding of the direct relationship between crime and tourism in reference to the hotel, and that keeping the hotel and its surrounds safe for tourists is likely to ensure return visitors and a secure job tenure for community members employed at the hotel..

The hotel is popular with couples, families, and honeymooners and markets itself as a family hotel. Figure 3.2 below shows the different types of attractions that make up the Umngazi product. The hotel utilizes the natural and cultural resources in its surrounding environment and has also built several amenities that enhance the tourist experience, for instance, the spa and wellness centre. It also caters for small children through the provision of a well-equipped children centre.

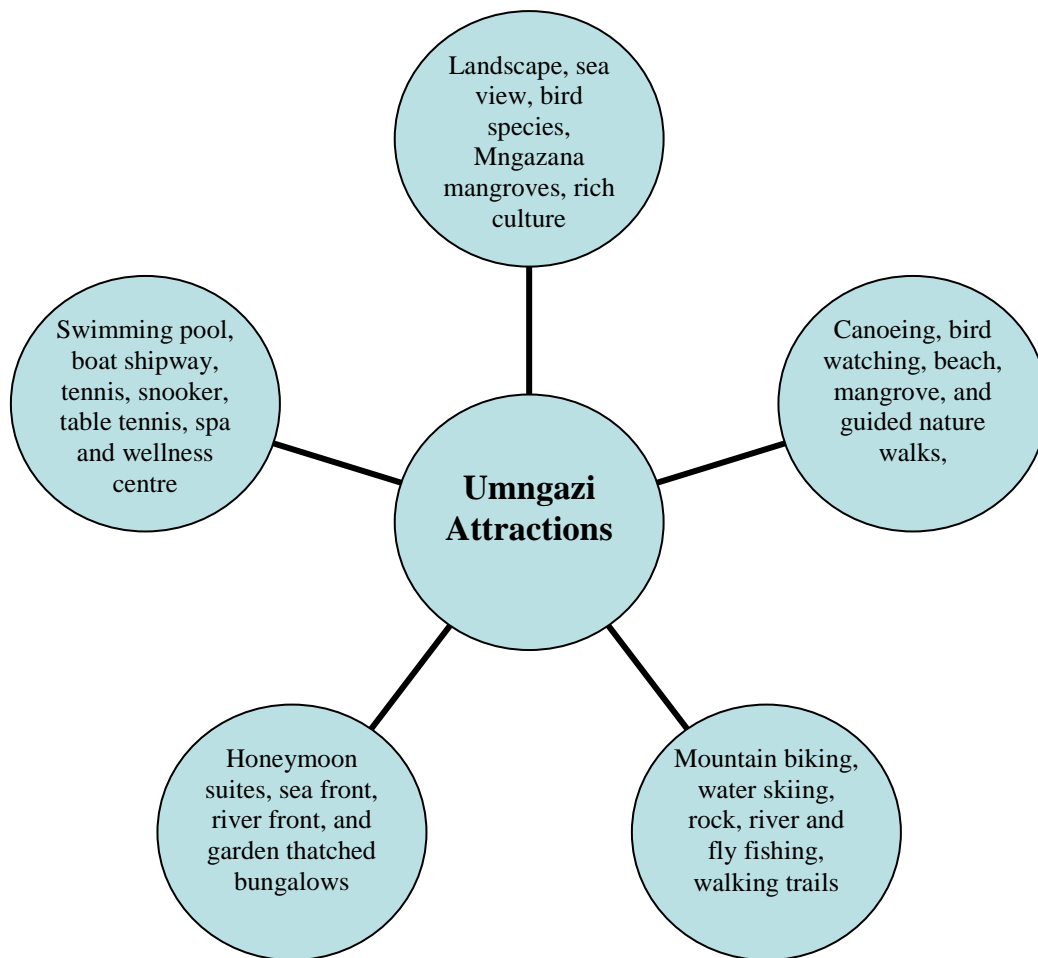


Figure 3.2: Sketch diagram showing the types of attractions at Umngazi River Bungalows

At present, the hotel has 66 bungalows and 148 beds, and a staff village where night shift staff members are accommodated. The hotel's architecture follows an eco-friendly design borrowed from other game reserves in the country, and local materials were

sourced for use during renovations after purchase and indigenous plants were preferred for the gardens as shown in Plate 2 below.



Plate 2: View of a garden thatched bungalow

According to the General Manager (Manager 1, pers. comm., 15 May 2008), the hotel has an annual occupancy rate of 98%, the average cost of stay is R1100 per night inclusive of meals, and 87% of their guests are return visitors who generally spend 5-7 nights on average at the hotel. The Umngazi package includes accommodation, breakfast, morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea, and dinner, and prices start at R540 per person per day with reductions for children. The operations of the hotel are governed by a number of government departments as mentioned above, although the survey revealed that very little contact was made between state agencies and the management of the hotel. The hotel has received a number of awards since 1999, from the Accommodation Association Travel Guides Accommodation Awards Programme and Getaway magazine, based on the service and experience offered. It was named the best family

hotel in South Africa at the 2008 Accommodation Association Travel Guides Accommodation Awards ceremony (Accommodation Association Travel Guides, nd).

3.8.3 The communities profile

The Cwebeni, Vukandlule, and Sicambeni villages, border Umngazi River Bungalows. These communities, which comprise the black African population group, are IsiXhosa speaking and originate from the AmaPondo tribe. According to the 2001 national population census, there are 2270 people living in these villages, including 594 in Cwebeni, 1093 in Sicambeni, and 577 in Vukandlule villages (Statistics South Africa, 2003a). These communities typically live in tribal settlements, travel mostly by foot, and many have only attained primary school education (Statistics South Africa, 2003b). Plate 3 below shows an image of part of the Cwebeni community, which borders the hotel to the north. Employees from this community access the hotel by foot and boat, the latter which is provided by the hotel.



Plate 3: Part of the Cwebeni community seen from the Mngazi River

Table 3.1 below shows the combined population distribution of these three communities by age group, gender, gender of head of household and marital status.

Table 3.1: Combined population distribution in Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule communities

Population Variable	Percentage
Population Distribution by Age Group	
0-14	48%
15-65	48%
66+	4%
Population Distribution by Gender	
Male	47%
Female	53%
Population Distribution by Gender of Household	
Male	42%
Female	58%
Population Distribution by marital Status*	
Never married	78%
Married traditional/customary	12%
Widower	4%
Married civil/religious	3%

Source: Raw data from Statistics South Africa (2003b) used

All percentages represent data combined for the three communities

***Only the highest four percentages for the variable are represented in the table**

Almost 50% of the population in the three communities comprises children. Women also comprise the majority of the population, which is a typical scenario in ex-homeland areas in South Africa where men migrated to urban areas in search of work. The data shows low levels of female marriage, which could be explained by the high incidence of male migration to urban areas, and as shall be shown later in the study, increased instances of female-headed households.

Table 3.2 below shows the distribution of three significant household services; lighting, sanitation and water facilities, according to the 2001 national household census. The data confirms the characteristics of most poor rural areas in South Africa where communities depend on natural resources for the provision of household services. From the data, it can be deduced that the three communities are located in a remote, relatively underdeveloped, and poor region of the country where there is little or no access to proper water and sanitation services.

Table 3.2: Household services in Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule communities

Population variable	Percentage
Energy Source for Lighting*	
Candles	75%
Electricity	18%
Paraffin	6%
Other	1%
Toilet Facility*	
None	51%
Pit latrine without ventilation	28%
Pit latrine with ventilation	14%
Chemical toilet	4%
Main Water Supply*	
River/stream	90%
Spring	5%
Borehole	2%
Rain water tank	1%

Source: Raw data from Statistics South Africa (2003b) used

All percentages represent data combined for the three communities

***Only the highest four percentages for the variables represented in table**

The communities depend on subsistence farming, cattle rearing, and natural resource harvesting as a source of livelihood (Lewis et al, 2004). Community members, for instance, often sell mussels, fish, oysters and bait to the hotel (Manager 1, pers. comm., 15 May 2008). The Mngazana mangroves provide building materials and a base for beekeeping and other community projects, especially for the Cwebeni village (Lewis, n.d). Remittances from migrant family members and welfare benefits are a key form of income in this population.

Table 3.3 below shows combined employment, income and welfare distribution in the three communities, according to the 2001 national census. More than 70% of the population is not active in employment, which implies little income per household. There is also dependence on the government welfare programme as a source of income for these households, which shows that most households rank in the low income group of economic clusters. This data confirms poverty, underdeveloped, and a lack of alternative sources of employment within these communities.

Table 3.3: Employment, income and welfare distribution for Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule communities

Population Variable	Percentage
Employment of the Labour Force* (15-65)	
Scholar/student	26%
Employed	29%
Unemployed	21%
Homemaker/housewife	12%
Does not choose to work	12%
Individual Monthly Income for the Labour Force*	
No income	78%
R401 - R800	14%
R801 - R1 600	5%
R1 - R400	2%
Annual Household Income per Dwelling*	
R4 801 - R 9 600	33%
No income	30%
R9 601 - R 19 200	18%
R19 201 - R 38 400	10%
Welfare Distribution by Age Group*	
0-14	48%
15-65	47%
66+	5%

Source: Raw data from Statistics South Africa (2003b) used

All percentages represent data combined for the three communities

***Only the highest four percentages for the variables represented in table**

The above statistics provide a clear picture of the high incidence and severity of poverty among the communities of Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule, with a predominantly high young and female population structure. Umngazi River Bungalows provides an opportunity where the hotel management and owners can engage the communities actively in its operations thereby providing the economic and other benefits needed to uplift these communities. Often “private operators give little thought to the relationship they should be building with their neighbours” (Poon, n.d: 1). Since Umngazi is the only tourism establishment and main source of employment in the area, an agreement between the tribal authority and the owner upon purchase of the hotel in 1993 specified the need to provide employment to these communities (Manager 1, 15 May 2008). When the hotel was purchased in 1993, only twenty-two people who worked six days a week were employed from these communities.

At present, the hotel employs staff members from 350 families in the 3 villages. A total of 290 staff members, 27% of the combined labour force population, are employed, including 148 permanent staff, 48 permanent-casual staff (those on call whenever there is a casual job at the hotel), 50 casual staff, 26 child minders, and 18 gillies (nature guides). Approximately 98% of all employees in the hotel are sourced from these communities with the average wage for the permanent staff members being R1650 per month (Manager 1, 15 May 2008). In addition to the regular monthly income, the staff members receive a 13th cheque, an annual salary increase, and share in the annual profits from the hotel. Most employees have been at the hotel for over six years signifying a low staff turnover rate.

The hotel is also involved in a number of community initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of not only its staff members but their families as well. It has, for instance, assisted in the building of schools in the area and provided space for the selling of arts and crafts by community members in the hotel. Furthermore, the hotel buys local food produce especially from women of the villages, encourages free agent entrepreneurship, and provides training and skills upgrading to its staff members on an annual basis. At the time the survey was done, the hotel was completing the construction of a training and development facility within the hotel aimed at providing in-house training on tourism and small tourism business entrepreneurship. It seems like the “management has taken these deliberate decisions to ensure happy workers and a happy community” (Poon, n.d: 1).

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter provides background information on tourism and ecotourism development, globally and in South Africa. Tourism is the largest service sector in the world economy and contributes significantly to employment and GDPs of countries, especially in developing countries. A historical account of tourism in South Africa has been provided where the pre- and post-apartheid eras were briefly examined. The development of South African tourism has been influenced by apartheid policies and the resultant segregation of the different racial groups. A non-developmental approach to the development and promotion of tourism in this era led to limited access to tourism,

especially by HDGs but also prevented mass tourism. Post-apartheid tourism policies and legislation have focused on addressing past inequalities and emphasizing responsible or sustainable tourism. The role of government as a facilitator in tourism development and promotion and some of these policies was discussed.

The chapter has also discussed the pro-poor strategy, which is aimed at ensuring poverty reduction and local economic benefits. The role of the private sector as a driver for tourism was examined. The South African government, through policies and legislation, has provided for the increased involvement of the private sector in economic development while emphasizing the need for partnerships with communities and other sectors of society. Information on ecotourism in South Africa, the Eastern Cape, and the Wild Coast was provided, including the main ecotourism attractions, the legislative framework, and its impacts.

The chapter concluded with a discussion of Umngazi River Bungalows, the case study chosen for the study. Located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, this family resort provides a unique study area in terms of ecotourism as it is located in a pristine environment. The owners have also sought to involve the local communities in their activities, especially with regard to employment and entrepreneurship through community initiatives. It also provides a unique view on partnerships between private sector players and communities in tourism in South Africa.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

Research is a process that involves questioning phenomena and discovering different answers. Prior to embarking on the research journey, the research design on which the process of research will be based must first be clarified. This aids in clarifying thoughts and “provides the theoretical context in which to justify findings” (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 6). Appropriate “sets of rules and procedures” must be carefully chosen to guide the investigation process (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 6).

A multi-strategy approach is adopted in this study with both qualitative and quantitative methods being used. Some researchers have argued that research methods are based on “epistemological and ontological commitments” dictating that choice of research instruments and techniques be rooted in particular conceptions of the world (Smith, 1983; Guba, 1985; Hughes, 1990; Morgan, 1998b as cited in Bryman, 2004: 445). These differences, as argued by Bryman, should not be viewed as “fixed and ineluctable” but rather compatible and desirable (2004: 459). The choice of both approaches in this study was motivated by the specific qualities that each method possesses regarding how aspects of reality ought to be studied (Sarantakos, 2005). In the study, quantitative methods were applied through the use of closed-ended questions in the questionnaire instrument. Data analysis involved the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the Excel Program that aided in the ordering of data to enable better quantitative analysis. The identification of themes also involves a degree of quantification since codes were generated to aid in the classification and connection of data. Qualitative methods were used in structuring open-ended questions for the questionnaire instrument. Dey’s (1993, cited in Kitchin and Tate, 2000) qualitative approach was used as the major tool for analysis, providing an end result that depicted a process of interpretivism associated with qualitative research.

The study adopted a case study approach where Umngazi River Bungalows, a family hotel in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, was used to explore and investigate the research questions. This approach is deemed appropriate for this study as it provides engaging, rich explorations within a short period of time (Seidel, 1998). The study used both primary and secondary sources of data and adopts face-to-face, self-administering, and electronic techniques of conducting questionnaires. Observation and informal conversations were used as additional data collection techniques for recording interactions amongst guests, employees, and management. This chapter provides an overview of the different methods used in the study. It presents the sampling methods, data collection instruments, and data analysis methods used in conducting the study. It documents the experiences of the researcher in the process and discusses the issue of research ethics and its relevance to the study. The chapter concludes by discussing the limitations encountered during the process.

4.2. Primary Data

Primary data in the study was collected using questionnaire surveys, observation, and informal conversations. The design of research instruments seeks to ensure that data collected is aligned with the purposes of the study and that the exact procedures used to generate data are known (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). The questionnaire survey was conducted with twenty employees, one former and three current manager(s), an independent community project operator, and a government official. The researcher and a language translator, who both stayed at the family resort on 12 – 17 May 2008 for five (5) days during the period of data collection, made observations of the social settings, relationships, and behaviours of both respondents and non-respondents. Informal conversations were also held with various employees and managers, which provided a more in depth understanding of their experiences.

4.2.1. Sampling

Time and financial constraints limit the use of entire populations for research purposes, and hence a sample is usually chosen. The determination of a research sample is “related to the precise scope, nature and intent of the research and the expectations of the researcher” (McGuirk and O’Neill, 2005: 115). Purposive sampling as used in this

study as it enables the targeted sample to be quickly reached. In addition, the issue of proportionality was not a primary concern in this study, making purposive sampling ideal (Seidel, 1998). Respondents were therefore selected for the study in a non-random manner and were rather chosen because they represented the key stakeholders that were required to be interviewed in order to answer the research questions of this study.

a. Sampling methods

A number of purposive sampling methods were used in the choice of respondents for the study. Quota sampling, which involves finding “respondents of particular types so that the profile of the sample matches that of the target population within the area of study”, was used to target employee respondents (Parfitt, 2005: 97). Employees of the hotel, who were perceived as well informed on both the operations of the hotel and the views of fellow non-staff community members regarding hotel-community relationships, were chosen. This was viewed as a feasible option given the time constraints. This sample included at least two members of the hotel’s staff committee representing both the respective genders, as well as a member of a community committee. Proportionality of the sample group was not considered a priority in this study since social dynamics among the three communities were not under investigation. The snowball technique, where an initial contact person helps the researcher to recruit another contact, who in turn puts the researcher in touch with someone else, was also used (Valentine, 2005). Initial contact was made with one of the employees at the hotel, who assisted in identifying employee respondents representing various hotel departments, who, in turn, provided information on other potential respondents. This method was also used to select manager respondents. Convenience sampling was used in the field to select the individual employee respondents depending, on their work schedules.

Expert sampling was used to select an external community project operator (hereby called independent operator), in this case a beekeeping operator; a former general manager at Umngazi River Bungalows; and a government official. This method of sampling is usually helpful where one is interested in eliciting views from persons with particular expertise or experience (Seidel, 1998). The independent operator had worked

in a number of community beekeeping projects including within the Cwebeni community and provided useful information on experiences in engaging with communities in projects. The former general manager had worked at Umngazi River Bungalows for fifteen years since the purchase of the hotel and had implemented the hotel's community involvement activities. The government official provided information on government policy.

b. The sample

Table 4.1 shows the sample group chosen for participation in the study including their characteristics. All twenty-six respondents are broadly classified into employee, manager, independent operator, or government official categories.

4.2.2. Data collection instruments

The generation of data ought to be done in a manner that ensures easy description and analysis (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). This study used three data collection instruments, the questionnaire, observation, and informal conversations to gather data. The questionnaire was adopted as the main instrument of data collection in the study. Observation and informal conversations were used to gather additional information on the settings of the study area and employees' experiences respectively.

a. Semi-structured questionnaire

The questionnaire instrument is used to assist in gathering data that reflects respondents' opinions, attitudes, and experiences (Parfitt, 2005). It also enables the researcher to "classify people, their circumstances, and their environment" (Parfitt, 2005: 79). A preliminary literature review on the formulation of questionnaires was undertaken (Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Parfitt, 2005). Four different versions of the tool were designed to target the different categories of respondents. Questions relating to the perceived roles of key stakeholders were formulated and were guided by the research questions. A mix of descriptive and analytical questionnaire design was adopted to capture both "factual and subjective data relating to respondent and their circumstances, their behaviours, attitudes, opinions and beliefs" (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 49).

Table 4.1: Details on survey respondents

<i>Employee Respondents</i>								
Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Employee 1	Male	Plumber	Contract	Local	Vukandlule	0-6 months	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 2	Female	Dining room supervisor	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9	College	13 May 2008
Employee 3	Female	Spa	Permanent	Local	Vukandlule	7-11 months	College	13 May 2008
Employee 4	Female	Gym / village walk community project	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9 years	Primary	14 May 2008
Employee 5	Female	Nanny	Contract	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 6	Female	Bar Tender	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9 years	College	13 May 2008
Employee 7	Male	Entertainment and Relations	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	1-3 years	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 8	Female	Spa/ Cleaner	Permanent	Local	Sicambeni	7-9 years	High school	14 May 2008
Employee 9	Female	Front Office	Permanent	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	College	15 May 2008
Employee 10	Female	Nanny	Contract	Local	Vukandlule	10+ years	Primary	15 May 2008
Employee 11	Male	Gilly	Part time	Local	Cwebeni	1-3 years	High school	14 May 2008
Employee 12	Male	Gilly/ Porter	Retired	Local	Vukandlule	10+ years	Primary	15 May 2008
Employee 13	Male	Entertainment and Relations	Permanent	Non-local	Staff village	0-6 months	University	15 May 2008
Employee 14	Female	Handicraft project	Self-employed	Local	Sicambeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008

Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Employee 15	Female	Reservations/ Staff Committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+years	High school	16 May 2008
Employee 16	Male	Porter/ Staff committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	Primary	14 May 2008
Employee 17	Male	Stock control	Permanent	Local	Vukandlule	7-9 years	College	15 May 2008
Employee 18	Female	Laundry	Permanent	Local	Sicambeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008
Employee 19	Male	Ferry operator/ community project	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	No answer	16 May 2008
Employee 20	Male	Chef/ committee/ community committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008

<i>Manager Respondents</i>								
Manager 1	Male	Current General Manager	Contract	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	University	15 May 2008
Manager 2	Male	Former General Manager	Based at Head Office	Local	N/A	10+ years	University	10 July 2008
Manager 3	Female	Reservations Supervisor	Permanent	Non-local	Vukandlule	3-6 years	Technikon	16 May 2008
Manager 4	Female	Current General Manager	Contract	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	University	15 May 2008

<i>Additional Respondents</i>								
Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Independent Operator	Male	Beekeeping Operator	Not applicable	Non-local	N/A	Not applicable	University	17 July 2008
Government Official	Male	Tourism Manager	Not Applicable	Non-local	N/A	Not Applicable	University	16 July 2008

Both open and closed ended questions were used in the questionnaire. Closed ended questions were used primarily to introduce questions on particular topics within the questionnaire. Open ended questions were used to “allow for spontaneous responses”, to further probe the respondents’ positions, and to avoid “the bias of constraining responses to certain categories” or “putting words into respondents mouths” (Parfitt, 2005: 91).

Simple, careful wording of questions was done creating space for respondents to have the choice to answer particular questions or not (Kitchin and Tate, 2000) This was done to reduce the problem of attitude forcing where “the questionnaire device itself creates attitude data, either because of a sense of embarrassment in respondents without a particular opinion on the subject at hand, or as a function of the way in which responses are elicited” (Parfitt, 2005: 79). Some questions were formulated in a manner that the researcher would be able to determine the meanings respondents attached to words, for example, what the word ‘natural environment’ meant to respondents. Related questions were grouped together to ensure continuity in responses as well as to avoid jumping “erratically from topic to topic which could irritate and tire respondents” (Parfitt, 2005:88). A pilot study to establish the characteristics of respondents and whether they would understand the wording of the questionnaire was not undertaken. The questionnaire was sent to an employee beforehand to identify potential biases. This assisted in situating the questions according to feedback received from the contact person and in ensuring any definitional mismatches between respondents and researcher were resolved (Parfitt, 2005).

b. Observation

The observation technique was only used at Umngazi River Bungalows for a week during the field work excursion to the hotel. It was adopted with a traditional assumption that the researcher would maintain an objective eye and would only be interested in a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). It was used to gather information about the settings of the study area and further descriptions on how the hotel operated (Siedel, 1998). The researcher was able to witness the workings of various relationships amongst people at the hotel, such as how employees related with each other and with guests. The method also assisted in further situating responses provided by respondents. Descriptive recording of all data observed

was done in a notebook that would later be used for data analysis. Field notes are used to provide and in depth background and to help the observer remember events and contexts at the time of observation (Siedel, 1998).

c. Informal conversations

Informal conversations were held with a number of employees and guests of the hotel. In some cases, additional information on topics that were under investigation was gathered, such as whether guests received satisfactory service from the hotel's employees. In other cases, conversations were held with employees about their general experiences at the hotel. This provided rich contextual information on how the hotel was operated and the feelings respondents had about its activities.

4.2.3. Conducting the questionnaire

Data collection was done between May and June 2008 in various settings, as will be discussed below. The researcher had little control over the choice of physical settings, allowing respondents to choose preferred areas where the questionnaires could be conducted. A language translator was employed in order to bridge the linguistic and cultural gaps between the researcher and the employee respondents. The choice of a translator not only took into consideration their ability to understand the local language but also the ability to develop a rapport with respondents (Siedel, 1998). A highly experienced translator, Ms. Sibongile Buthelezi, was employed. Face-to-face meetings were conducted to complete questionnaires with twenty-four of the respondents and the researcher and/or translator recording all responses in the questionnaire. One employee questionnaire was self administered while electronic communication via email was used to conduct the government official questionnaire. No monetary compensation was offered to any of the respondents who participated in the study.

a. The employees

The survey was conducted with twenty employee respondents between 13th and 17th May 2008 at Umngazi River Bungalows. With the help of one of the hotel's managers, respondents representing the different departments were chosen. The researcher understood that this choice could introduce some bias as hotel management may choose

employees that they have the best relationship with. Information was gathered from respondents representing the following departments: reception and reservations, bar, stock control, guest relations and entertainment, spa, grounds, gardens, maintenance and boats, gym and tennis courts, housekeeping, and kitchen and dining. Questionnaires were also conducted with child minders, gillies, a handicraft operator, and the ferry operator. Amongst the respondents, some belonged to either the staff committee or community committee and others were involved in particular community projects. For example, the gym operator also ran the village walk project, a cultural experience offered by the Cwebeni community to hotel guests. The respondents also represented the three communities from which staff members were recruited, Cwebeni, Sicambeni, and Vukandlule, as well two non-local employees. Face-to-face meetings were used in conducting questionnaires with nineteen of the employee respondents. This method was preferred as it is “personal in nature and one can easily gauge the respondent’s reaction to a specific topic through their body language and facial expressions” (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 216) Due to one of the respondent’s busy schedule, the remaining one questionnaire was self administered.

The questionnaires were conducted within the hotel, in a setting deemed comfortable by respondents to “facilitate a more relaxed conversation” (Valentine, 2005: 118). The process of developing a rapport with respondents began upon arrival at the hotel on 12th May 2008, where one of the managers gave the researcher and translator a tour of the hotel and introduced some of the potential respondents. Before the start of any of the interviews, the researcher and the translator introduced themselves, briefly explained the subject under study, and obtained consent from the respondents. Information regarding confidentiality in the use and disclosure of the information provided was also explained to respondents at this stage. Questions followed the format of the questionnaire and clarity was provided as needed.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was divided into four parts. The introductory section dealt with the day-to-day activities of respondents followed by a section seeking information about the natural environment. The third and final sections dealt with stakeholder and community participation issues, and baseline data respectively. Efforts

were made to share information with respondents during the surveys to avoid a superior-subordinate relationship but, at the same time, ensuring the researcher did not express their own views and opinions on the research topics (Valentine, 2005). The questionnaires were filled out and short notes made of additional information received from further probing. Each questionnaire took approximately one hour to finalize and no tape recording was done. At the end of each session, respondents were thanked and provided with an opportunity to cross check the authenticity of information gathered.

b. The managers

Questionnaires were conducted with four managers, including the current general manager couple, a reservations supervisor, and a former general manager. This questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was divided into three parts with a section on the history of the hotel, a section on participation issues, and a baseline data section. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents before commencing with any of the questionnaires. Two questionnaires were conducted with the general manager couple on 15th May 2008 at their offices. It was learnt that they were newly appointed, and information on the day-to-day operations of the hotel was provided coherently. They, however, referred the researcher to a former general manager for additional information on some of the questions.

Data was collected from the reservations supervisor in a fragmented manner as a result of a busy schedule. The last section of the questionnaire was self-administered but a follow-up survey session was done on 17 May 2008 to consolidate and authenticate the information provided. This respondent, a non-local, had worked at the hotel for six years and lived in the Vukandlule community. An 'outsider's' view on the characteristics of the communities and the interface with the hotel was provided from this respondent.

A questionnaire was conducted with a former general manager at the hotel's head office and marketing branch in the Pinetown area of Durban on 10th July 2008. This respondent had directly managed the hotel since its purchase by the current owner in 1994 and had initiated and implemented most of the community benefit initiatives. The

questionnaire was sent to the respondent beforehand to ensure familiarity with the topics under study. Due to the perceived intensity of responses, the session was tape-recorded allowing the researcher to “concentrate fully upon the discussion rather than trying to balance the conversation with note-taking” (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 218). The history of the hotel, the origin of the community initiatives, and the relationships the hotel had adopted with different stakeholders were discussed. Information gaps experienced from previous discussions with other managers were also filled.

c. The independent operator

To further understand the differences in relationships between the hotel and the communities, a questionnaire was conducted with an independent operator. A beekeeping operator, who had worked with the Cwebeni community on behalf of an external research organization, was chosen. The questionnaire was conducted at the respondent’s home on 17th July 2008. Informed consent was sought prior to the commencement of the survey. The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) sought to understand the experiences of the respondent in implementing this project within the Cwebeni community as well as in implementing beekeeping projects in other communities. Information on the perceived role of the hotel in community benefit initiatives was also sought. A tape recorder was used for the purposes of recording the respondent’s responses. An understanding of the key success characteristics of Umngazi River Bungalows with regard to relationships with communities, and general constraints on implementing community projects faced, was provided.

d. The government official

Once a potential government official respondent was chosen, telephonic conversations took place with the researcher to develop a rapport as well as to explain the objectives of the study. Informed consent was sought from the respondent before a questionnaire (see Appendix 4) was sent to them via email. A set return date was agreed upon, after which the researcher was to check if all the information provided was adequate. Unfortunately, the government official’s response to the questionnaire was inadequate on most key topics, but contact details for other potential government officials deemed

experts were provided. Efforts made to reach these contacts remained futile even up to the final write-up of the report.

4.3. Secondary Data

Secondary data was obtained from books and a dissertation sourced from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) library, and where books were unavailable in the main libraries, the interlibrary loaning facility was used. Literature for the study was sourced through a desktop search of scholarly journal articles. The Science Direct database and particularly the Annals of Tourism Research journal information were widely used in the study. Other internet sources were also used to gather further information on relevant references. The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa was accessed from the government website to provide background information on the South African government's views regarding private sector involvement in community benefit tourism initiatives.

During the visit to Umngazi River Bungalows, both at the Eastern Cape and at the Pinetown Head office, photos that showed the architectural evolution of Umngazi were accessed. This aided the researcher in further understanding the changes that had taken place over the years to shape the current architecture of the hotel. National census data was accessed from Super Table, a computer program that contains the 2001 national population census data for South Africa. Raw data on households at the Eastern Cape and Port St. John's municipality was accessed and converted into percentages by the researcher to obtain necessary data.

4.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative methods are used to analyse the data. This was decided both during the questionnaire design and after an initial investigation of the data gathered. The SPSS program and Excel, a Microsoft Office tool were used to quantitatively analyse the data while Dey's approach was used for qualitative analysis.

4.4.1. Quantitative analysis

Electronic data analysis was adopted in the study and typically involved a “systematic process that begins with preparing the data for computer entry, followed by entering the data in the computer and then processing the data” (Sarantakos, 2005: 364). Of the twenty six questionnaires conducted, twenty-four were analysed quantitatively. Both open and closed-ended questions were analyzed.

a. Data preparation

This step involved the checking and editing of all information gathered to ensure clarity, legibility, relevance and appropriateness. Post-coding, “a process of converting responses to numerical codes” after data collection, was done on the hard copy questionnaires (Sarantakos, 2005: 364). Answers to each question were carefully read to identify relevant categories. Values, “the numbers expressing the codes” and value labels, “the concepts they represent” were then assigned to each question (Sarantakos, 2005: 364). The researcher carefully monitored the coding “in order to prevent errors or bias” (Sarantakos, 2005: 364). To ensure reliability, a stable and uniform pattern of coding was maintained.

b. Using the computer

The coded data was entered on an Excel spreadsheet and later exported onto SPSS Version 15.0 for Windows. The already defined variables and labels on the questionnaires were maintained in SPSS. All labels corresponding to each question were entered into the spreadsheet and, where multiple responses were given, numerical values were assigned at the end of each label for the purposes of differentiation.

c. The analysis

Upon completion of data entry, SPSS frequency tables for each variable were obtained and exported to an Excel Spreadsheet. The researcher then collated all multiple response variables into accurate percentages to avoid confusion and exaggeration of results, both on hard copy frequency tables and on the soft copy Excel Spreadsheet. To provide a ‘visual representation of the results’, graphs, tables, and pie charts that “indicate the

magnitude of the values of the variables in question” were used as shown in the results chapter (Sarantakos, 2005: 365).

4.4.2. Qualitative analysis

All the questionnaires were qualitatively analyzed. The codes generated in the quantitative analysis were used as a point of departure for this analysis. Through qualitative analysis, descriptive detail about the findings of the study were provided, while “descriptive excess” where the “amount of detail inhibits the analysis of the data” was controlled (Bryman, 2004: 281). The objectives of the study were used to guide the description and theme development process. Short notes jotted down during data collection were reviewed to provide further information on specific contexts (Bryman, 2004). Aspects of Dey’s approach (1993 as cited in Kitchin and Tate, 2000) to qualitative analysis were adopted in the study (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). This analysis uses “description, classification and connection” to uncover key themes and provide an adequate interpretation of data (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 230).

a. Describing the data

A digital tape recorder was used to record the two questionnaires conducted with the independent operator and former general manager. “A written reproduction of the formal conversation which took place between the researcher and informants” was done in the form of transcripts at this stage (Dunn, 2005: 96). Transcription “enables the researcher to engage with the data again’ providing ‘a preliminary form of analysis” (Dunn, 2005: 96). Only relevant data was chosen from the recordings as opposed to obtaining a full transcript, a process guided by the broader objectives of the study. This was all converted into typed format for ease of reference. All twenty-six questionnaires were read again, and additional handwritten notes were made which highlighted particular responses that could be used in the development of themes. This process was guided by whether data corresponded to literature, as well as to how unique the responses were (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). A description of the situational context within which the study was done including, the time frames of data collection, characteristics of various respondents, their behaviours, and the social settings was also done.

b. Classifying the data

The master categories representing objectives of the study were used as the starting point in the process of classifying the data (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Data relating to the research objectives from the short notes and questionnaires was then sub-categorized depending on similarities of responses. Sub-categories were determined by “establishing the associations and relationships between data” (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 246). For example, objective one of the study was related to identifying the different community-oriented projects that reflected relationships between the private sector and communities, in this case, that of Umngazi River Bungalows and the three communities. This was defined as a master category. Three types of projects, namely, service infrastructure, income generating, and community outreach projects were then identified and defined as sub-categories. A further investigation revealed that within the income-generating sub-category, the nature of projects differed between those where the hotel had substantial operational control and those where community members had more control.

c. Connecting the data

At this stage, a constant inquiry and investigation on whether different parts of the data relate to each other and fit together is continued (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). All the questionnaires were crosschecked to ensure originality of responses was maintained in the final reporting of the findings. Finally, the various conclusions on the findings were determined.

4.5. Researcher's Experiences

The request to conduct research at Umngazi River Bungalows was met with interest from managers who pledged to assist in whichever way they could during this period. The managers were very cooperative, provided data as requested, and a sense of genuineness in responses was experienced. The choice of employee respondents was facilitated by two of the managers who requested the former to cooperate with the researcher in the quest for information. The experience at the hotel was pleasant, with the researcher and translator receiving very good service from all the staff members. Staff members were found to be more than willing to share information about their

experiences at the hotel and general assistance sought was met with willingness to help. Fieldwork was also conducted at a time when the hotel was not as busy in terms of guest numbers making it easier to schedule session times with respondents, although some respondents had very tight schedules. In the latter cases, sessions were scheduled around the respondent's break periods and after work. All the questionnaires were done within the hotel, which aided in the scheduling of times to suit respondents. Questionnaires with the former general manager and the beekeeping operator proved to be very insightful. The fieldwork experience was educative and enjoyable for both the researcher and translator.

“Research interactions are influenced by who we are, what we are, where we are and how we appear to others” (Hallowell et al, 2005: .42). An effort was made to learn about some of the culture governing the communities to ensure that proper manners, dress codes, and behaviours were displayed at all times to avoid confusing and offending respondents. Despite the language and other social differences between the researcher and respondents, similarities in cultural lifestyles made it easier for the development of a rapport. Questionnaires were conducted in settings where respondents were most comfortable, and confidentiality and privacy issues were explicitly communicated. Perceptions that the researcher and translator were superior had to be dealt with sensitively and systematically to prevent an imbalance of power relations (Valentine, 2005).

4.6. Research Ethics

Different institutions have formulated codes of ethics to inform ethical standards and professionalism in research. In tertiary institutions, ethical guidelines and committees have been formed to assess research proposals, and to ensure researchers adhere to the set codes of conduct (Sarantakos, 2005). Codes of ethics cover issues related to “physical and mental harm to respondents, covert or hidden research, invasion of privacy, violations of anonymity and confidentiality, deception, coercion, plagiarism and fabrication or concealment of findings” (Sarantakos, 2005: 17).

Ethical standards also place emphasis on the researcher-respondent relationship to ensure respondents are protected. Most ethical guidelines require that all aspects

regarding the study be communicated to respondents in a written form (Sarantakos, 2005). The options to take part in the study or refuse to as well as the withdrawal of data at any stage of the study must also be communicated. Informed consent forms are commonly used for this purpose.

Prior to this study being undertaken, a research proposal was drafted and submitted to the UKZN Faculty of Humanities Higher Degree's committee for approval. Included in the proposal was a signed ethics form that informed the type of research to be undertaken in terms of choice of respondents and the effects the research may have on respondents. According to the UKZN Code of Conduct for Research, research cannot commence until the committee approves the proposal. An informed consent form (see Appendix 5) that included information on the researcher, all relevant contact details, institution where research was based, the nature and purpose of the research, anonymity, confidentiality, and withdrawal clauses was designed (Sarantakos, 2005). At the beginning of each questionnaire, verbal consent from respondents was requested upon communication of the consent form contents. Respondents were made aware of the option of non-response to questions and withdrawal at any stage during the survey.

4.7. Limitations

A number of limitations were faced in conducting the study. Firstly, due to cost implications, the time set for conducting the bulk of the research at the hotel was limited to a week. As a result, the choice of respondents was largely dependent on their availability during that period. A smaller sample was favoured, while making sure data sufficient for the achievement of the objectives of the study would be provided, through a careful selection of sample units. Due to this limitation, no data collection was done with casual employees, the tribal authority, the owner of the hotel and other external community members. Information was, however, sought to fill in these gaps by, for instance, targeting key community members who worked at the hotel. The information received from the former general manager of the hotel was deemed sufficient to compensate for the absence of a survey with the owner.

Secondly, a language barrier existed between the researcher and some of the employee respondents. Although a language translator was employed to assist the researcher, there was a general feeling that communication would have been made easier if the researcher had a good command of IsiXhosa. An attempt was made to learn cultural greetings to facilitate development of a rapport with respondents. After each questionnaire, both researcher and translator had a brief meeting to compare notes, to ensure accuracy of responses, and fill in gaps where certain information had not been adequately recorded.

Since the questionnaires were conducted at the hotel, most respondents were often busy with their daily work tasks. This necessitated sessions to be scheduled around their work break times, for instance, during tea and lunch breaks. This did, however, provide for an opportunity to engage in observation activities and informal conversations with other employees and guests. Lastly, efforts to reach an additional government official for further information were futile. The official contacted presented inadequate responses to topics, but this was supplemented by information received from government publications and literature.

4.8. Conclusion

The chapter provides an account of the procedures used in the study to investigate the research questions. A multi-strategy approach was used where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were applied in the different stages of the research. A case study approach was also adopted with Umngazi River Bungalows being used as the study area. This choice enabled the researcher to gain a deeper and focused understanding of the phenomena under study.

The research used both primary and secondary sources in gathering data, which are explained in the chapter. Non-random, purposive sampling techniques namely, quota, snowball, convenience, and expert sampling were used in the choice of respondents. Four different questionnaire types, including open and closed-ended questions, were designed for the various respondents, the latter including the employees, managers, an independent operator, and a government official. Observation and informal conversations were also discussed as additional instruments used for the collection of

data on social settings of the study area. The process of coding the questionnaires, and use of SPSS and Excel programs is explained. Dey's qualitative analysis approach was discussed, providing information on how themes were developed. The methodology used for this study enabled the researcher to both decipher key themes emerging from data and produce statistical data. Constraints including time, language and cultural barriers, respondents' busy schedules, and inadequate information received from government were experienced by the researcher.

Chapter 5

EXPLORING PRIVATE SECTOR, COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AT UMNGAZI RIVER BUNGALOWS

5.1. Introduction

“A sound data generation process is only an aspect of a whole data network whose principal objective is the production of a lucid and concise document embodying the findings of the entire research. The need for clarity in the presentation of data can only be fully appreciated when one recognizes that properly generated data can still not serve a useful purpose if poorly analyzed and presented” (Obasi, 1999: 178)

The data collection process in this study was both qualitative and quantitative and resulted in the generation of different types of raw data. The process of data analysis ensures that raw data is organized, sorted and presented in a systematic way that enables a proper interpretation and the identification of trends in the data.

This chapter presents both the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from the questionnaires and open discussions as well as explanations for observed patterns and trends in the results with reference to the applicable bodies of theory as outlined in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. The chapter is divided into four sections that are linked to the broad objectives of the study:

1. To identify the various ecotourism and community projects Umngazi River Bungalows is involved in
2. To identify key stakeholders within and outside Umngazi River Bungalows and explore different relationships among these stakeholders
3. To examine the degree of participation in the operation of Umngazi River Bungalows by the three surrounding communities
4. To explore the extent to which Umngazi River Bungalows ascribes to the notion of ecotourism

5.2. Social Responsibility and Ecotourism Projects at Umngazi River Bungalows

The tourism sector “has an obvious interest in adopting social responsibility principles, given its high dependency on cultural heritage and the sustained beauty of natural resources” but has been very slow to do so (Frey, 2007: 321). The number of private sector practitioners in sustainable tourism has increased, especially in developing countries. Ecotourism principles dictate that benefits from ecotourism ventures should accrue to local economies (Fennell, 1999). As such, some private sector players, especially in Southern Africa, have initiated and supported projects in local communities alongside their own ventures (Ashley and Jones, 2001). This study seeks to identify the type and nature of projects that Umngazi River Bungalows is involved in that include the local communities. Three different types of projects were identified in the study namely: service facilities, income-generating projects, and philanthropic projects. These were initiated and operated by the hotel in cooperation with the communities, with various sponsors assisting the hotel. These projects aim to ensure community upliftment, are “often about the things that community members need”, and focus on the generation of income (Manager 3, 16 May 2008). As the following sections show, Umngazi River Bungalows, although acting in a neo-liberal environment, has chosen to voluntarily implement social responsibility programs.

5.2.1. Services infrastructure

Three service facilities had either been initiated, built, or upgraded by the hotel and were in use by both the hotel and the three communities. The hotel had built twenty-one classrooms in the surrounding communities, seven in each community. A sense of achievement and gratitude was reflected by Employee 1 (13 May 2008) who remarked, “there was no school before. Now, our children are able to learn. Before, many people/children were not schooling.” A community hall had been constructed at Cwebeni community and was used for community functions such as meetings, celebrations, religious and educational activities. At the request of the hotel, the Port St. Johns municipality had also upgraded the main road leading to the hotel, and which was through the Vukandlule and Sicambeni communities. As such, the hotel has acted as a catalyst for the mobilization of funds to ensure infrastructure development. In most cases, private sector investors are attracted to areas where infrastructural development

has already occurred, and this development of basic services and road can then be of benefit to local communities (Schilcher, 2007).

5.2.2. Income-generating community projects

In South Africa, unemployment is highest in rural areas, especially in the former homelands (Lester et al, 2000). Through ecotourism investment in these areas, the private sector can assist in poverty alleviation. Umngazi River Bungalows, being the only source of livelihood for the three surrounding communities, also supports a number of income generating community projects. These projects, although linked to the hotel's tourism product, are aimed at ensuring job creation for both employee and non-employee community members. These provide an alternative source of livelihood for communities and show that ecotourism activities can provide a better spillover effect in terms of supporting livelihoods than other resource activities. Research done at Phinda Game Reserve in South Africa, revealed that the private sector investor, CCA, had supported local entrepreneurship as a way of promoting rural economic development (Scheyvens, 2002). Umngazi River Bungalows facilitates and markets community projects, products and services.

Income-generating community projects supported by the hotel can be distinguished depending on the level of the hotel's control over the operations of the projects. Projects that involved less control by the hotel included a beekeeping project, initiated by the Institute of Natural Resources (INR), an external organization, and managed by members of Cwebeni community. It relied on the hotel solely for the marketing and sale of honey. A horse trail project had also been initiated with the help of an external organization. Employee 17 (15 May 2008) summarized the role of the hotel in this project:

“The hotel helped to build house [sic] for storage, orders food for the horses, which comes with the truck that delivers food for Umngazi, bookings are done at Umngazi, they (tourists), go with the Umngazi ferry to the horses yet the horse people do not have to pay for it.”

The recruitment, funding, and training aspects of these projects were managed by external organizations. The hotel also provided space for community members to set up a craft stall where they could sell handicrafts to the hotel's guests. Community members

also hired beach umbrellas and chairs to tourists as an additional form of income generation. A cultural village, rondavel, and community restaurant had also been initiated at Cwebeni, although they were not operational at the time of the study.

The second type of income-generating community projects involved more control over their operations by the hotel. The hotel supported a nanny project where guests could hire members of the community as child minders on a contract basis. A gilly project, employing the services of nature guides, canoeists, porters, and wood gatherers for hiking, fishing, canoeing, and camping trips for a specified period of time on a contract basis, was also operational. Payment and terms of contract were negotiated between the service provider and guest. This can be problematic as there is no basic wage or no agreed policy on what payment ought to be. Some guests may pay fairly well, while others may exploit the fact that contract workers were not part of the hotel. Most of the contract workers did, however, stipulate a basic wage, which by urban standards for daily casual work was low. According to Manager 2 (10 July 2008), nannies and gillies were first to be considered for permanent positions when the hotel was recruiting potential staff members.

A permanent staff member hosted the 'village walk', a cultural initiative that exposed guests to the Pondo culture at the employee's home. It included a trip in the village and an exhibition of cultural artifacts and traditional lifestyle. The hotel provided these staff members with all the materials needed for the carrying out of their responsibilities. The hotel also sourced fruits, vegetables, crayfish, and oysters from community subsistence farmers and fishermen before seeking these products from external suppliers as an income generating activity. This type of involvement of communities often ensures that their wellbeing becomes an 'integral and essential part' of the ecotourism development process and augments their economic benefits. This conclusion was also reached by Hill et al (2006), in a study on the role of small scale, nature-based tourism in pro-poor development in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

A comparison between these two types of income-generating projects was done. The Independent Operator who had worked in the beekeeping project was interviewed in

this study (17 July 2008) and his experiences were compared with those of projects operated in close conjunction with the hotel. The beekeeping project was funded by an external non-governmental organization, and the INR, and involved only members of the Cwebeni community. The hotel's role in this project had been limited to the purchasing and bottling of honey, and the operation of an initiative that provided an educational tour for guests on beekeeping. The respondent cited a number of challenges faced during the initiation and implementation of this project:

- A lack of knowledge and understanding about beekeeping by communities.
- A lack of patience and perseverance by communities.
- One of the main community members the respondent had been working with had since died, and seeing that this member had been such a critical person with regard to the success of the project, it had begun to fail. The respondent had also since retired from the project.
- The hotel had not been involved in the management of this project.

Although the study did not investigate the dynamics in these projects, it would appear that operational and structural limitations, as outlined by Tosun (2000), might have hindered the project's successful operation. In some cases, the involvement of an external agent in a community project can act as motivation for the participation of community members, as seen in the case of Umngazi River Bungalows. In other cases, where external agents prescribe projects to communities, the success of these can be questionable in the long run (Mowforth and Munt, 1998).

5.2.3. Philanthropic projects

Increasingly, private sector ecotourism ventures are incorporating corporate responsibility in their agendas and eliciting the assistance of sponsors to implement these activities (Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007). Umngazi River Bungalows has initiated a number of community outreach programmes with the help of specific sponsors such as Pick n' Pay retail chain. The hotel was involved in an orphan feeding programme and donated stationery, computers, and other equipment to the three community schools. A knitting club has been initiated by guests at the hotel where guests assisted in the knitting of garments that were subsequently distributed to needy

children in the communities. As a way of ensuring reuse of materials, the hotel donated old deco from hotel rooms to various community members. The hotel also supplied water to the Vukandlule community from their water pipelines when water shortages occurred in the area. It provided transport, by means of a tractor, for firewood and finances during community functions, and as noted by Employee 13 (15 May 2008), “if community has a problem, they take [the sick person] to hospital at Umngazi”, the hotel was proactive in assisting the communities in emergency situations. The above reveals that the hotel is a key player in pro-poor development and community upliftment in these communities. The table below summarizes the different projects as discussed above.

Table 5.1 A summary of projects Umngazi River Bungalows is involved in

Community Projects		
Service infrastructure	Income-generating community projects	Philanthropic programmes
Classrooms	a) Less operational control by hotel	Orphan feeding programme
Community hall		Stationery, computer and equipment donations
Road infrastructure	Beekeeping project	Knitting club
	Horse trail project	Old deco donations
	Handicraft stall	Supply of water
	Beach umbrellas and chairs	Transport for community functions
	Cultural village	Assistance in emergence situations
	Rondovel	Financial support in community functions
	Community restaurant	
	b) Increased operational control by hotel	
	Nanny project	
	Gilly project	
	Village walk project	
	Sourcing fresh produce	

5.3. Identifying key stakeholders within and outside Umngazi River Bungalows and the different relationships among these

Stakeholder engagement or involvement allows for “information sharing, accountability and legitimization, education, community empowerment and actual power sharing” (Graham and Phillips, 1998: 8). Although it is often a difficult and time-consuming process, it has significant implications for sustainability of a business. This section will identify the various stakeholders involved in the operations of Umngazi and explore the relationships that the hotel management and owners have with these stakeholders.

5.3.1. Key stakeholders

A stakeholder can be defined as “any person, group or organization that is affected by the causes or consequences of an issue” (Bryson and Crosby, 1992 cited in Araujo and Bramwell, 1999: 356). Table 5.2 below summarises the stakeholders identified by both community and manager respondents.

Table 5.2 A summary of key stakeholders

Employee Respondents	Manager Respondents
Stakeholders within Umngazi	Stakeholders within the communities
Management	Tribal Authority
Staff committee	Community Committees
Owner	Employees/ communities
	School Principals
	School PTA Committees
Stakeholders outside Umngazi	Staff Committee
Tribal Authority	
Community committees	Government stakeholders
Community members	Eastern Cape Fisheries
	Department of Labour
	DWAF
	Marine Control Board
	Department of Nature Conservation
	DEAET
	Tourism industry stakeholders
	Wild Coast Accommodation Association
	Accommodation Association

The process of identifying stakeholders in the study included fielding questions to community and manager respondents regarding who the hotel management interacted with the most within the hotel, the communities, and other external organizations. Araujo and Bramwell used this method in a study where stakeholder assessment was undertaken on a tourism planning initiative in Brazil (Araujo and Bramwell, 1999).

There is a significant difference in the manner in which both employee and manager respondents identified key stakeholders. This difference could be explained by the manner in which these two groups perceived the key stakeholders as possessing the attributes of urgency of claims, power and legitimacy as described below. Employee respondents identified key stakeholders as only those individuals or groups that had power or authority within both the hotel and community, which was based on their interactions with these stakeholders and which indicates limited exposure to external stakeholder groups. Manager respondents on the other hand included other external stakeholders who they viewed as stakeholders.

5.3.2. The relationships between stakeholders

An analysis of the types of relationships a business has with other stakeholders can be used to determine whether their involvement in an initiative is adequately representative. This informs the types of stakeholders they are depending on, and reveals whether they possess power, legitimacy or 'urgency of claims' attributes within the relationship (Mitchell et al, 1997).

a. Relationship between employees and management/owner

The study investigated the processes of recruitment and job experiences to explore the relationship employees had with the management of the hotel. This investigation revealed the hotel was committed to community upliftment through employment.

i. Recruitment at Umngazi River Bungalows

Umngazi River Bungalows is situated adjacent to three communities. The hotel recruits its employees from the three communities except where job positions require specific expertise, such as management, specialized maintenance, and finance positions.

Recruitment in the communities is done on a rotational basis so that employment benefits accrue to each community equally. This is done in consultation with the staff committee and employees. In cases where tourism ventures are developed in more than one community, the investor has to be careful regarding biased selection of employees as this can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction. This was also concluded in a study done at Kwa-Dapha, a tourism initiative involving three communities in KwaZulu-Natal (Urquhart, 2003). Dissatisfaction with the recruitment and selection of tour guides led to poor services to guests and lack of cooperation by workers, and eventually this affected community relationships and the operations of the initiative.

ii. Job experiences

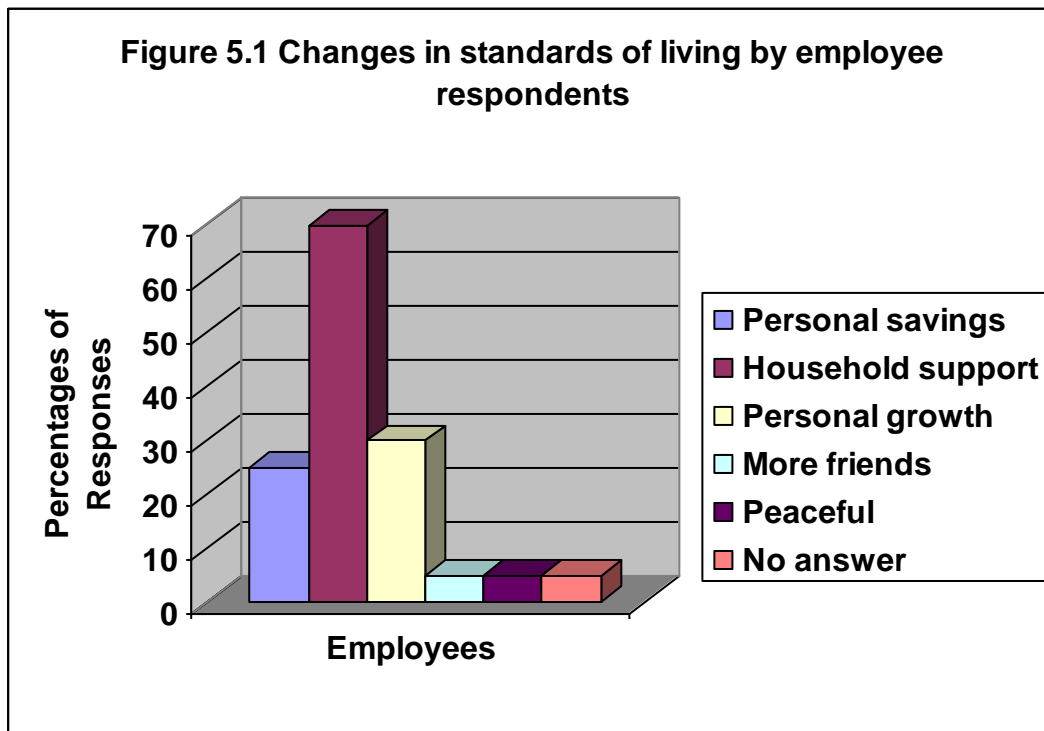
A number of questions were asked to employees about the nature of their jobs and on-the-job experiences. Employee respondents were asked whether their standards of living had changed since they started working at the hotel, and 100% of them answered to the affirmative. A majority of employee respondents, 70%, stated that they were able to support their families with the incomes they received from the hotel. Responses received from three employee respondents summarize the changes in standards of living:

“All the children have gone up to Std 10, I supported them. I built a big house” (Employee 13, 15 May 2008).

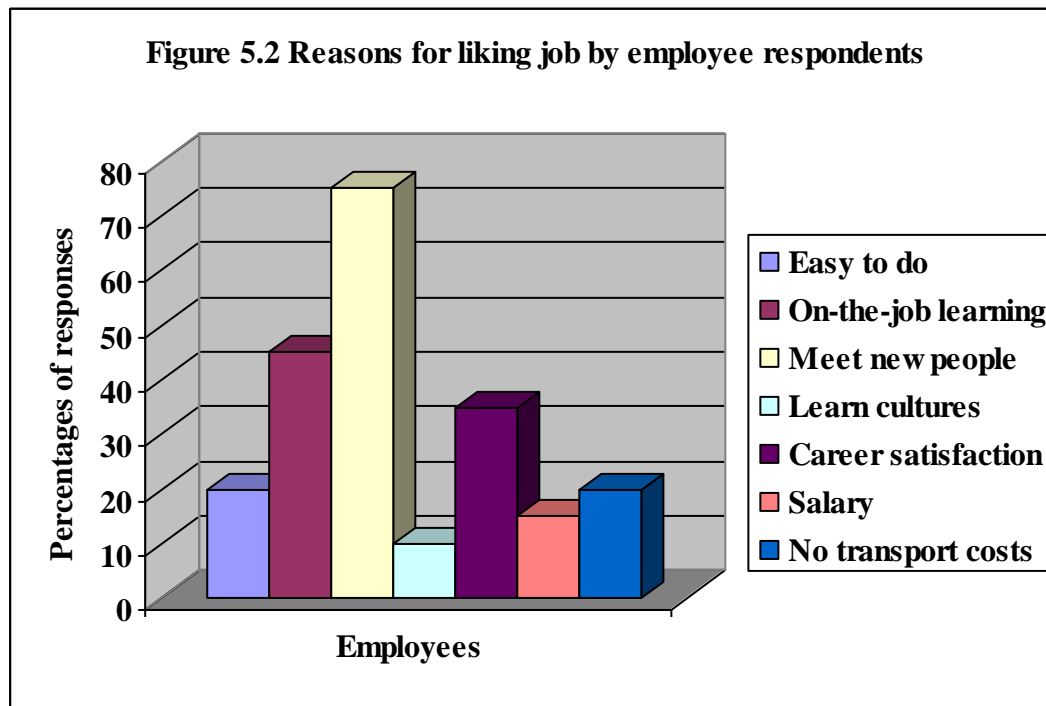
“[I] Am able to take care of my family, my dad and mum not working. I support my family, two sisters pass Matric maybe next year (2009), I will take them to University (Employee 16, 14 May 2008).”

“Umngazi helped me through my tertiary education. I can go and work overseas because my certificate allows me to do that. And management says I can come back if I want to” (Employee 2, 13 May 2008).”

Figure 5.1 below shows the responses from employee respondents regarding on the changes in standards of living since employment by the hotel.



Asked about the things they like most about their jobs, 75% of respondents mentioned meeting new people and experiencing new cultures as a key benefit of not only working at the hotel, but also within the tourism industry. Some respondents, 45%, stated on-the-job learning and growth in personal attributes, such as confidence and ability to communicate better, as reasons they enjoyed their jobs at the hotel. It was observed that employees were highly passionate and dedicated in the performance of their responsibilities within the hotel during the data collection period. All respondents noted the value of working in close proximity to family homes where rent and transport costs were not incurred. Access to the hotel by employees was largely by foot and river, with 90% of all employees stating they had not encountered any problems with their journey to and from work. This was attributed to low crime and the availability of staff accommodation within the hotel for staff members who worked late shifts. Figure 5.2 below presents the responses of employees about the reasons why they liked their jobs at Umngazi River Bumgalows.



In summary, the ability to support family, wages, salaries, gratuity and bonuses (twice a year), retirement, funeral cover, on-the-job training, formal education sponsored by the hotel, and exposure through job rotation were used to express positive job experiences at the hotel.

A few respondents, 15%, stated they were unhappy with the period it took to move from contract to permanent employment. This period was described as lengthy and one that hindered them from enjoying the financial benefits of permanent employees. The need for teamwork among employees, especially where an age gap existed between staff members, was mentioned. There was a feeling that the older employees were not always innovative and flexible, which led to near conflicts at times. A language barrier existed, where some of the employees did not have a good grasp of the English language, posing a communication problem with guests and some managers.

A lack of skilled human resources has been stated by Tosun (2000) as a limitation to involving communities in tourism development. The study revealed that the hotel was obligated to hire staff members from the three communities stemming from an initial agreement with the Tribal Authority, but that finding skilled labour within the

communities was sometimes difficult especially when specific skills were sought (Manager 1 and Manager 4, 15 May 2008). The hotel had adopted an on-the-job training strategy to assist in the management of this challenge where employees were trained in how to carry out certain responsibilities. A training centre was being constructed within the hotel at the time of data collection that would offer training and development to community and staff members. The commitment to train community members often requires time, energy, and perseverance from investors and has been outlined as a limitation to community involvement in literature (Swarbrooke, 1999 cited in Garrod, 2003). Finally, a lack of decision making by employees, especially in senior positions, was often experienced. There was a shared feeling amongst all managers that some senior employees were cautious of executing decisions that involved disciplining or instructing fellow employees. Manager 2 (10 July 2008), explained this further:

“We are all equal, but some people are better educated and can make decisions, and you have got to take instructions. A process of negotiation, education was started for people to understand. There is now an understanding at Umngazi that people have to take instructions from seniors regardless of whether they are neighbours at home or not.”

iii. Interactions between employees, staff committee and worker unions/ external representatives

Respondents were asked if they had formed groups amongst themselves in order to represent views to management. There had been no such group formations at Umngazi River Bungalows by staff members as a result of unhappiness of feelings or unfair treatment by management. This additionally confirmed that staff members were relatively satisfied at Umngazi. Staff meetings were held once a month between the hotel's staff committee and permanent staff members and were used as platforms to forward issues, complaints, and challenges to management.

The staff committee was made up of heads of different departments within the hotel but also included employees who did not hold any supervisory positions. Management had elected the original committee with no input from other staff members, but subsequently, the latter were involved in the election of members when a position in the committee was vacant. Staff members could also vote for the removal of a particular

member of the committee. The committee was mandated with the representation of staff problems to management at all levels. A large number of respondents, 40%, had used the committee to negotiate for better wages and salaries. Seeking assistance from management, to build schools within the communities for instance, requesting speedy registration from contract to permanent employment, and reporting intimidating guest behaviour were also reported to management through this committee. A good relationship existed between employees and the staff committee. Employee respondents believed in the ability of the staff committee to represent them to management, stating that the outcomes of negotiations ended up in a consensus.

A high majority of employee respondents, 95%, had never used an external organization to represent them to management. This could be explained by the fact that Umngazi was seen as the provider of income and other benefits for these communities, and therefore raising any concerns would affect the flow of these benefits. Alternatively, it could be interpreted to mean that employees were satisfied with the way things were operated and did not see the reason for external organizations. The latter reason seemed to prevail with 90% of employee respondents not believing in unions. This may also reflect the rural character and self confinement of these communities within traditional structures. The Labour Union periodically checked whether staff members were treated fairly by management in terms of wages and salaries. Managers confirmed this sentiment against labour unions (Manager 1 and Manager 4, 15 May 2008). Only 10% of the employee respondents feared losing their jobs if they engaged in union activities. Employee 7 (13 May 2008) explained the reason as being that, since Umngazi was privately owned, workers felt they could lose their jobs if they involved in union activities.

iv. Sense of belonging

The vast majority of employee respondents, 90%, felt they were part of the Umngazi community. Most employees, 70%, attributed this feeling to the open relationship between management and staff, with Employee 4 (14 May 2008) remarking, “The hotel is like a ‘household;’ the Umngazi people (owner) have built here as if they were a part of the community.” This was also related to the feeling of gratitude for the salary/wage/bonus benefits that staff members received from the hotel as expressed by

Employee 12 (15 May 2008): “Umngazi has done a lot for me; I paid lobola [dowry] for my wife. When I worked at the mines, I earned 25cents, [now] I can support my kids. They always call me to come and work even though [I have] retired.”

Referring to the important role of employees in the operations of the hotel, Manager 2 (10 July 2008) stated: “Those buildings and everything else there, you can make them as beautiful as you want to, as functional as you want to, but without the staff, that place is nothing.” The hotel had adopted the community-based approach on managing their business, as they believed it would contribute to the success of the tourism venture. Ensuring a good relationship with the communities, ethics, fairness, empowerment, and knowledge transfer were all stated as reasons for the adoption of this approach. This need to have a good relationship with communities was summarized by Manager 2 (10 July 2008) who had worked as a General Manager at the hotel for 15 years since the current owners bought the hotel:

“Umngazi is part of the community. The communities want Umngazi to be there for their children and grandchildren. It’s a culture we have built at Umngazi with the staff. Now, that culture, you cannot just cut it off at Umngazi. Where do those employees come from? They come from the communities. So, I made myself very visible in the communities. I would attend funerals, weddings, and things like that. Umngazi is not an island. We could not divorce with the community. There had to be a personal aspect, ubuntu, [and] human aspect to the relationship.”

Local communities are key stakeholders in tourism as they are a source of labour and provide tourism links through involvement in the production of services, such as handicrafts and the operation of tourism related projects (Ladkin and Bertramini, 2002). In the study of Umngazi River Bungalows, the employee respondents represented the communities’ perceptions and views. The hotel relies on its employees to ensure consumer satisfaction, efficient service, and the community for the maintenance of peace and security. The community relies on the hotel for the provision of employment opportunities and support of tourism projects. Communities and employees in this study can be referred to as definitive stakeholders as they hold legitimacy, urgency of claims, and power attributes.

b. Relationship between the hotel, Tribal Authority and external organizations

These representatives included the Tribal Authority (TA) made up of two headmen and a chief, as well as community development committees. The majority of respondents, 95%, reported that they had people within their communities who represented the ideas and views of the communities to the management of Umngazi. These representatives were mostly elected members of the community who held other prominent positions within the communities, such as teachers, heads of community projects, and businessmen. The hotel was in constant communication with both the Tribal Authority and community committees whenever an action necessitated their participation. The Tribal Authority was, however, not consulted with regard to the daily operations of the hotel as stated by Manager 3 (16 May 2008): “they are not consulted with regarding Umngazi’s operations—perhaps how operations may impact on the community is discussed with the committees of the communities.”

Tribal Authorities in South Africa are important development stakeholders, especially in rural areas where they are often the “custodians of land resources and control the development of these areas” (Mosidi, 2003: 111). They are also therefore considered to be definitive stakeholders. The endorsement of a tourism venture by these authorities is a vital step in ensuring long-term success, if its operations are in an area. Constant communication and consultation with them ensures a good relationship with the community. This was also concluded in a study of the Madikwe Game Reserve in South Africa by Mosidi (2003) where success was linked to the tribal authority’s endorsement of the conservation initiative. The research at Umngazi revealed that, prior to the re-development of the hotel in 1993, the owners held consultative meetings with the Tribal Council where agreements were reached on the expected conduct of the hotel, especially regarding its relationship with the communities.

Umngazi River Bungalows is a member of the Accommodation Association (AA) and the Wild Coast Accommodation Association. These are hospitality industry accreditation organizations that seek to ensure due standards are maintained by accommodation establishments through periodic grading processes. The Accommodation Association does not include sustainability principles in its grading

process. The hotel is not affiliated to any sustainable tourism accreditation organizations, which was confirmed by Manager 1 and Manager 4 (15 May 2008): “Umngazi is not an affiliate to a lot of organizations. It offers a unique experience, and we believe the grading done by the AA is satisfactory.” These organizations were also categorized as definitive stakeholders as their involvement at Umngazi ensured set standards were maintained. The grading process is often an important process for tourism establishments as the results are usually used for marketing purposes.

c. Relationship between the hotel and government

All four managers were in agreement that government had very limited influence over how the hotel was operated. The Department of Labour, DEAT, DEAET, DWAF and the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) were governmental authorities the hotel worked with. The involvement of government departments in the operations of the hotel was related to the issuing of environmental licenses, maintenance of labour laws, and coastal and marine protection. This relationship with government departments is characterized by poor support as stated by Manager 2 (15 May 2008): “The wheels within governments move slowly. [There are] too many administrative procedures and red tape.” A lack of capacity by government departments was also blamed for this kind of a relationship with Manager 2 (15 May 2008) stating that some of the departments were “a waste of time”. The government official (16 July 2008) described government’s relationship with tourism ventures as follows:

“It is an indirect or rather a distant relationship in the sense that our support is directed at projects coming to us via Municipal Integrated Development Plans (MIDPs). The DEDEA is only involved in both the financial and non financial aspects of tourism ventures support identified through those MIDPs.”

The establishment of the hotel occurred at a time where there was a governance vacuum in the Eastern Cape due to the process of consolidation of provincial and district boundaries post 1994. Additionally, the prominence of the Tribal Authority as a key governance structure, resulting from the Homelands governance system, meant that establishments had to deal with the tribal authorities. The DEAET, which is responsible for tourism in the Eastern Cape, is more focused on Small-Medium Enterprise (SME) development in tourism (Government Official, 17 July 2008). Since Umngazi River

Bungalows is financially self-sufficient, this could further explain the distant relationship it has with government. These reasons could explain the limited governmental influence at Umngazi River Bungalows. The government, in this case, can be categorized as an expectant stakeholder as it holds little power through its departments.

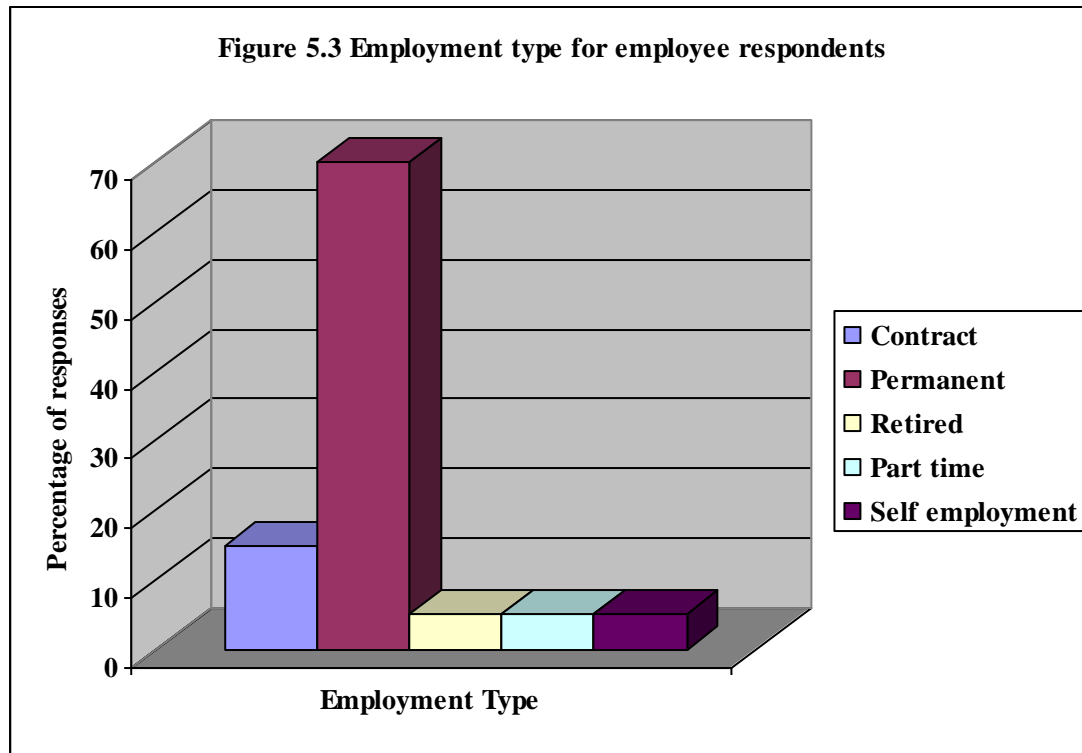
5.4. Examining the Degree of Participation in the Operations of Umngazi River Bungalows by the Three Surrounding Communities

The need for participation of local communities in the operations of tourism ventures has been expressed widely in literature (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Fennell, 1999; Scheyvens, 1999; Mosidi, 2003). Participation of local people is one of the principles of ecotourism and allows local communities to “gain larger and more balanced benefits from tourism development taking place in their localities” (Tosun, 2000: 493). However, it is not participation that has become critical in dialogue concerning community involvement but rather the nature of this participation (Scheyvens, 2002). Emphasis has been on the role of government as a regulator of private sector developers in rural areas to ensure proper local participation occurs in these areas (Scheyvens, 2002). This study aims to provide evidence that the private sector can ensure participation without much government involvement and that decision-making may not necessarily be the only avenue to ensure full participation. Participation can be in the various forms, both direct and indirect. In the study, all but two of the employees interviewed were members of the community and had a good understanding of how the hotel was operated and the role played by the hotel within the communities. The following section discusses the various ways in which the three communities in the study participated in the operations of the hotel.

5.4.1. Employment

Local employment is one of the most significant local economic benefits that tourism investment in rural areas achieves (Hill et al, 2006). Upon purchasing the hotel, the current owner and the Tribal Authority reached an agreement, stating the intention of the former to provide employment opportunities to the three surrounding communities. The hotel employs casual, part-time, contract and permanent staff members all year

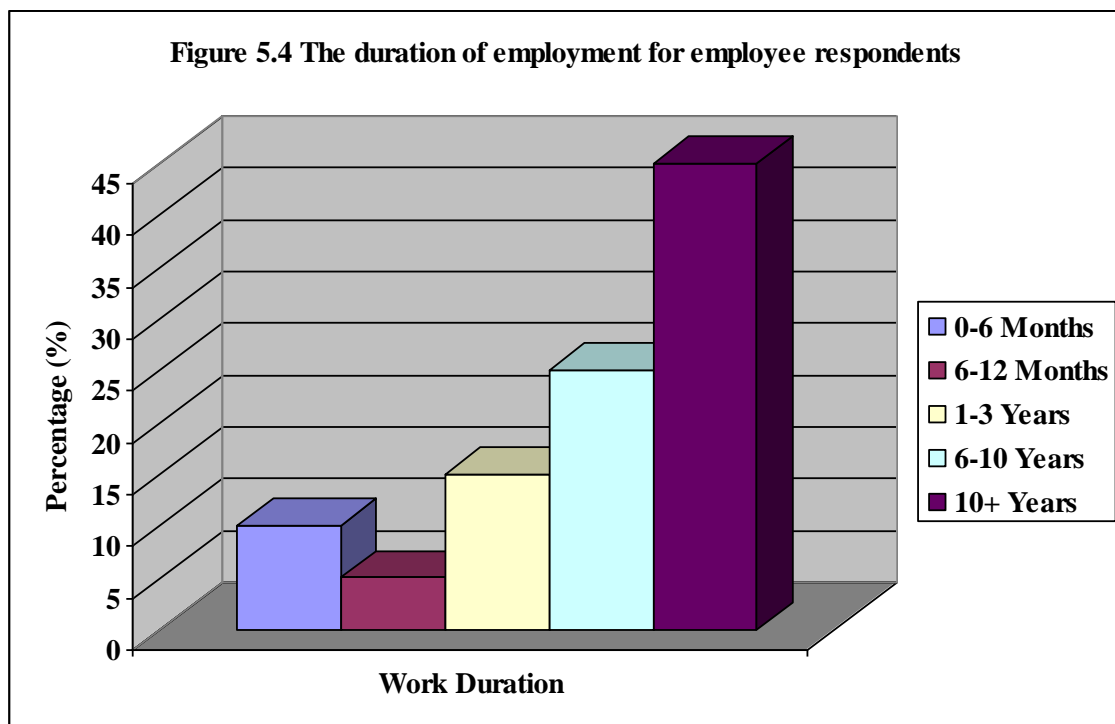
round. A majority of the employee respondents, 70%, were permanent staff members, with 15% contract employees. The study did not include any casual employees. Figure 5.3 below shows the distribution of employee respondents by the type of employment.



As shown in Figure 5.4 below, a large number of the employee respondents, 45%, had worked at Umngazi for over 10 years depicting high staff retention, 25% had been employees for 6-10 years, while 15% had been at Umngazi for 1-3 years. This depicts a high staff retention and low staff turnover rate.

Employment creation was ranked second highest of the factors that strengthened the community-hotel relationship with 70% of all employee respondents and all managers referring to it as a benefit. Employee respondents had been recruited through informal ways, such as family recommendations, retention from casual employment, or ‘walk-in’ job inquiries. All four managers interviewed emphasized the involvement of the staff committee in the recruitment of junior personnel. The hotel had also adopted career succession and in-house promotion plans as a staff development strategy. Most employee respondents had worked in different job positions within Umngazi with the

majority of them in the gardening/maintenance or kitchen/dining room departments. This supported the comment made by Manager 2 (10 July 2003) about the hotel recruiting permanent staff members from casual employees. The latter two departments employed more casuals than any other departments in the hotel. Salaries and wages were augmented by involvement in other community projects, welfare benefits, and remittances. Only 20% of employee respondents augmented their incomes through other self-employment sources not affiliated to Umngazi. Figure 5.4 shows the duration of employment at the hotel of employee respondents. .



In terms of equality, both males and females were equally employed at Umngazi River Bungalows although there were more females than males in the communities, according to the National Census (2001). A majority of employee respondents, 80%, perceived that economic benefits accrued to the three communities equally with both employees and non-employees benefiting from the hotel's presence in the area. This could be explained by the availability of other alternative economic opportunities in the form of other community projects in the area. These results are aligned with a study done by Mitchell and Reid (2001) on Taquile Island in Peru where 89% of respondents claimed they received economic benefits from tourism. Staff members also shared in the hotel's

annual turnover and received bonuses every year as a way of increasing staff morale and spreading the hotel's financial benefits. This was found to be the case in the Jackalberry Lodge in Limpopo, although the lodge only employed 27% of its labour force from the local population (Spenceley, 2003).

5.4.2. Community projects

As outlined in objective one above, Umngazi and other sponsors had introduced both income generating and outreach projects to the three communities. This was stated as a benefit by 60% of employee respondents. Most of these community projects were interlinked with the experience that Umngazi offered to its guests. Other spin-off benefits from the development of the hotel that accrued to communities included the introduction of various poverty alleviation programmes, such as the *Working for Water* programme aimed at eliminating alien plants from these communities through mechanical, biological and chemical methods. The programme aims to recover scarce water, conserve biological diversity, and empower of local communities through job creation.

5.4.3. Education (informal and formal)

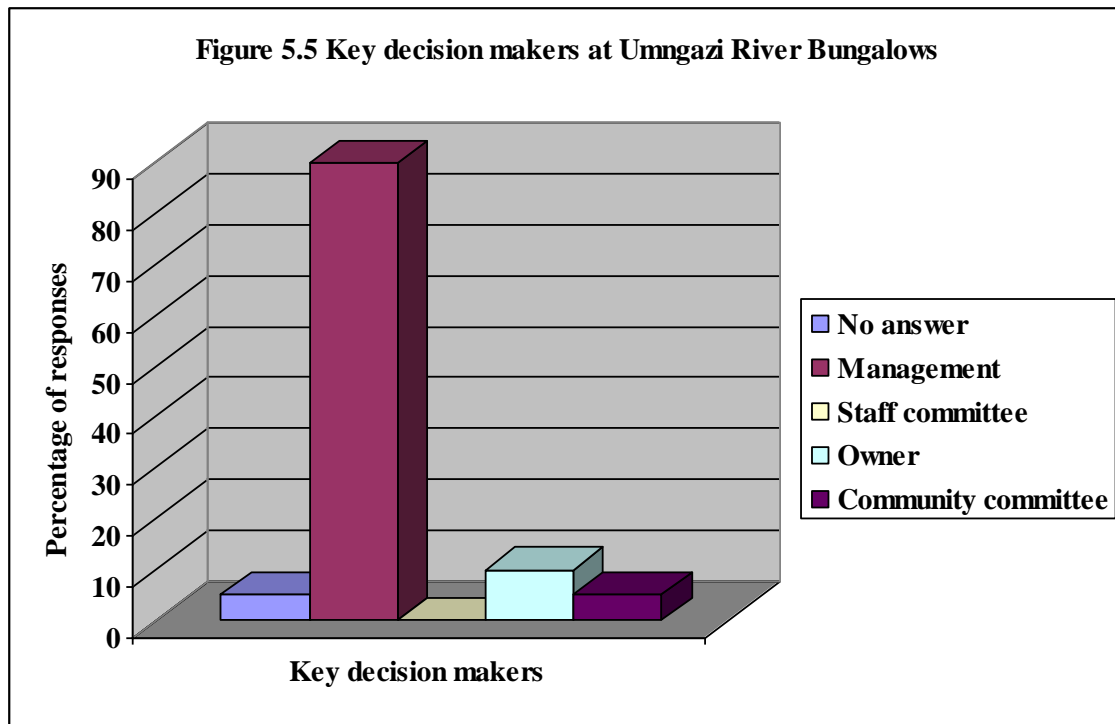
Most employee respondents reported they had acquired and enhanced their job skills while working in different job positions. This can be seen as an indirect benefit of engaging in tourism for the employees. Through the hotel's policy on staff development, employees received bursaries to assist them with formal education within the hospitality industry. Employee respondents became more aware of the need to conserve the environment as a result of working at the hotel. Informal education, provided by management and other senior employees, on the need to protect the natural environment contributed to this awareness. Some employee respondents mentioned that their sense of self-confidence and motivation had increased since they began working at Umngazi River Bungalows. Managers stressed the importance of providing educational opportunities to employees as this enabled the latter to gain a better understanding about how the hotel was operated.

5.4.4. Decision making

Local communities should be integrated fully into the operational and managerial activities of tourism ventures if full participation is to be achieved. In most developing countries, owing to constraints, as stated by Tosun (2000), it is often difficult for decision-making processes to be all inclusive of surrounding practices. The challenge of poverty reduction and alleviation is usually the major priority in most of these countries. The provision of economic opportunities becomes more essential than trying to ensure community-wide dialogue in most developing countries (Li, 2006). In cases where the private sector is the major driver for tourism development in an area, like at Umngazi River Bungalows, involvement in tourism activities rather than participation in decision making processes by communities are usually encouraged. In other ventures, communities are often left out of the operations of the establishment completely (Mowforth and Munt, 1998).

a. Key decision makers in the operations of Umngazi

When asked who the key decision makers were, 90% of the employee respondents ranked the General Manager as the key decision maker on the operations of the hotel. They referred to his first name, when asked, rather than the word ‘management’ or ‘manager,’ which signified an open relationship between management and employees. Only 10% of all responses referred to the owner as playing an active role in the management of the hotel. This could be explained by the fact that the owner was not normally a resident at the locality of the hotel and to the flexible managerial style the hotel had adopted. The staff committee was also seen as an important decision maker with 45% of all responses stating this. The community committee was mentioned by 5% of respondents. It is worthwhile to note that the communities were not seen as key decision makers by both employee and manager respondents. The Government Official (17 July 2008), however, mentioned the importance of this group of stakeholders in decision making forums, although there was no specific government strategy in place to ensure that tourism’s private sector players ensured this. Figure 5.5 shows the key decision makers at Umngazi River Bungalows.



b. Consultation

A majority of respondents, 80%, felt the need to be consulted regarding the decision making process in Umngazi. One fifth, 20%, of all respondents either did not feel the need for consultation, or considered it necessary only in specific situations. The fact that the hotel was built on communal land was stated as a key reason for this need by 40% of all the respondents. Ethics, the need for teamwork, the owner's open personality, and tapping of indigenous knowledge were also stated as some of the reasons for the need to consult both employees and the community. Employee 2 (13 May 2008) who remarked, "you can't work alone in this industry; people's views are essential. My views are important because management need people who know this place and where to go when they need help", felt very strongly about the need to be consulted.

However, some respondents felt it was the duty of professionals (referring to senior management) to make and amend decisions without prior consultation. This was a sentiment shared by Employee 5 (13 May 2008) who felt contract workers were not adequately consulted in decision-making. This could be explained by the fact that the staff committee comprised of only permanent staff members. However, contract employees had their own forum where they could deliberate on issues that affected their

staff welfare. Although the study did not investigate this body, informal conversations confirmed that it was not as strong as the staff committee. It appears that contract staff are more vulnerable both in terms of wage negotiations and representation to management and general staff meetings.

Various consultation forums were in place to aid staff members and management in the exchange of ideas, and in dealing with concerns and issues. These included the use of departmental, general staff, staff committee-management, staff meetings excluding management, individual staff member-management, senior staff-management, and informal meetings. The use of the staff committee was ranked the most useful method of consultation by 40% of all respondents. General staff and informal meetings were also stated as popular methods of information sharing by 25% and 20% of all respondents respectively. Almost one third, 30%, of respondents did not respond to this question. These included employees who felt that decision-making was reserved for management and that only permanent staff members were consulted since the staff committee represented them.

Decision making within Umngazi River Bungalows seemed structured in a hierarchical manner where the staff committee played a vital role with regard to two-way communication between management and staff members. Employee respondents seemed to understand the hierarchy of decision making well and were content with this kind of a structure. Where a staff member felt aggrieved, he/she would approach staff committee members who would intervene on his/her behalf to management or fellow staff member. If this process was unsatisfactory, the individual would present their challenges to management. Table 5.3 provides a summary of the different consultation forums in place at Umngazi River Bungalows.

Table 5.3 A summary of the different consultation forums in place at Umngazi River Bungalows

Consultation forums
Staff committee-management meetings
General staff meetings with management
Informal meetings/one-on-one/dining room/garden meetings between management and staff members. These were mainly used for educational purposes
Departments meetings between the different departmental supervisors and the departmental employees
Staff meetings excluding management. These were held every month and chaired by the staff committee members. They were used as platforms for employees to voice issues, which would then be presented to management
Individual staff member-management meeting
Senior staff- management meeting. These were held once a day and were mainly focused on the day-to-day running of the hotel
Community representatives/committee meetings. These were often held between hotel management and community representatives where matters related to community involvement at Umngazi were discussed

Consultation with the tribal authority was deemed important when the hotel needed to conduct activities, such as building a school or road, outside the hotel compound, but within communal land. This type of cooperation was also established at the Lisu Lodge in Thailand where management was in constant communication with village elders regarding major decisions (Johansson and Diamantis, 2004). At Umngazi River Bungalows, representatives of the tribal authority and various other contact persons were often consulted about major decisions on the operations of the hotel, such as if management decided to expand the hotel. The relationship between the hotel and Tribal Authority was summarized Manager 2 (10 July 2008) as follows:

“They do not have a say in the running of the hotel, but two way communication channels are open and junior positions (recruitment of junior staff members) take place when the need arises. If an issue, policy, decisions etc, could have an impact on employees and/or any of our neighbors, consultation takes place with those who may be affected and/or their representatives.”

Using Pretty’s (1995) typology on participation, employees of Umngazi and the Tribal Authority could be seen as interactive participants on the operations of the hotel, given the mechanisms in place for their involvement. This can be applied to permanent staff members only since analysis took into account their comments alone. The dynamics between the Tribal Authority and local communities were not under investigation in the

study, and so a generalization as to whether the general community adequately participated in decision-making could not be made. However, most employee and manager respondents commented positively on the role of the tribal authority in the representation of communities. Over half of the employee respondents, 55%, answered that representation was satisfactory. A majority of respondents, 85%, that did not respond to this question were women, and this could be explained by the cultural limitation placed upon women regarding attending and participating in community meetings. The voices of women in these forums are important since there are more women that work at Umngazi and as shown in data in the chapter four, more women live in the communities.

Different communities seek and require different forms of participation given their needs and expected benefits from tourism. Community participation should allow for the involvement of host communities at different levels and in various forms under different site-specific conditions (Tosun, 2000). At Umngazi River Bungalows, the levels of general community participation in decision-making were considered to be low. Most respondents were, however, content with their levels of participation in the operations of the hotel and considered decision making the mandate of management and other structures that had been put in place. Employees were happy with the role of the Staff Committee, Community Committees, and the Tribal Authority as key representatives of their interests to management. A similar conclusion was made by Li (2006) who studied community participation in the Jiuzhaigou Biosphere Reserve in China. In this study, community members interviewed were not concerned with the way decisions were made by management, but were rather focused on the improvements in local livelihoods. It was believed that management and the other governance structures in place at the reserve had the know-how on how to run the reserve. The following section will provide the findings regarding the practice of ecotourism at Umngazi River Bungalows.

5.5. Exploring the Extent to which Umngazi River Bungalows Ascribes to the Notion of Ecotourism

The growth of ecotourism has stemmed from the realization that mass tourism was resulting in negative environmental, social, and economic benefits especially for local communities. The adoption of ecotourism principles by business ventures has the potential to provide economic benefits while protecting the environment and ensuring maximum benefits to local communities (Wearing and Nel, 1999). Ecotourism ventures have the potential to not only “boost local jobs and economic growth” but also contribute to the empowerment and skills enhancement of local people (Loon and Polakow, 2001: 902). This has been witnessed in ecotourism ventures in Belize and Ecuador (Mowfort and Munt, 1998; Fennell, 1999). The study aims to explore whether Umngazi River Bungalows practices ecotourism, and, in so doing, the principles of ecotourism will be examined in relation to the hotel.

5.5.1. Nature of tourism at Umngazi

Umngazi River Bungalows offers a unique experience to its guests and markets itself as a family hotel. Although the hotel incorporates natural and cultural activities in its tourist experience, management did not consider the hotel to be an ecotourism venture. This could be because of its market positioning as a family hotel from the onset. Additionally, the grading process by the Accommodation Association (AA), seen as a very important accreditation process by management, does not focus on sustainability issues but rather on superior guest service and satisfaction.

The trend with regard to incorporating sustainability principles in tourism activities in South Africa has also changed since the 1990s, with many tourism establishments now being considered as ones that practice responsible tourism rather than ecotourism. The introduction of concepts like co-management in natural resource management has also changed the words used to describe sustainable natural resource management as seen in Hauck and Sowman (2003). The hotel is the only tourism establishment, and source of consistent employment opportunities, within the Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule communities. The tourism experience at Umngazi River Bungalows is geared towards family vacations with sufficient facilities available to cater for this market. Most of the

guests have been visiting the hotel for generations with their families, and it therefore holds a lot of history for those guests. Table 5.4 summarizes the tourism activities available for tourists at the hotel.

Table 5.4 The tourism product offered at Umngazi River Bungalows

The tourism product offered at Umngazi	
Natural and cultural activities	Additional facilities and activities
Hiking	Darts, snooker, and bar quizzes
Cruises	Spa and beauty centre
Mountain biking	Gym
Canoeing	Tennis
River breakfasts	Picnics
Fishing trips	Nanny service
Forest walks	Gilly service
Bird watching	Handicraft stall and convenience store
Mangrove swamp walks and canoe trailing	Fuel and pump station
Excursions	Swimming pool
Dune surfing	Adult and children entertainment lounge
Cultural walk	Guest laundry service
Paranomic view of the Wild Coast	Separate dining room for children
Horse-back riding	Trampoline and children's playground
	A variety of dining experiences
	Library and Conference facility

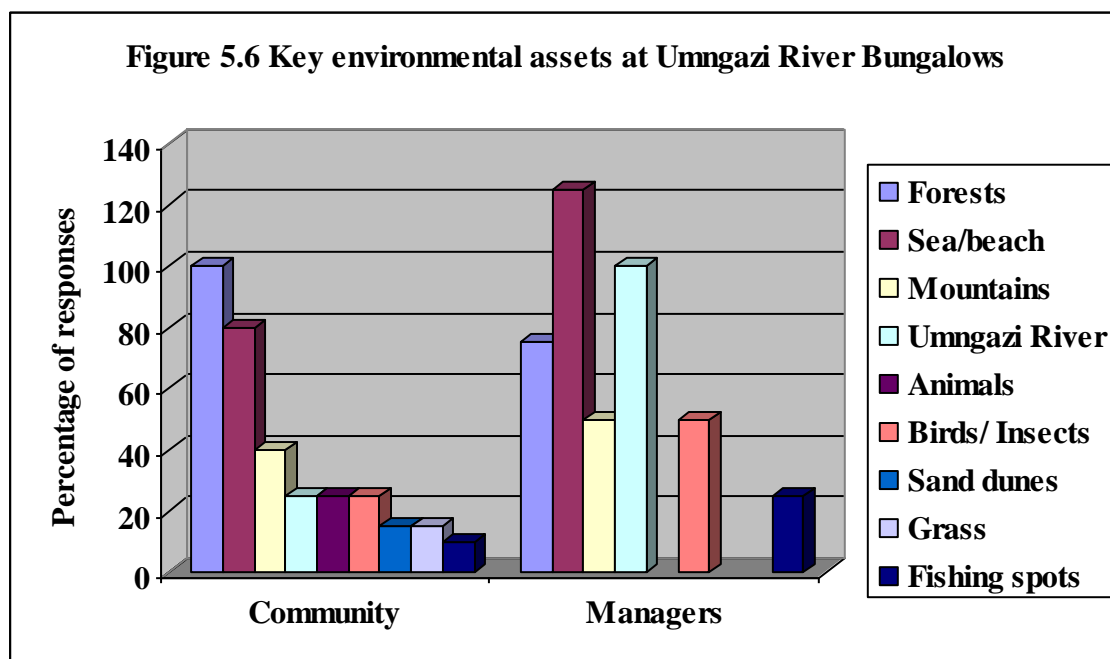
5.5.2. Natural and cultural activities

Ecotourism involves a focus on nature as the primary motivation for travel by guests (Wearing and Nel, 1999). Umngazi River Bungalows is located in a pristine environment and offers a unique chance for its guests to interact with a relatively undisturbed “high-energy coastline, interspersed with sandy shores.” (Russell and Kuiper, 2003: 149). Manager respondents regarded nature as a key asset and employee respondents mentioned components of the natural environment (see Figure 5.6 below) as key tourist pull factors. Nature activities offered by the hotel included forest, mangrove swamp and bird walks, mountain hikes, fishing, boat cruises, water skiing, canoeing, horse riding, and beekeeping tours. Local nature guides (known as gillies) provided indigenous knowledge on trees, animals, birds, and insects to guests. Gillies were not employees of the hotel but the latter recommended them to aid guests with nature activities. It has become more difficult to divorce nature from culture in ecotourism experiences and, because of the emphasis of sustainability in ecotourism;

most ecotourism ventures have adopted some aspect of cultural tourism in their product (Wearing and Nel, 1999). Village walks, where guests experienced the culture of the Pondo people, and entertainment on weekends by the Umngazi choir provided cultural activities at Umngazi River Bungalows. Handicraft displays and crafts for sale also exposed guests to the Pondo culture. On the basis of the natural and cultural activities offered at Umngazi, the destination can be viewed as one that practices nature-based tourism.

5.5.3. Environmental education and information

Both employee and manager respondents seemed to have a good understanding of what the natural environment contained. When asked what they liked most in the natural environments in their area, the sea/beach/sand dunes were ranked highest by 80% of employee and all four manager respondents. Forests, mountains, the river, animals, birds and insects, sand dunes, grass, and fishing spots were also mentioned as shown in Figure 5.6 below.



Over half of the employee respondents, 55%, had received information on the need to conserve the environment from Umngazi River Bungalows, while 35% had not received any information. Out of this 35%, the majority were contract workers who were not

involved in staff meetings. Staff meetings were stated as a major channel through which this information was provided, as cited by 35% of employee respondents. Informal settings and tribal meetings were stated as gatherings through which environmental information was also received. “There are some projects, and people get trained and have skills and know what they are doing, and they are able to explain some of the things to the tourists” commented Employee 2 (13 May 2008). Employee 14 (15 May 2008) also remarked:

“There is limit to use trees; our forest increasing because the Department of Agriculture [has] come to my community [to] teach us to protect our environment for generations. They teach us use one forest at a time. Then, if that forest becomes less, we move to other forest to give the chance to grow again that forest. They (hotel) call meetings; they tell the headman and chief why it’s important to conserve nature because it’s important for tourism.”

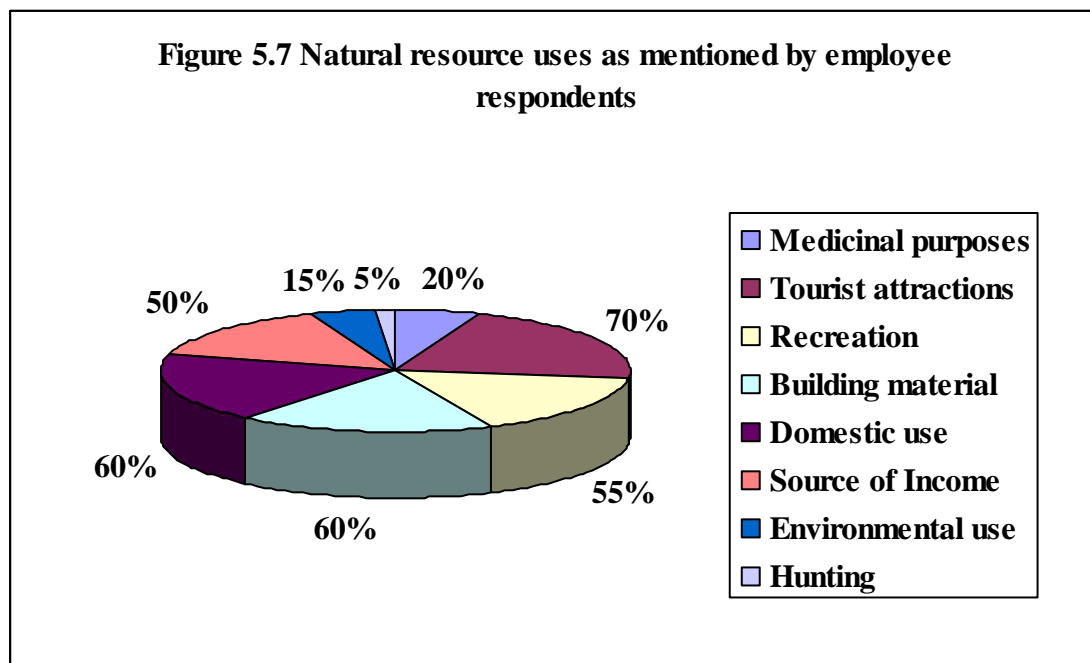
Bird, butterfly, tree, and snake books were available at the library for guests to acquaint themselves with information on the natural environment. A consent form between gillies and guests stressed the importance of using local knowledge in the tourist experience and advised against buying crayfish from gillies. It also specified chefs would only prepare fish of legal sizes and species from guests that had caught fish in the river. Staff members informally monitored guest behaviours and practices. Provision of information seemed to be an added value to the Umngazi product rather than a core of the tourist experience at the hotel. The ecotourism experience includes an “element of learning, education or appreciation of natural and cultural attractions” (Weaver, 2001: 11). The hotel had an unwritten environmental policy that was communicated to staff members and community members in consultation forums (see Table 5.3) whenever the need arose. The hotel, however, did not adopt any measures, such as labels in their rooms informing guests about water conservation. It seemed that environmental awareness was created through the activities offered. The effort to provide educational information to staff members, communities, and guests could be seen as meeting the requirements of ecotourism to some extent.

5.5.4. Protection of the environment

Most employee respondents appreciated the natural environment because it provided goods or services for their daily survival needs. Respondents used natural places for

medicinal purposes, as stated by Respondent 19, “we use sea water for relieving constipation, there are ‘special trees’ used for cleaning our chests (coughs and flu).” Natural places were used for relaxation and recreation, as tourist attractions, and as sources of building materials, especially the mangrove swamps. Half of the respondents, 50%, mentioned that income from selling crayfish, oysters, and vegetables to tourists, the hotel, and fellow community members was also derived from these resources. Figure 5.7 provides a summary of all the natural resources mentioned by employee respondents. Only a few of the respondents, 5%, mentioned hunting, although community members were not allowed to engage in this consumptive activity by government authorities and the hotel. Manager 2 (10 July 2008) summarized the hotel’s policy on hunting as follows:

“I understand. I used to hunt. I did not threaten them. I explained to them that it is natural for people to want to hunt but to please refrain from doing it in this area, rather do it in another area far away. So, preferably do not do it at all but, if you have to, do not do it here because it is impacting on my guests; they do not like to hear it, and they do not like to hear gunshots. Once, when hunters chased buck, guests were unhappy. We communicated this to the headman.”



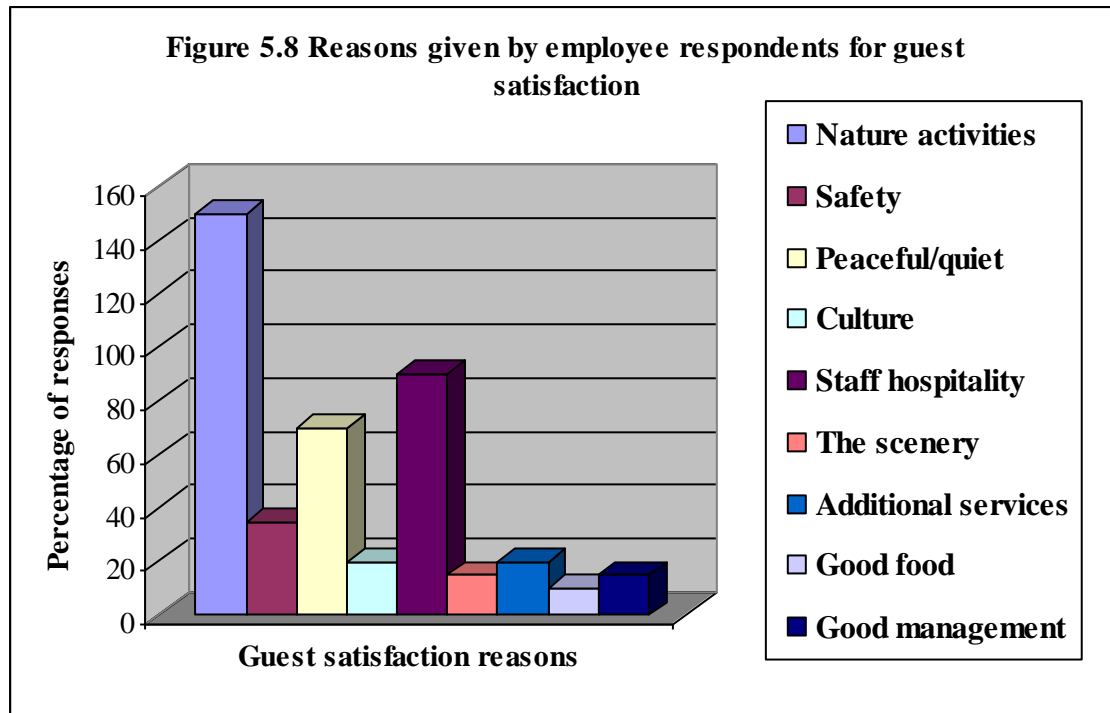
A majority of employee respondents, 75%, had not witnessed any significant negative changes in the natural environment. Changes were largely with regard to the protection of the environment, such as encouraging seasonal fishing, introduction of fishing licenses and forest protection, and coastal watch personnel for the protection of both sea and forest resources. Some trees that were a source of building materials had disappeared over the years due to over harvesting and alien species had also been introduced into the ecosystem. Through the *Working for Water programme*, a government initiative, these were being eradicated.

Comparing Umngazi River Bungalows with other tourism ventures in the Port St. Johns area, Employee 13 (15 May 2008) implied that Umngazi particularly practiced ethics regarding the natural environment. *'Litter', 'ugly feel', 'lack of respect for the environment', 'lawlessness', 'no order', 'chaotic'* were words used by this employee respondent to describe the general state of other areas in Port St. Johns with regard to environmental consciousness. "It is easier for me to just stay in Umngazi because it is peaceful and quiet here", the Employee 13 (15 May 2008) added. Umngazi was seen as an environmentally conscious tourism business by 15% of respondents. Ecotourism ventures are not only mandated to conserve the environment, but also to protect it. The presence of Umngazi River Bungalows in the area has strengthened the need to protect the environment and emphasized the need for sustainable natural resource utilization by the communities.

5.5.5. Guest satisfaction

Data from Umngazi showed that the hotel had a 98% occupancy rate and that return trips by guests were quite common. Nature activities offered, safety, the peaceful nature of the area, staff hospitality, the variety of services offered by the hotel, and good food were among the reasons given by respondents for return trips by guests and these are depicted in Figure 5.8 below. A good relationship between management and communities increases staff morale resulting in improved guest satisfaction. This was also concluded at Mbotyi River Lodge in South Africa, where high staff morale was linked with customer satisfaction (Frey, 2007).

At Umngazi, guests were also interested in how the relationship between the hotel and communities came into being. It can be concluded that guest experiences were of high standards and satisfactory at Umngazi. Umngazi could be seen as a destination that practices soft ecotourism on Weaver's (2001) model of ecotourism, given the conclusions about its practice of ecotourism.



5.6. Conclusion

The chapter described the data collected from the field work experiences, interpreted the data, and linked this data with theory while providing case studies where similar conclusions had been arrived at. The chapter began by identifying the various projects that Umngazi River Bungalows was involved in. These projects were divided into three groups namely: service infrastructure, income-generating community projects, and philanthropic projects. Income-generating projects were further categorized into those projects where the hotel had less operational influence in and those that the hotel had more operational control over. Given these categories of projects, it was concluded that Umngazi River Bungalows was an active participant in social responsibility projects within the Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule communities. Community upliftment

and the need to ensure that economic benefits accrued to members of these communities were also seen as reasons the hotel was involved in these projects.

The chapter identified employees, the Tribal Authority, community committees, community members, natural resource management government departments, and tourism and accommodation associations as the key stakeholders in the operations of the hotel. The Umngazi staff committee was seen as a powerful stakeholder as it acted as the negotiating unit on behalf of permanent staff employees. A symbiotic relationship was noted between management and employees where employees were a key element of the Umngazi experience. It was concluded that the government had limited operational influence but that communities, the Tribal Authority, and the Accommodation Association were key stakeholders.

With regard to the degree of community participation, it was concluded that employment was the main way in which communities participated in the operations of the hotel. Community projects, formal and informal education, limited decision making opportunities, and direct and indirect consultation mechanisms were also presented as other modes of participation by communities. The chapter concluded by exploring whether Umngazi River Bungalows ascribes to the concept of ecotourism. Given the discussion on the participation of the local communities, the different projects Umngazi is involved, its incorporation of educational components in its tourism experience, and the high levels of guest satisfaction, it was concluded that the hotel practiced soft ecotourism.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

The study aimed at investigating the relationship between private sector practitioners of ecotourism and local communities. Umngazi River Bungalows was chosen as the case study for the investigation, and subsequently a survey was conducted with the hotel's employees and managers. The employees were viewed as representatives of the surrounding communities in this study. Additionally, a government official and an independent operator participated in the survey. This concluding chapter seeks to provide a summary of the key findings of the research, forward recommendations, and suggest areas of future research. Given the concepts and data presented in the literature review, background chapters, and results chapters, conclusions are then carefully drawn. A case study approach to research is based on the premise that the findings can be applied in other similar settings, although it must be acknowledged that some findings are case and context specific, as will be seen in the summary of findings below.

6.2. Summary and Recommendations

This section provides a summary of the findings based on the four objectives set for the research.

6.2.1. Key projects at Umngazi River Bungalows

Umngazi River Bungalows is located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, within three rural communities, namely: Cwebeni, Sicambeni and Vukandlule. During the data collection period it was established that the hotel was the main source of income for these communities, being the tourism establishment in the area. According to the National Census (2001), 78% of the combined labour force (age range 15- 65 years) had no monthly income. The hotel had undertaken to introduce and support various projects where these communities could derive an income. A mutual relationship was built between the communities and the hotel. The latter relied on communities as a source of labour and security for guests, and the former derived a source of livelihood from the hotel. The data analysis distinguished between three types of projects,

including service infrastructure, income-generating, and philanthropic projects. The hotel seemed to be substantially involved in community affairs and the survey revealed a general concern for the welfare of community members. It was concluded that those projects where the hotel had substantial operational control were more successful than those that were fully community driven. The study did not investigate the dynamics within the community-driven projects but operational and structural limitations were perceived as contributing to the projects' non-operation.

The following were seen as potential areas that Umngazi River Bungalows could address in order to maintain and enhance success in terms of involvement in projects:

- Increased community training and development to ensure a greater understanding of the benefits of the income generating projects.
- Increased involvement in projects where the hotel did not have a vested interest in terms of the tourist experience.
- Joint partnerships between the hotel, external organizations and the community in initiating other projects within the communities could provide additional source of income and guidance on the management of community projects.

6.2.2. Key stakeholders and relationships with the hotel

The various stakeholders at Umngazi River Bungalows were identified, and the relationships the hotel had with them were explored. The hotel seemed to have a positive and honest relationship with its employees, who in this study represented the community members. Recruitment of staff members was done on a rotational basis with approximately 98% of the total employees sourced from the three surrounding communities. Economic benefits that accrued to employees included timely payment of wages and salaries, staff accommodation, a share in the profits of the hotel, and an annual employee bonus. An open relationship with the management of the hotel, and the presence of a number of consultation forums through which employees could voice their concerns, enhanced the feeling of a sense of belonging by employees. This relationship could be enhanced by:

- Ensuring speedy registration from contract to permanent employees.

- Introduce programs where employees could undertake part time studies to enhance their skills.
- Structure the work schedules such that permanent employees could take leave days in a more flexible manner.
- Maintain the high standards of expected high guest satisfaction from employees.
- Address the concerns and relative marginalization of contract workers.

The hotel had a good relationship with the tribal authority, the latter having endorsed the presence of the former in the area since the purchase of the hotel. The hotel consulted the tribal authority whenever a major decision had to be made and where the involvement of the tribal authority was vital, such as the expansion of the hotel into communal land. The hotel was a member of the Accommodation Association whose periodic grading process assisted in the maintaining of high standards. It is recommended that:

- The hotel becomes a member of a sustainability based grading organization that would audit its environmental activities

The provincial government was found to have limited involvement in the operations of the hotel which could be explained by the context within which the hotel was purchased. This relationship with government departments was seen as a matter of procedure, such as the adherence with labour and environmental laws. This was done at a time where a governance and institutional vacuum occurred in the Eastern Cape, and where the Tribal Authorities formed the highest governance structures in terms of land ownership and development in the Wild Coast. This explains the need for the hotel to form a good relationship with the tribal authority and partly explains the conspicuous absence of government in the hotel's affairs.

6.2.3. Community participation

The hotel is privately owned but has formed relationships with the surrounding communities. Employment, community projects introduced and supported by the hotel, and educational opportunities supported by the hotel for its employees were all seen as ways in which the communities participated in the operations of the hotel. The tribal

authority represented community members to the hotel whenever there were issues or concerns. There were various consultation forums that the hotel had in place for the employees to raise concerns, with the staff committee acting as a major liaison link between the hotel's management and its employees. The study revealed that employees were happy with their levels of involvement in decision making, and the hierarchical manner in which consultation took place. Many respondents felt that the staff committee and community representatives (tribal authority) did a good job of representing them to management. It was concluded that full participation was not necessarily achieved through involvement in decision making structures, but that communities appeared to be content with the other forms of participation. This conclusion is however context-specific and not all communities voice this kind of satisfaction with participation.

6.2.4. Ecotourism practice

Although Umngazi River Bungalows did not consider itself an ecotourism venture, the criteria for ecotourism was used in this study to determine whether the hotel practiced this type of tourism. The choice to use the ecotourism approach for Umngazi River Bungalows was based on the fact that from the onset, the hotel's operations seemed to be based on the principles of ecotourism stipulated in literature. The hotel was surrounded by natural resources that formed the base of the tourist experience there and its core activities were nature based. Environmental education and information were provided in a non-prescriptive manner to employees, guests and community members. The management of the hotel were proactive in ensuring that the natural environment was protected and informed the relevant authorities where environmental laws were not adhered to. The hotel had adopted a very strong community focus as demonstrated by the above three objectives. These characteristics provided for a good framework of analysis regarding the hotel's adherence to ecotourism principles and criteria. It was, however, felt that the hotel could adopt the following for it to enhance its ecotourism or sustainable focus:

- Adopt water recycling methods
- Recycle plastic, paper, glass and other waste
- Include additional cultural elements in its experience

- Limit the use of electricity and perhaps adopt sustainable energy use practices in some of their activities
- Increase environmental educational for both children and adults
- Provide information in the bungalows about the need to recycle and reuse
- Choose biodegradable cleaning products to ensure fewer negative impacts on water and soil ecosystems

6.3. Reflections on Ecotourism and Participation Theory

The theoretical framework of the study comprised neo-liberalism, ecotourism, community participation, and stakeholder identification theories. Umngazi River Bungalows provided a case study that was unique when placed within this literature, and provided a lense through which questions for further study in the area of natural resource management through tourism could be investigated.

Neo-liberalism stipulates that economic growth is the key to any development and the state is seen as a development facilitator rather than a central actor. As a result of this system, the private sector is seen as playing an important role. Communities, especially in the tourism sector, have also become significant key players who are increasingly partnering with private sector players to produce ecotourism products. The relationship between the private sector and the communities is one to be investigated in natural resource management, especially where an informal relationship is formed such as in the case of Umngazi River Bungalows. Power relations within this relationship, the issue of self-interests within communities and management levels of the ventures, and the governance of these relationships, are areas that could be further investigated.

At Umngazi River Bungalows, the hotel-community relationship is one that reflects informal giving through philanthropic activities the hotel is involved in and the provision of employment opportunities in communities where there are no other options of formal employment. This partly explains the communities' satisfaction with the limited level of participation in the decision making over the operations of the hotel. This relationship reflects the emergence of a highly organized, well established, hierarchical system based on trust and stemming from traditional or cultural practices,

that governs stakeholder relationships. In this relationship, the expectations of each of these stakeholders are unwritten, but well understood because of the mutual benefits that accrue from their realization. Although Umngazi River Bungalows provides a strong community oriented venture, the nature of the relationship could be jeopardized if there was to be a change in ownership of the hotel to one where profit maximization would be priority over community upliftment, as dictated upon by proponents of neo-liberalism.

Literature on ecotourism, as discussed in Chapter Two, provides us with criteria that can be used to categorize and identify ecotourism activities, and which were used to establish whether Umngazi River Bungalows was an ecotourism venture. Although the hotel was not established as an ecotourism venture, it reflected ecotourism principles as stipulated by Weaver (2005). Ecotourism principles and criteria provide a good scale that can be used to measure the adherence of initiatives to this form of natural resource management for this case study. However, the criterion, due to the holistic and broad nature of the definitions, is open to varying interpretations by different users and actors. This latter argument could explain why the state of ecotourism in South Africa is diminishing, and why other forms of alternative tourism are on the rise. The preferred form of tourism by the Government of South Africa, as espoused on the White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (1996), is Responsible Tourism, which provides clear economic, social, and environmental guidelines that are context specific. The case study used in this study has shown that a combination of willingness by the private sector, an acceptable level of community participation, and the adherence of ecotourism principles can create an environment where the economic and social needs of the private sector and communities respectively can be achieved.

6.4. Lessons Learnt

The following lessons from Umngazi River Bungalows could be incorporated in the management and operations of other types of ventures, especially those aspiring to incorporate local communities in their operations and adopt sustainability principles. This is particularly important in the South African context where partnerships between

the three tiers of government are being formed in natural resource management, through co-management and community-based natural resource management strategies:

- The private sector is an important developmental partner especially in a world that is governed by neo-liberal thinking.
- The private sector can form relationships of mutual benefit with the local communities, especially where social responsibility forms a key part of the relationship.
- The local government structures are important in building successful relationships with local communities. Endorsement of natural resource management activities by tribal authorities can ensure the support required for the private sector developmental activities to succeed, and for these to be politically and socially acceptable.
- Investment in rural areas by the private sector should consider the needs and aspirations of local communities and aim to fulfil these once developmental activities commence. In the case of Umngazi River Bungalows, the realization of the need for alternative sources of income for communities motivated the hotel to initiate and support community projects.
- Promises made to local authorities upon the commencement of developmental activities should be kept. Part of the success that Umngazi River Bungalows has had, especially in terms of community relationships is closely associated with the ability of the hotel to keep to the initial agreement with the tribal authority to aid in community upliftment..
- Recruitment of local people, and training and development should be part of the relationship between the private sector developers and communities.
- Superior quality of services provided by staff members to guests in tourism ventures can be ensured by treating employees fairly. There is need for consultation forums with staff members to ensure that ideas, concerns and challenges are shared.

6.5. Conclusion

The private sector is a key actor in ecotourism development, and although it is often thought that its profit-oriented nature determines the developmental activities to

undertake, evidence from Umngazi River Bungalows proves that the private sector can play a proactive role in pro-poor development. The importance of incorporating stakeholders in ecotourism development cannot be underestimated as this ensures development takes place in a manner that is acceptable to all these stakeholders. At Umngazi River Bungalows, the employees, local communities, tribal authority, the Accommodation Association, and to a lesser extent the government were all identified as stakeholders. The conspicuous absence of government in this relationship, and the resultant private sector-community relationship can be explained by the lack of governance and policy structures at the time the hotel was purchased by the current owners.

Ecotourism plays a significant role in ensuring that the natural and cultural environments are protected, that tourism activities are locally oriented, that superior guest satisfaction is ensured, that environmental education and information are provided to guests, and that sustainability principles are adhered to. Umngazi River Bungalows was purchased at a time that ecotourism was gaining popularity in developing countries and the owners chose inadvertently to adopt ecotourism principles with a strong community focus. This study of Umngazi River Bungalows concludes that the hotel practices ecotourism in its soft form and suggests other ways in which the hotel can enhance environmental and cultural sustainability principles. Given the new era of 'responsible tourism' that has dawned in South Africa, the research reflects that Umngazi River Bungalows would most likely be a good example of 'responsible tourism.' Other tourism projects should therefore learn from the success achieved at Umngazi River Bungalows, particularly in terms of private-sector-community relations.

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Interviews

<i>Employee Respondents</i>								
Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Employee 1	Male	Plumber	Contract	Local	Vukandlule	0-6 months	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 2	Female	Dining room supervisor	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9	College	13 May 2008
Employee 3	Female	Spa	Permanent	Local	Vukandlule	7-11 months	College	13 May 2008
Employee 4	Female	Gym / village walk community project	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9 years	Primary	14 May 2008
Employee 5	Female	Nanny	Contract	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 6	Female	Bar Tender	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	7-9 years	College	13 May 2008
Employee 7	Male	Entertainment and Relations	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	1-3 years	High school	13 May 2008
Employee 8	Female	Spa/ Cleaner	Permanent	Local	Sicambeni	7-9 years	High school	14 May 2008
Employee 9	Female	Front Office	Permanent	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	College	15 May 2008
Employee 10	Female	Nanny	Contract	Local	Vukandlule	10+ years	Primary	15 May 2008
Employee 11	Male	Gilly	Part time	Local	Cwebeni	1-3 years	High school	14 May 2008
Employee 12	Male	Gilly/ Porter	Retired	Local	Vukandlule	10+ years	Primary	15 May 2008
Employee 13	Male	Entertainment and Relations	Permanent	Non-local	Staff village	0-6 months	University	15 May 2008
Employee 14	Female	Handicraft community project	Self-employed	Local	Sicambeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008

Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Employee 15	Female	Reservations/ Staff Committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	High school	16 May 2008
Employee 16	Male	Porter/ Staff committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	Primary	14 May 2008
Employee 17	Male	Stock control	Permanent	Local	Vukandlule	7-9 years	College	15 May 2008
Employee 18	Female	Laundry	Permanent	Local	Sicambeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008
Employee 19	Male	Ferry operator/ community project	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	No answer	16 May 2008
Employee 20	Male	Chef/ committee/ community committee	Permanent	Local	Cwebeni	10+ years	High school	15 May 2008

<i>Manager Respondents</i>								
Manager 1	Male	Current General Manager	Contract	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	University	15 May 2008
Manager 2	Male	Former General Manager	Based at Head Office	Local	N/A	10+ years	University	10 July 2008
Manager 3	Female	Reservations Supervisor	Permanent	Non-local	Vukandlule	3-6 years	Technikon	16 May 2008
Manager 4	Female	Current General Manager	Contract	Non-local	Staff village	1-3 years	University	15 May 2008

<i>Additional Respondents</i>								
Respondent	Gender	Position at Umngazi	Employment type	Residence	Place of residence	Length of employment	Education level	Date interviewed
Independent Operator	Male	Beekeeping Operator	Not applicable	Non-local	N/A	Not applicable	University	17 July 2008
Government Official	Male	Tourism Manager	Not Applicable	Non-local	N/A	Not Applicable	University	16 July 2008

Appendix A

Questionnaire A- The Employees at Umngazi River Bungalows

The Private Sector-Community Relationship in Ecotourism: The case of Umngazi River Bungalows

Questionnaire A: The Employees at Umngazi River Bungalows

Introduction

Hi, my name is Dorothy Ngila and I am doing my Masters thesis at UKZN, which focuses on the relationships between the private sector and private ecotourism ventures, specifically how this takes place at Umngazi River Bungalows. This interview will help me understand the following. Firstly, whether Umngazi River Bungalows embraces ecotourism principles and best practice. Secondly, the role the private sector plays in community upliftment. Lastly, the degree of community involvement at Umngazi River Bungalows will be explored.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured at all times. Your personal details are not required for this study and under no circumstances will they be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your permission to participate at any stage without any negative consequences. I am willing to provide your organization with a copy of the report upon completion.

Part 1: Introduction

1. What three things do you like most about living here?

2. What three things would you change about your life here?

3. What three natural places do you like most in this area? Are they special for you?

4. What do you use these places for?

5. a) Have these places changed since you began living here?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) How have they changed?

6. a) Are there places you are not allowed to go to in this area? Do you have free access to everywhere here?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Explain.

7. a) i) What work do you do at Umngazi?

--

ii) What work have you done before at Umngazi?

--

iii) What type of employment are you on

Casual	
Contract	
Permanent	
Retired	
Part time	
Self Employment	

b) How long have you worked here?

0-6 Months	
6-12 Months	
1-3 Years	
3-6 Years	
6-10 Years	
10+ Years	

8. a) How did you find out about Umngazi River Bungalows?

b) How did you get your job? How did you start cooperating with Umngazi?

9. What three things do you like about your job?

--

10. What three things would you change about your job?

11. a) How has your standard of living changed since you started working at/ with Umngazi River Bungalows?

b) What has changed?

c) Do you like the change?

12. a) Do you feel you are a part of the Umngazi community?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) What makes you feel this way?

13. a) How far do you live from Umngazi River Bungalows?

Less than 30 minutes	
30 mins-1hr	
1-2 hrs	
2+	

b) How easy is it to access the property?

c) What mode of transport?

Bus	
Taxi	
Private Car	
Company Car	
By Foot	
By Bicycle	
By River	

d) How long does it take you to get to work and home again?

Less than 30 minutes	
30 mins-1hr	
1-2 hrs	
2+	

e) Do you have any problems with your journey to work?

Yes	No
-----	----

f) Explain.

Part 11: Ecotourism

14. a) How do you feel about tourism ventures that are developed within your community?

b) Are they good for the environment?

Yes	No
-----	----

c) Explain.

15. What three things do you think make Umngazi River Bungalows a special destination? Why do tourists come to Umngazi?

16. What kind of a relationship do the communities here have with the manager and owners of Umngazi River Bungalows? How do the communities and Umngazi work together, if at all?

17. a) Do you receive information from Umngazi River Bungalows on the importance of looking after these natural places?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) How is this information provided to you?

Part 111: Identification of Stakeholders and Community Participation

18. a) Do you feel you should be consulted before major decisions are made at Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Why?

19. a) What methods does the Umngazi management use to listen to your ideas, contributions, and views?

b) Are you actively involved in meetings, gatherings and forums at Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

c) In what ways?

20. a) What methods do you usually use when presenting your concerns, ideas, and contributions? Explain?

21. a) Have you ever come together as a group to put forward your ideas and concerns?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) What necessitated this?

c) Were you successful?

Yes	No
-----	----

d) Please give examples.

22. a) Which people make major decisions at Umngazi River Bungalows?

b) Do they all work within Umngazi River Bungalows?

Yes	No
-----	----

c) Do they work outside of Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

d) What positions do these people hold?

e) Do you think these positions help them influence how decisions are made at Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

f) How so?

23. a) Are there people within your community who tend to represent the ideas and views of the whole community to the management of Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Who are these people?

c) What positions do they hold in the community?

d) How do you feel about this?

24. a) Have you used an outside organization to represent your views to the management of Umngazi River Bungalows?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Why?

c) What was the outcome?

25. Why do you think the Umngazi management is keen on involving the local community in its activities?

26. a) Who benefits from Umngazi?

b) How are these benefits shared?

c) Who decides how the benefits are shared?

Baseline Data:

1. Age

20-24	
25-29	
30-44	
45-59	
60+	

2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Educational Level

Never Attended School	
Primary School	
High School	
College	
University	
Other, specify	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Never Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Other, specify	

5. Home Language

Xhosa	
English	
Zulu	
Afrikaans	
Other,	

6. Income per Month

Amount	From Umngazi	Total Income	Total Household Income
≤500			
R501-R1000			
R1001-R2000			
R2001-R3000			
R3001-R4000			
R4001-R5000			
R5001-R6000			
R6001-R7000			
R7001 ⁺			

7. What are the rates you are paid for doing the work at Umngazi?

8. What other things do you do to earn money?

9. a) Are you the only person who supports your family financially?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) If not, who else supports your family?

10. Which community do you come from?

Cwebeni	
Vukandlule	
Sicambeni	
Other	

Appendix B

Questionnaire B- The Managers at Umngazi River Bungalows

The Private Sector-Community Relationship in Ecotourism: The case of Umngazi River Bungalows

Questionnaire B: The Owners and General Manager- Umngazi River Bungalows

Introduction

Hi, my name is Dorothy Ngila and I am doing my Masters thesis at UKZN, which focuses on the relationships between the private sector and private ecotourism ventures, specifically how this takes place at Umngazi River Bungalows. This interview will help me understand the following. Firstly, whether Umngazi River Bungalows embraces ecotourism principles and best practice. Secondly, the role the private sector plays in community upliftment. Lastly, the degree of community involvement at Umngazi River Bungalows will be explored.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured at all times. Your personal details are not required for this study and under no circumstances will they be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your permission to participate at any stage without any negative consequences. I am willing to provide your organization with a copy of the report upon completion.

Part 1: Introduction

1. a) When was Umngazi established?

--

- b) How was it established?

- a) When did the present owners take over the management of Umngazi?

- b) Who owned the land before then?

--

c) What role do they play in how Umngazi is operated now?

2. a) Who currently owns the land on which Umngazi is established?

--

b) What role do they play in the day-to-day operations of Umngazi?

3. a) What is your role at Umngazi River Bungalows?

--

b) Who decides this role?

4. a) What activities take place at Umngazi?

b) Which places does Umngazi River Bungalows use for its operations?

c) Have nature based activities always been a part of the Umngazi experience?

Yes

No

5. a) What community-based projects operate in association with Umngazi River Bungalows?

b) Please describe the key characteristics of these projects?

6. a) What are your key environmental assets here?

b) How do you protect and sustain these assets?

7. a) What natural resources are you permitted to utilize?

b) Do you seek permission to utilize these natural resources?

Yes	No
-----	----

c) Who do you seek this permission from?

d) Does this regulation impact on how you operate at Umngazi?

Yes	No
-----	----

e) How so?

8. a) In what three ways does Umngazi River Bungalows strive to conserve nature?

b) Who funds these conservation measures/ initiatives?

9. a) Are there external organizations that audit or check your activities to ensure they do not negatively impact nature?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Which are these organizations?

c) How do they make sure this happens?

d) What other organizations are you affiliated with?

e) What benefits do you achieve from these partnerships?

10. a) Do you provide any education to visitors and other people who interact with Umngazi regarding best practice and how they should interact with nature?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) How is this done?

11. a) Have you had any conflicts regarding how natural resources around Umngazi are managed?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) If so, please give examples.

c) How did you deal with this conflict?

--

12. What kind of relationship does Umngazi have with local authorities?

Part 2: Identification of Stakeholders and Community Participation

13. What is your philosophy/principles/thinking towards community based projects?

14. Why has Umngazi adopted a community-based approach?

15. What challenges do you face with these projects?

16. a) How do you determine who is employed at Umngazi River Bungalows?

b) Who determines this?

17. a) What role do the communities play in the running of Umngazi? What kind of a relationship do you have with the local communities, generally?

b) Why is it important to maintain this relationship?

c) Who are the main people/groups/stakeholders in the communities you interact with at Umngazi?

d) Who amongst these people/groups/stakeholders do you consult with regularly regarding how Umngazi River Bungalows is operated?

e) How do you determine who is consulted?

18. a) What methods do you use in consulting the community members and other stakeholders?

b) Do you feel you need to consider the concerns, ideas and contributions of community members, and other stakeholders?

Yes	No
-----	----

c) Why?

19. a) Where do you prefer to hold decision-making forums or meetings?

b) Why?

c) Who chooses the venue?

20. a) Who from the community is dominant in influencing decisions?

b) Why?

21. a) Do you feel you have to provide information to these groups on how Umngazi River Bungalows is run?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Why?

22. a) What benefits do the communities get from Umngazi?

b) How do you decide how the benefits of activities and economic value get distributed in the community?

23. a) In what ways is the management of Umngazi River Bungalows different from the other tourism ventures?

Baseline Data:

1. Age

20-24	
25-29	
30-44	
45-59	
60+	

2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Educational Level

Never Attended School	
Primary School	
High School	
College	
University	
Other, specify	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Never Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Other, specify	

5. Home Language

English	
Afrikaans	
Zulu	
Xhosa	
Other,	

6. Income per Month

≤ R1000	
R1001-R2000	
R2001-R3000	
R3001-R4000	
R4001-R5000	
R5001-R6000	
R6001-R7000	
R7001	

Appendix C

Questionnaire C- The Beekeeping Operator

The Private Sector-Community Relationship in Ecotourism: The case of Umngazi River Bungalows

Questionnaire C: The Beekeeping operator

Introduction

Hi, my name is Dorothy Ngila and I am doing my Masters thesis at UKZN, which focuses on the relationships between the private sector and private ecotourism ventures, specifically how this takes place at Umngazi River Bungalows. This interview will help me understand the following. Firstly, how the bee-keeping community-based project began. Secondly, The role the communities play in the operation of these projects. Lastly, the role of Umngazi River Bungalows in how these projects are operated will be explored.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured at all times. Your personal details are not required for this study and under no circumstances will they be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your permission to participate at any stage without any negative consequences. I am willing to provide your organization with a copy of the report upon completion.

1. What three natural places do you like most in Port St. Johns?

2. a) Has the natural environment in this area changed since you began working here?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) If so, what has changed?

3. a) What projects are you involved in, in cooperation with Umngazi?

b) Please describe the project/projects

b) How long have you been involved in this/these projects?

0-6 Months	
6-12 Months	
1-3 Years	
3-6 Years	
6-10 Years	
10+ Years	

--

4. How did you find out about this project/s?

5. What motivated you to want to get involved in this project/s?

--

6. a) How did this/these projects start?

i. What were the motivating factors?

ii. Where do you get your funding from?

iii. What is the history of the projects?

7. What is your philosophy/principles/thinking towards community based projects?

8. Do you engage with Umngazi regarding how:

a) The projects are operated

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Decisions on various aspects of these projects are made?

Yes	No
-----	----

9. What role does Umngazi play in how the projects are managed?

10. What kind of a relationship do you have with the communities around Umngazi?

11. Do you cooperate with them in these projects?

Yes	No
a)	

12. a) Are there people within the communities you operate in who tend to represent the ideas and views of the whole community in the way the projects are managed?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Who are these people?

c) What positions do they hold in the community?

d) How do you feel about this?

13. What challenges do you face with these projects?

14. How do you think these challenges can be dealt with? What are the solutions?

15. Why do you think the Umngazi management is keen on supporting these projects?

16. a) Who benefits from these projects?

b) Who decides on how these benefits are shared?

17. What other community projects are there within the communities surrounding Umngazi?

18. How are the project/s you are involved in linked with these other community projects, if at all?

19. In its involvement with the community, what do you think distinguishes Umngazi from other tourism ventures?

20. What government policies, legislation and approaches are in place to govern ecotourism ventures in South Africa?

21. a) In your experience, are these government policies, legislation and approaches used by ecotourism ventures?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) Do they work?

Yes	No
-----	----

c)

Baseline Data:

1. Age

20-24	
25-29	
30-44	
45-59	
60+	

2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Educational Level

Never Attended School	
Primary School	
High School	
College	
University	
Other, specify	

4. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Never Married	
Divorced	

Widowed	
Other, specify	

5. Please specify field of training if studied after school

6. Home Language

Xhosa	
English	
Zulu	
Afrikaans	
Other	

Appendix D

Questionnaire D: Government Official

The Private Sector-Community Relationships in Ecotourism: The case of Umngazi River Bungalows

Questionnaire C: Government and Ecotourism Officials

Introduction

Hi, my name is Dorothy Ngila and I am doing my Masters thesis at UKZN, which focuses on the relationships between the private sector and private ecotourism ventures, specifically how this takes place at Umngazi River Bungalows. I want to understand the following from the interview. Firstly, your role in ensuring best practice and ecotourism principles are adopted by tourism ventures. Secondly, the importance of community participation in the operation and decision making process of a tourism venture. Lastly, the policies that govern how tourism ventures are to be operated in order to ensure best practice will be explored.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured at all times. Your personal details are not required for this study and under no circumstances will they be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your permission to participate at any stage without any negative consequences. I am willing to provide your organization with a copy of the report upon completion.

Part 1: Role in tourism

1. What is your role in the tourism sector?

2. What relationship do you/ your organization have with tourism ventures?

3. In what ways does tourism:

a) benefit the environment?

b) Affect the environment?

Part 2: Best Practices and Ecotourism Policy

4. What legislation/ policy is there to govern how ecotourism ventures operate?

5. How do you define ecotourism?

6. a) Which Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (National) division is responsible for ensuring that ecotourism principles are adhered to be ecotourism ventures that market their services accordingly?

b) If so, why is this function important?

c) If not why?

7. If not, what are ventures that practice nature based activities and interface with the community termed as by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (National)?

8. Which Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (National) division is responsible for those ventures that are still practicing ecotourism now?

9. What criteria does the Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism (DEAET- Eastern Cape) use to determine if a tourism venture is practicing ecotourism?

10. What are the penalties for ventures that use the ecotourism label as a mere marketing tactic without practicing ecotourism principles?

11. a) What measures are in place to ensure natural resources are not overexploited in the name of ecotourism?

b) How is this monitoring done?

c) Who does this monitoring?

Part 3: Community Participation

12. How do you define community participation?

13. In what ways are tourism ventures encouraged to ensure communities and other stakeholders are involved in operation and decision-making processes?

14. How do you measure the degree of participation by communities and stakeholders in tourism ventures?

15. a) What legislation governs community and stakeholder participation in ecotourism ventures?

a) How does government enforce this?

16. a) What are the distinct characteristics that successful ecotourism ventures possess in South Africa?

a) Please give examples

17. At what level should community members be involved in an ecotourism venture's operation and decision-making process especially in a case where the venture/business is owned privately but partnerships have been forged with local communities?

18. a) Do you know of Umngazi River Bungalows?

Yes	No
-----	----

b) What about Umngazi do you know?

c) What kind of a relationship do you have with Umngazi?

d) How do you feel about the community projects that Umngazi has initiated and supports?

e) What is good about how Umngazi River Bungalows is operated and managed?

f) What is bad about how Umngazi River Bungalows is operated and managed?

g) Would you refer to Umngazi River Bungalows as an ecotourism business?

Yes	No
-----	----

Baseline Data:

1. Age

20-24	
25-29	
30-44	
45-59	
60+	

2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Educational Level

Never Attended School	
Primary School	
High School	
College	
University	
Other, specify	

4. What educational qualification do you hold?

5. What is your job title?

6. Home Language

English	
Afrikaans	
Zulu	
Xhosa	
Other,	

Appendix E

RESEARCH CONSENT LETTER

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College

Letter of Informed Consent

Date: 08 May 2008

I, Ms Dorothy Ngila (207512485), am a Coursework Masters student registered at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. I am conducting research focusing on the relationships between the private sector and private ecotourism ventures, specifically how this takes place at Umngazi River Bungalows in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. I would like you to participate in the study by conducting an interview with you. This information collected will be used solely for the purposes of completing my Masters Coursework dissertation.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured at all times. Your personal details are not required for this study and under no circumstances will they be disclosed. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your permission to participate at any stage without any negative consequences. I am willing to provide your organization with a copy of the report upon completion.

Informed Consent

I _____ am willing to voluntarily answer questions for this study but reserve the right to withdraw my participation at any stage should I wish.

Signature

Date

Contact Details

Student: Dorothy Ngila

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Supervisor: Ms Catherine Oelofse

Tel: 031 260 1403

Email: Oelofsec1@ukzn.ac.za