

**TOURISM PARTICIPATION IN THE ISIMANGALISO  
WETLAND PARK: PERCEPTIONS, PRACTICES  
AND PROSPECTS**

**BY**


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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research study: *TOURISM PARTICIPATION IN THE ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK: PERCEPTIONS, PRACTICES AND PROSPECTS*, except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own work both in conception and execution. All the theoretical information and related sources that have been used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references. It is further declared that this dissertation has not previously been submitted to any institution for degree purposes.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The product of this nature cannot be attributed to the researcher alone, undoubtedly it should be acknowledged and stated that it was firstly through the power of the Almighty God, who gave me strength and perseverance to face and conquer this mammoth task. In addition, it should be mentioned that there are individuals around me who contributed a great deal from the conception up to the final production of this research. These individuals have rendered their support in different forms. Furthermore, these people were pillars of my faith in completing this research inquiry. Throughout the study they gave me moral, spiritual, physical, emotional, educational and financial support. Hence, I humbly and gratefully feel very indebted to all of them. It will be difficult for the researcher at this stage to mention all of these individuals. The few that can be mentioned include:

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of work to my Mom Ntano Doris Gumede and late Dad Mhlakwempi George Gumede for having brought me up so well. To Mom, no fitting words my brain can find to express my jubilation for all the good things you have done for me. You hold a very special place in my heart.

To my Dad. “Dad even though you have departed but I know you are not dead but have graduated to a higher plane of consciousness and we will meet again. Today, I want to say to you well done for having brought me up so well. Well done Dad and Congratulations!”

To the sons and daughters, who have been patient with me during the writing of this dissertation, and thus contributed directly or indirectly to my success, I thank you. They say it takes two people to make a child but it takes the entire community to bring up that child.

I thank you

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## **ABSTRACT**

There has been turmoil between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and the Khula village community located adjacent to it. Khula village community members have been trespassing into the park and conducting illegal activities. Some of these include: killing wild animals, cutting trees for wood carving and medicinal purposes without permission from the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. In addition, the number of hijacked tourist cars in the area is increasing and other serious criminal activities directed to tourists are becoming very common.

All these illegal activities are progressively contributing, not only to the gradual deterioration of the status of the resources, but also to the spoiled relationship between the authorities, tourists and the community around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. These occurrences are impacting adversely on the park as a tourist destination. What is implicit is that tourist visitation numbers at the Wetland Park will drop, and these reduced numbers of tourists that will affect the employment rate within the local community. Pursuant to these observations and problems, the researcher found it appealing and necessary to explore the relationship between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and Khula village community. This would be achieved by investigating the participation, practices, and patterns associated with the administration of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

In an attempt to address the research question or problem, the following research objectives were set up:

- To reveal the extent to which the local community is aware of the importance of tourism in the study area
- To establish whether the communities do participate in the reserve activities that bring in income
- To determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities
- To explore whether the communities are given a platform to express their preferences about the park
- To investigate whether there are any development initiatives the reserve is offering to the local community.

The research methodology used to execute the objectives of the research study involved collecting information from the local community of Khula Village, Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife. Data was collected by means of sets of questionnaires. The data collected was analysed using the SPSS computer statistical package, which led to getting the research findings.

There were various findings that emerged and were deduced from the research data analysed. The findings showed that a dual relationship between the local community and Park Authorities. On the one side it was good because of the social involvement of local communities in the activities of the Park, whereas, on the other side, the lack of economic participation affected the relationship negatively. The findings showed that, among the respondents from the study area, a limited number of people had had access to tertiary education. It is believed that the lack of tertiary education influenced the availability of skills that resulted in a small number of people participating in activities that would



bring economic benefit as opposed to social benefits. Social benefits were enjoyed by a larger number of the respondents whereas economic benefits were only experienced by few. Furthermore, these economic benefits were experienced through activities, which brought income to the local communities such as harvesting wood for carving and craft making. Some benefits involved the performance of cultural activities to tourists, whereby community participants were paid money for the services. The cited benefits reflect some of the important solutions to the research problem of this study.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **PREFACE TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The province of KwaZulu-Natal as part of South Africa has, in recent times, begun on a number of conservation initiatives concerning world heritage sites, which are attempting to conserve resources whilst linking them to the development of the people. These conservation initiatives follow a worldwide trend, which acknowledges that conservation cannot be undertaken without the participation of local communities. In most cases these local communities are affected by the establishments of protected areas. The Isimangaliso Wetland Park in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa is one such initiative supported by the national government. The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is managed by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority, and these terms are used interchangeably in this work.

The idea of conservation is entrenched in White Paper on Tourism (DEAT, 1996) which seeks to promote a conservation and tourism legacy for the South African nation. In this Tourism White Paper it is stressed that national and provincial agencies should play an important role in developing and managing state conservation land for tourism purposes.

Most conservation and tourism activities and businesses around Isimangaliso Wetland Park are conducted by the conservation authorities, private business operators and much less by the local people. The reasons behind the lack of

participation and ownership of businesses by the local communities remain unknown. One of the ways of establishing reasons for the lack of community participation in tourism related activities and businesses by the local people was to conduct this research investigation, which would culminate in bringing the core reasons for this phenomenon to the surface. It remains a concern for any tourism person that the neighbouring people of Isimangaliso Wetland Park do not gain some benefit from the various tourism activities, such as the provision of accommodation, transportation, entertainment and the selling of art and crafts.

Inside the Isimangaliso Wetland Park there are various tourism attractions that draw tourists from all over the world. When the tourists visit they are interested in the attractions within the Isimangaliso Wetland Park as well as the environment around it that includes the lifestyle of the local people. It is from this perspective that the communities should be involved and be given a platform to express themselves and say what they would prefer in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

## **1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This section focuses on clarifying the research problem and uses two aspects namely: the background to the problem and the statement of the problem. As intimated earlier, there is substantial conflict lurking around the seemingly successful Isimangaliso Wetland Park environment. The background of the problem explores the underlying causes of the conflict that have to do with the removal of the local people from their original places and constraints in accessing resources at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Then the statement of the problem looks at what actually constitutes the problem and the resultant possible conflict between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authorities and the

local communities. It would be useful if this research study were to propose some viable solutions to the problem investigated.

### **1.2.1 Background to the problem**

There is general understanding and argument among the residents of Dukuduku Forest that they were forcefully removed from their original settlement in 1959 and came back to the area in the 1960s. These people were again removed in 1977 and were placed in the Mpukunyoni area, which is about 50 kilometres away, and under Inkosi Mkhwanazi. They came back for the second time to Dukuduku Forests their original place, in 1988. Dukuduku Forest is a high conservation area that the government decided to protect against any human-induced deterioration. The people were then removed from Dukuduku Forest by the government to Khula village on 13 January 1993. However, others remained in the forest. The Isimangaliso Wetland Park was proclaimed as a world heritage site in 1999. Some people moved from Dukuduku Forest to Ezwen'elisha from 2005. At present a land claim process is underway, but they are aware that they will not be able to get their land back physically, but they will get some compensatory benefit out of it [<http://www.afra.co.za/upload/files/AP16a.pdf> . (2008)].

The Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority represents the interests of the government that removed the people from their original area. It is therefore understandable that some people in the community do not respect the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority as it represents a government that has not sorted out their problems. Despite the fact that, in 2008 the government decided to let the people at Dukuduku stay there permanently in 2008, the people are still not changing their attitudes towards the Park. Even though the people have been allowed to stay permanently in the Dukuduku area, there are some restrictions involved with regard to the cutting of trees for

carving to make a sustainable livelihood [<http://www.afra.co.za/upload/files/AP16a.pdf>]. (2008)].

The communities moved freely in their land before they were removed from their original settlement. They claim that their land was fertile. If they planted any crop the production was good whereas where they are now, they do not have enough space to plant and the soil is not fertile. Most of the people in the area are skilled in wood carving. They carve different crafts or art sculptures that they sell to earn a living. The carving skills are passed on from generation to generation, thus carving is regarded as part of the culture of the people living at Dukuduku.

The community has argued that it was not beneficial to them when the government initiated the conservation programmes as an attempt to eliminate the deterioration of the Dukuduku forests. The programmes directly affected the wood carvers who had to reduce their carving activities for the benefit of the sustainability of the forest. The reduced carving activities automatically reduced the income that was generated through the selling of the carvings and crafts. There were other activities the local people performed in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park before it was fenced, and these included: hunting, collecting of herbs, firewood and building materials, however, those activities had to stop after the fence was erected [<http://www.afra.co.za/upload/files/AP16a.pdf>], (2008)].

### **1.2.2 Statement of the problem**

Some local people are not co-operating with the Isimangaliso Wetland Park officials. They trespass and engage in illegal activities like hunting, snaring, shooting wild animals and cutting trees to build their homes without permission. In other areas surrounding the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, the

fence is cut so that they can get inside and, as a result, other wild animals escape. There are flora species in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park that attract certain fauna in the area and because of the illegal removal of the flora some birds are disappearing. These activities are negatively affecting the attraction of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park without the knowledge of the management and this affect its business [[http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isimangaliso\\_Wetland\\_Park](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isimangaliso_Wetland_Park) (2008)].

Isimangaliso Wetland Park is an internationally recognised world heritage site. Therefore it is important that there be a study to explore the motive behind these actions of killing wild animals and cutting trees because it affects the heritage site status, the tourism industry in the area and even the country as a whole. The tourists are most likely going to stop coming to South Africa if the Wetland Park as an attraction is not meeting their expectations.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In order to elucidate the intention of the study it is necessary to work out some objectives for the research study. The objectives which are set for the study would help to accomplish the main goals of the study. Furthermore, these objectives would assist the researcher to keep focus on the problem under investigation. The fundamental objectives are as follows:

- (a) To reveal the extent to which the local community is aware of the importance of tourism in the study area
- (b) To establish whether local communities participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that bring benefits to them

- (c) To determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities
- (d) To explore whether the communities are given a platform to express their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park
- (e) To investigate whether there are any tourism development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authority is offering to the local community.

Since these objectives were set to be fulfilled by the study, it is anticipated that the very objectives would act as a measurement as to whether the study was successful or not by providing the responses to them.

#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES**

The hypothesis as defined by Wellman and Kruger (2001) is seen as a tentative assumption or preliminary statement about the relationship between two or more phenomena that need to be examined. In other words, the statement of hypothesis is a calculated guess that is useful in shaping the direction of the study. It facilitates the analysis and interpretation of the subject matter under discussion. The questionnaires were formulated in such a way that they would address the concerns encompassed in the statements of hypotheses. In this study the following hypotheses relative to the objectives of the study, are postulated:

- (a) That the majority of the local community is not aware of the importance of tourism in the study area
- (b) That the local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would bring benefits to them

- (c) That there exists a negative relationship between the local communities and the park authorities
- (d) That the local communities are indeed given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park
- (e) That there seems to be adequate development initiatives or practices that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is offering to the local community.

The above mentioned hypotheses, as the core of the study, are subject to acceptance or rejection pending on the outcome of data analysis. These hypotheses would also facilitate the process of arriving at interpretive findings and conclusions (Magi, 2005).

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

It has been mentioned in previous paragraphs that the tourism industry needs a good relationship between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park management and the local communities, to avoid the deterioration of nature-based attractions. In this regard, the purpose of this research study is to study and bring about revelations about the administrative relationships that exist at the Isimangaliso Park. A good relationship would ensure that tourists get maximum exposure of Isimangaliso Wetland Park attractions as well as the surrounding environment, including the lifestyle of local communities. The relationship involving the participation of local communities in the activities of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park could bring income to the community.

Another important purpose of this research study is to alert the authorities to the existence of a problem that needs attention to ensure that the World Heritage Site status of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is sustained. We should remember that the world heritage site, not only brings about the world



focus on the park, but also attracts more international tourists to the country. Therefore, if there could be anything going wrong; it could be easily exposed internationally. It is from this notion that this study is conducted to explore the relationship between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park management and the local communities. Furthermore, a successful research study would contribute to assuring all stakeholders about the importance of the riddance of criminality and securing a safe and secure tourism environment in the study area.

## **1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

In order to cast light on the exact spatial area that this study is referring to, as well as refer to some concepts that may cause doubt to anyone reading this study, it was felt appropriate to start by looking at both the spatial and conceptual delimitation of the study. The spatial delimitation refers to the physical features that are related to the study area for orientation purposes. The aim of spatial delimitation was to give a picture of the area for a person reading the study. It went to the extent of providing the map of the area concerned to give more practical to the readers about the area in relation to municipalities around and even beyond the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The conceptual delimitation simplified the core concepts of the study, which are participation, local communities and perceptions. There might be other definitions for those concepts based on different authors because of their background and experiences. but the specific given definitions have been adopted for the context of this study. This will enable anyone reading the study to understand the context easily.

### **1.6.1 Spatial delimitation**

The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is situated between the northern side of Richards Bay town and the Mozambique border. It is on the eastern side of

N2 road from Richards Bay to the town, Manguzi. The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is also on the eastern side of the following towns, Mbonambi, Mtubatuba, Hluhluwe and Mbazwana (Figure 3.1.). The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is 38000 hectares in size. There are ten communities on the exact western boundary of Isimangaliso Wetland Park. They are: Khula Village, Ezwen'elisha, Nkundusi, Nibele, Sokhulu, Qakwini, Mngqobokazi, Mbila, Mabibi and Mduku. However, the study focuses on one community namely, Khula Village because it has more impact to the daily activities of the Park (Figure 3.3 p 64). The Khula community is neighbouring the St. Lucia town where the busiest gate of the park is situated. What makes this gate to be the busiest is because it is nearer for the tourists who are coming from larger airports like the Durban International, O.R. Tambo and others airports.

### **1.6.2 Conceptual delimitation**

It has been decided to conceptually scrutinise some of the concepts in order to delimit the scope, meaning and perspective of the concepts used. Some of these concepts include: participation, local community, and perceptions and various other concepts that are related to striking a balance between sustainable tourism development, tourism policies and management, and community benefits. These concepts are expected to provide an ideological framework upon which the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority can best make a contribution to tourism development in the area.

In the context of this study, participation refers to the involvement of the communities in a very active manner so that the communities can influence the direction and execution of development projects. Then, local community means or refers to the local residents who come into contact with tourists, as employees, as service providers and attractive curiosities for tourists.

Furthermore, perception in this study refers to what communities perceive as the right direction for their development or expectation towards the Isimangaliso Wetland Park activities. There are also a few principles which have been used in the text. Some of these principles include: responsible tourism; community-based tourism; cultural tourism and sustainable development. These and often relevant concepts are dealt with in the definition of terms (Section 1.8).

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The majority of the communities that were forcefully removed from the Isimangaliso environment are characterized by poverty and unemployment. It has been stated that tourism management around Isimangaliso Wetland Park would provide great potential for job opportunities. It is hoped that the findings of this study would be able to reveal the role of Isimangaliso Wetland Park in tourism promotion and development among the local communities.

It was anticipated that the research study would also help to establish the level of tourism understanding and awareness among the Isimangaliso Stakeholders and local community in particular. The understanding would lead to better community participation and tourism benefits. The study would further reveal the kind of strategies used by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to encourage local communities to participate in tourism.

It was equally significant to disclose whether there was any transparency with regard to the management processes of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. Also worthy of investigation is to determine the perceptions of the local people as to whether they admire the management or are comfortable with being part of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. If their

perceptions are positive then the battle is half won. Having noted all that the study was sought to achieve, it is clear that it has the important role of addressing the fundamental conflict situation apparent within the Isimangaliso Wetland Park environment.

## **1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

In this research report a number of tourism related concepts are used. The definition of these concepts will help the reader in getting a clear picture of what this study is all about. The concepts will also help in limiting the study to only the relevant issues and avoid ambiguity. The terms defined in this section are central to the research question, and therefore deserve special clarification. Their better understanding would also assist in clarifying and operationalising their true meaning in the rest of the study. The terms are explained by referring to different authors and thus reveal their singular meaning.

### **1.8.1 Tourism**

Middleton as cited by Bennett (2002) defines tourism as an activity that is concerned with temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places they normally live and work, and their activities during the stay at these destinations.

The World Tourism Organisation (2000: 4) defines tourism as comprising of the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. The Tourism Society as cited by Youell (2000) defines tourism as temporary, short term movement of people to destinations outside their places or residence of work, and activities during their stay at these

destinations, it includes movement for all purposes, as well as day visits or excursions.

McIntosh *et al* (2002) on the other hand define tourism as a composite of activities, services and industries that deliver a travel experience; transportation; accommodation, hospitality, entertainment, activity facilities and other services available for individuals or groups that are travelling away from home. This definition clearly shows that tourism offers a wide range of services and has great opportunities for employment. The main problem that is observed is that local communities are normally not employed or are employed as cleaners and people from afar hold higher positions. The term tourism in this study is used as it is defined by these three authors cited above.

### **1.8.2 Ecotourism**

Ecotourism as a concept has a variety of interpretations. This is mainly because definitions are influenced by a variety of underpinning philosophies, which are either biocentric (promote ecological process to operate as freely as possible – protect the integrity of the ecosystems) or anthropocentric (use and enjoy – maximization of direct human use) in nature. The concept may relate to any targeted group to express similar environmental and tourist activities such as the following:

“Nature tourism, green tourism, low impact tourism, adventure tourism, alternative tourism, environmental preservation, symbiotic development, responsible tourism, soft tourism, appropriate tourism, quality tourism, new tourism, sustainable development, sustainable tourism”  
Goeldner, *e al* (2006: 123).

A general definition as provided by Ceballo-Lascurain (1996) as cited in Nzama *et al* (2005) states that ecotourism is environmentally responsible, enlightening travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations.

In line with this definition is the definition by the American-based Ecotourism Society which is as follows:

“Purposeful travel to natural areas, to understand the culture and natural history of the environment; taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, while producing economic opportunities that make conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people” (Hall and Lew, 1998: 44).

A variety of definitions of ‘ecotourism’ exists and these have been used in a number of ways. The three definitions cited above specifically related to this research study.

### **1.8.3 Participation**

For the purpose of this study, the definition of participation by Paul (1987) is used. Paul (1987:2) defines community participation as an active process by which beneficiary client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish. This definition is adopted by the researcher as having relevant meaning with regards to the situation in the surroundings and settlements of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

#### **1.8.4 Community**

It should be noted that the concept or term “community” is an illusive one and tends to vary from subject to subject and author to author. According to Bellah *et al.* (1985: 313):

A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision-making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it.

This concept is also defined by Stoddart (1993) as a social organization based on (a) shared values and beliefs by the individuals; (b) direct and many-sided relations between individuals and (c) on the practice of reciprocity. On the other hand, Hall and Lew (1998) restrict the definition to an aggregation of people at a particular locale. Communal groups have been observed to distinguish themselves by providing identity, meaning and a sense of self-worth to their members while providing a manageable scale through which to manage day-to-day affairs. In the context of this study this concept will be adopt the definition as given by Stoddart (1993).

#### **1.8.5 Local community**

MacIntosh, *et al.* (2002) regard local communities as the local people who get employed as a result of tourism, and who have a face-to-face relationship with the tourist. Mathieson and Wall (1982) share this idea by expressing that local community are those people who are impacted by tourism activities. In this study local community refers to the local residents who come into contact with tourists, as employees, as service providers and attractive curiosities for tourists.

### **1.8.6 Tourist attractions**

Lubbe (2003) views tourist attractions as those occurrences or creations (e.g. fauna or flora, buildings, scenery) or happenings (e.g. festivals, events, competitions) in natural or human-made environments that motivate people to travel. Faulkner *et al.*, (2000) define an attraction as a designed permanent resource which is controlled and managed for the enjoyment and education of the visiting public. Bennett and Strydom (2001) view tourists' attractions as something interesting or unusual to do. It stands to reason therefore, that without attractions there would be no tourism. Bennett and Strydom (2001) link an attraction to what they describe:

Natural attractions are those attractions that have their origins in the physical environment. The nature and strengths of natural attractions are largely determined by one or more of the following factors: landscapes, animals, plants, beaches, geographical features and water.

The study involves both the natural and socio-cultural attractions. This study then focuses on the potential of these attractions and how they satisfy and attract more visitors and tourists.

### **1.8.7 Tourist destination**

In some instances a tourism destination has been seen and equated to a tourist attraction. Lubbe (2003) defines tourist destination as the geographical area where the attraction is located and to which the tourist or visitor is heading. In the context of this study this concept is used to mean tourists and other stakeholders visiting Vernon Crookes Nature Reserve, which is by definition a tourist destination.



According to George (2001), a tourism destination is a place, including a physical or perceived location, consisting of primary and secondary attractions and supporting amenities that entice people to visit. George further illustrates that basically, it is where offerings designed to meet tourist needs are located. It could be clearly that a tourism destination is the location of cluster of attractions and related tourist facilities and services which a tourist or tour group selects to visit or which providers choose to promote.

#### **1.8.8 Tourism Development**

Aaronson (2000) defines development as associated with positive social change, which means moving forward to something that is better than at present. In this case this change relates to the growth and advancement of tourism activities and benefits. In other words, tourism development relates to a process for improving human well-being through re-allocation of resources that involves some modification of the environment (DEAT, 1997b). That is, tourism development also implies the establishment and promotion of new tourism products and activities, upgrading and marketing of already existing tourism products, and creating a safe and user-friendly atmosphere for tourists and local communities.

#### **1.8.9 Sustainable development**

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987:8), sustainable development refers to the improvement of human and physical environment with a view of meeting the needs of the present communities “without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development usually operates on the environment and therefore suggests the natural setting upon which people or humans participate in activities, one of which is tourism development.

Hence, the concept “sustainable development” relates to the careful and strategic utilization of resources in development so that not only the present, but the future generations as well, benefit from the resources. Sustainable development is widely applied in tourism development planning. Weaver (2000: 300) defines sustainable tourism as follows:

Tourism that meets the needs of the current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

#### **1.8.10 Perceptions**

The term perception refers to the way in which the world looks, sounds, feels, tastes or smells to and individual or groups of people. A person’s perceived world is the world of their immediate experience (Morgan and King 1982). Senses and experience therefore form the cornerstone of perception. Perception is stimulated and cast by what takes place around people. By implication, perception is also a psychological process.

Stratton and Hayes (1993:139) define perception, as “the process by which we analyse and make sense out of incoming stimuli.” Psychological value judgement is therefore part of perception. Since the mind is not a passive receiver of stimuli, William Jane in Morgan and King (1982:252) believes that, “part of what we perceive comes through our senses from the object before us; another part always comes out of our own”. Perception is, therefore, shaped by experience but is never a sum total of it. Perception in this study is used to refer to the host community’s psychological value judgement based on emotions, since motions influence perception.

#### **1.8.11 Practice**

At a general level the term ‘practice’ is understood to refer to ‘action’ as opposed to ‘theory’. Usually both the terms ‘policy and practice’ are

intertwined, since practice has to do with the transition of the policy into action, which is doing what the policy has to do with the translation of the policy into action, which is doing what the policy stipulates (Van Niekerk, 1988). The emphasis on practice is on action rather than on theory (policy). The notion of practice further emphasises the idea continuous actions with regard to use of facilities at hand and by being less premeditated, and often practically executed. Practices are used to make the problem easier to understand and solve [<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/practice> (2007)].

Therefore, this research study attempts to establish what actions the respondents are involved in as a way of concretising the provisions of the policy. This research did not stop with the establishment of the existence of policies, but further sought to gauge the extent to which policy was being translated into tangible things that people could identify. Hence tourism activities, projects, programmes, seminar, or workshops are regarded as practice in this research enquiry.

#### **1.8.12    Prospects**

The term ‘prospect’ refers to the possibility of future success in the provision of tourism facilities and activities. The provision of tourism facilities is coupled with the usage of the existing facilities as well as present and future shortcomings that need to be attended to by the local authorities. According to Weaver, & Opperman (2000) one of the goals of tourism provision is to enrich the quality of life in the community by providing tourism benefits and opportunities for the tourists and local communities. respectively. This notion clearly means that for the future development and provision of tourism facilities proper planning is very much essential on the part of the local authorities, and more specifically for the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. For the entire study the use of the term ‘prospects’ will be relating

to the meaning of Weaver and Opperman explained above that refers to possibility of future success in the provision of tourism facilities and activities.

## **1.9 METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology that is used in this study includes the research design, research sample, instrumentation, collection of data, analysis and interpretation of data and the pilot study. Under this heading the research design, the method, approach and procedure followed are looked at. The research sample is dealt with and its size, mode of selection and representation in relation to the population, is explored. Instrumentation is described on the basis of the questionnaire that includes closed and open-ended questions. However, most of the questions that have been used are closed-ended questions. The latter is to ensure that the interpretation of responses is not compromised. The questionnaires that were distributed systematically and randomly have also been described. Collection of data and its analysis are presented in the form of statistical graphs and tables. The data analysed and interpreted has resulted in the acceptance or rejection of objectives and hypotheses of this research inquiry.

### **1.9.1 Research design**

Once adequate background information had been developed and the problem had been defined against this background, it was then time to develop the specific procedure or design for carrying out the total investigation or research project. This step is the heart of the research process (Magi, 2005). The secondary sources available were explored and acquired, as well as utilising the primary sources to gather information. With regard to the utilisation of primary research resources it became evident that the survey

technique was the ideal method to use. As such it was necessary to develop the sample, the questionnaire, or other data-collection forms and any instruction sheets and coding methods as well as tabulation forms. Finally it was necessary to conduct a pilot study to test all of the foregoing elements. The results were then written up in a detailed plan that served as a guide that could be followed by any researcher.

### **1.9.2 Research sample**

Cognisance must be made that it is not easy to choose a sample population from the large area that surrounds the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, because the population is scattered in most of the area. For purposes of this research study, a randomly stratified sample of 122 respondents was used for the collection of relevant information. The different categories of the sample were divided as follows: (a) local community members constituting a sample of 85 respondents; (b) the service providers with a sample of 16 respondents; and (c) Isimangaliso Park employees or officials making up a sample of 21 respondents. It must be noted that tourists and recreationists in their own right were not interviewed because it was felt that they were external visitors to the park. Furthermore, it was assumed that the tourists did not know much about the land issues and removal of people from their original land in the area.

It is worth noting that the research sample constituted about 8 percent of population of the research study community. This number was felt to be sufficiently representative of the local communities around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The target number of the local community of Khula village was also categorised as follows: family members, community leaders [*izinduna*], councillors and other political figures.

### **1.9.3     Instrumentation**

The questionnaires were designed in a way that it included open and closed-ended questions. The questions were formulated in a way that addressed the objectives of the research study and could elicit relevant responses to answer the hypotheses of the study. The questions were also phrased to explore the understanding of some key words of the topic under study, such as tourism, participation, benefits perception and prospects. The questions were grouped into five categories, which are, (a) personal details, (b) development of the reserve, (c) tourism activities, (d) community benefits from the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, and (e) personal views and opinions. The questionnaires were directed to the interviewees to reveal what benefits they get from the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Basically the questions were designed to establish whether the community was happy or concurred with the Wetland Park policies or not.

### **1.9.4     Collection of data**

Data was analysed using the computer programme known as the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) available at the University of Zululand. This programme was used to generate frequency tables and graphs. The emerging graphs and tables were constructed in such a way that they could be easily interpreted. The outcome of the interpretation facilitated the acceptance or rejection of the various hypotheses postulated.

The community members, leaders and officials were contacted to explain any existing complaint about the study area. The relevant community protocols, like asking for permission to hold a meeting with the communities, were followed. It was very important to explain about the study to the community leaders before they were to be engaged in the interview process. This approach helped to clarify the objectives of the study and direct the

community's expectations to the study objectives rather than to something else. Such explanation also prevented political interference which is very powerful in the area.

It is important to note that the interviewer asked questions verbally especially to local community members who were illiterate. Their answers were recorded. The more literate community members were presented with the questionnaires to read and complete on the spot, with guidance of the interviewers. Most community leaders and officials were interviewed telephonically. E-mail was also used for those officials who had access to it. Due dates were given to respondents to ensure that all questionnaires were returned within the set time frame.

#### **1.9.5 Analysis and interpretation of data**

The information was presented and analysed as it was collected. Tables and graphs were compiled to illustrate and elucidate. The statistics used were based on the frequency of responses and converted to appropriate percentage values. The resultant statistical outcomes assisted the researcher with the interpretation of the results, and drawing conclusions about the objectives and hypotheses to determine whether these were met or not.

#### **1.9.6 Pilot study**

About ten questionnaires were prepared to pilot the study. They were distributed to some community members to complete. The basic aim of this procedure was to test whether the questions were clearly understood and addressed the issue they were intended to address. The researcher took time to speak to Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority officials explaining the objectives of the study so as to ease the possibility of any tensions that might arise. The community leaders were contacted so that they could contribute to the preliminary pilot round of the questionnaire survey. Fundamentally, there

were no serious weaknesses recorded or observed in the structuring of the questions.

## **1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

Chapter One, designated as the “Preface to the study”, presents the introduction to the research study. This orientation to the study covers key areas such as: the problem statement, objectives and hypotheses, the delimitation of the study, its significance and the methodology adopted in carrying out.

Chapter Two, entitled the “Theoretical framework”, deals with the theory related to the research study. This chapter explores various authors’ ideas and relates them to the topic of the study. By doing so the findings of other studies, serve as a reasonable basis for interpretation considering work that comes from other authors on the same subject matter, thus accommodating a wider spectrum of research.

Chapter Three, the “Physical setting of the study area”, provides the actual physical layout and matters relevant to the study area. It considers, among other aspects, the historical background, settlement and land tenure matters, physiographic and climate issues. Social services and governance structures are also considered.

Chapter Four, describes the “Analyses and interpretation of data”. In this chapter all analytical procedures are presented. The findings of the study are documented and meaning is attached to them. The outcomes of the analysis lead to making conclusions about the acceptance or rejection of the various hypotheses postulated in terms of the prescribed objectives. The chapter also sets the scene for generating conclusions and recommendations of the study.



Chapter Five, written as “Conclusions and recommendations”, provides a summary of the findings and then proposes some recommendations as the final conclusion.

## **1.11 CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter has introduced, analysed and summarised all the important information regarding the research question of the study. The basic aim of the study was to identify the kinds of measures and strategies available to make the park a sustainable viable resource for all stakeholders, in the light of the strained relationships between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and the members of the local community. Furthermore, it was significant to disclose transparency regarding the management processes of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. It sought to establish whether any investigation and solution could be invented to make the Khula village community more responsive and proactive about the problems associated with the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

In the democratic South Africa of today it is important nowadays that the community participate in all aspects of tourism, including being tourists themselves (DEAT, 1996). The idea of participating in tourism activities provides firsthand experience and the necessary grounding from which tourism management and planning can be understood and executed. According to Blench (1999) the community must actively participate in and promote responsible tourism so that it is sustainable in the medium as well as the long term. This cannot be over-emphasised for the case of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A theoretical framework forms the basis upon which a research is generally conducted. This pronunciation of theory is of great help to the researcher since it points to the correct direction to be followed regarding studies that have been done which are related to the current study (Magi, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to furnish this study with theoretical material which is related to ecotourism development and management of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The uniqueness of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is not confined only to its scenic beauty and World Heritage Site status, but also to the fact that it has much to offer the local indigenous community in the area.

Another important relevance of this chapter is to explore what different authors say about the participation of local communities in natural parks. Other authors' ideas and viewpoints will be related to the objectives of the study that have been mentioned in the previous chapter. Some of the key concepts contextually relevant for this chapter relate to understanding community involvement, participation, perspective, perceptions and prospects relating to the management and sustainability of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

Tourism attractions, such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, provide the driving force that motivates people to visit places that appeal to their specific needs and senses. Attractions also act as magnets that draw people to them. Tourism experts such as Swarbrooke (1999) and Lubbe (2003) define attraction as occurrences or creations (such as scenery, climate, nature, water-bodies, exceptional fauna or flora, buildings or other architectural work, scenes of historic importance, works of art, places of enjoyment and entertainment, etc.) or happenings (such as festivals, meetings, sport competitions, etc.) in the natural or human made environments, that motivate people to travel. These attractions are there to benefits all stakeholders and in particular the local or host community.

## **2.2 COMMUNITY AND RESOURCES**

The community should have access to resources. If the park authority shares the resources with the local communities, that is bound to indicate whether they have a good relationship or not with the local communities. If there are already relationships that exist, it could even be extended through this practice. The access to the natural park could be in the form of gaining material to make crafts, firewood, building wood and other artefacts and necessities which are fundamental to human life. It will be from this standpoint that people will be cooperating in sustaining and using the resources in a creative manner for their benefit.

There are different resources found in Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The community should have access to those resources. However, they should be taught how to use those resources in a sustainable way for future use. There are very good dead carving trees and Incema reeds found inside the park. There should be arrangements made so that the wood carvers and Incema

weavers will have access to use these carving trees and Incema grass in a sustainable way that are not required for tourism development in the park. The traditional healers from the local communities should be allowed to harvest the 'muthi' plants in the park but in a very sustainable way [[http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISimangaliso\\_Wetland\\_Park](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISimangaliso_Wetland_Park). (2008)].

Notably, since the majority of the local communities do not have electricity, most of them depend and require to be allowed to collect firewood from the park, but this should be subject to prior arrangements having been made with the Isimangaliso authorities. Schoolchildren should also be allowed to learn about different animals and plants. They should also go there for training. An investigation of Reserve 126 in the St Lucia environment by the Ezemvelo Wildlife, has expressed a viewpoint that the park authorities have adopted two policies that are affecting the protected area neighbours (KZN-NCS, 1995: 26). They are that:

- (a) The fundamental right of locals living adjacent to a proclaimed area are to have access to that area for their specific needs, be it collecting reeds, herbs, fishing and, of course, recreation.
- (b) The local community should earn 25 percent per annum of the revenue collected from the proclaimed area, from the tourist facilities established on the community based area.

These two policies adopted by KZN-NCS (1995: 21) stress the argument above that it is the fundamental responsibility of any nature reserve to establish a good relationship with the neighbouring communities or to contribute towards socio-economic empowerment by giving them access to the park. However, the park authorities should do so in a very systematic and organized way for the sustainability of the resources. For example, where the

natural park has trees that were destroyed in the park by lightning, strong winds or other phenomena, then arrangements could be made to give these trees to woodcarvers for their craft-making enterprise. Such a gesture would undoubtedly strengthen the relationship.

### **2.2.1 Indigenous communities and resources**

According to Murat, *et al* (1998) there is evidence that elaborate resource management systems prevailed among indigenous African people before the arrival of European colonists. Traditional institutions such as kings, chiefs, headmen and healers played an important role in regulating and monitoring resource use. An example is the royal hunting preserves of the AmaZulu that is a procedure or an event which is well-known in southern Africa. The local institutions such as chiefs and headmen played an important ecological role, in setting boundaries that restricted natural resource use and enforced them (Murat, *et al* 1998). The underlying factor is that indigenous people were very conscious of the sustainable management of natural resources, because they relied on them for different purposes. It is from this background that the local people around Isimangaliso Wetland Park should be permitted to use some of the resources found inside the park in a sustainable manner. The resources should be harvested in a proper way. Proper harvesting of the resources in this case refers to observing the relevant season to harvest and not taking roots out so that the plant can grow again.

One of the wood-carver groups has established a project for indigenous tree nursery. The group propagates the trees that they use the most when doing their carvings and craftwork. If they see a dead tree in the forests, they then replace it with a seedling from their nursery to cater for the future generation. This project has succeeded because of cooperation between the local community and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In particular, KwaZulu-Natal

Ezemvelo Wildlife has helped the wood carvers by teaching them advanced technical ways of propagating plants as well as improving the quality of seedlings. It has been observed that, if the community has the opportunity of getting involved in using the natural resources, it invariably comes up with strategies and ideas of managing those resources more efficiently.

### **2.2.2 Sustainability of natural resources**

The concept of sustainability has come to mean the need to preserve and protect the natural environment. The natural environment is rapidly being destroyed because of over-exploitation. Once the natural resources have declined below a level of viability, they become non-renewable. Over-exploitation and degradation of natural resources can stem from tourist activities. Tourism and sustainability of resources are interrelated. Lubbe (2003) believes that, in order to implement sustainable development, a careful balance is required between the long-term and short-term goals, and it has to emphasize equity and quality of life rather than the mere quality of output. The concept of duration is highlighted by Butler and Boyd (2000) in their definition which views sustainable development as the process which is developed and maintained in an area in such a manner and on such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the natural environment on which it exists.

In addition to the duration, Hall and Lew (1998) emphasize that social and economic factors are the driving forces in promoting activities that cause cumulative effects. The condition of the environment should be enhanced as a result of careful control being exercised over the local users and tourist access. Solutions may not only lie with improved environmental management, but with changes in economic and social perceptions. Governments in tourist destinations should not be engrossed in the

development of economic generating tourism policies, but should also focus on implementing policies designed to sustain the natural resources so that the resources continue to attract tourists over an indefinite period of time. However, as is the case in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, the perceptions and attitudes of the local communities and tourists should be moulded for the better as far as the natural resource base is concerned.

### **2.3 COMMUNITY AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES.**

One of the objectives of the Department of Sports and Recreation cited in the Sport and Recreation White Paper (DSR, 1994:28) advocates that:

*“getting the nation to play” is increasing the level of participation in sport and recreation activities.*

With this kind of policy in place, the government is then bound and committed to ensure that the communities are involved or have access to recreation activities as much as possible. By recreation activities this study refers to any activities that are undertaken by people during their leisure time, with an aim of refreshing or entertaining themselves.

There are many outdoor recreation activities inside the park, some of these involve: bird watching, swimming, canoeing, trailing, boating and several others. The community should have access to these activities and must be free to participate in these activities offered by the park authorities. It is a difficult and uncomfortable situation when communities and local people are not allowed to walk in the park for safety reasons. There are wild animals that might cause danger to human beings. Therefore, authorities will not allow community members entry if they do not have motor vehicles. If community members have a letter from the surrounding neighbourhood Induna or Inkosi indicating that they are from local communities, they

normally will not pay an entrance fee, but must have a motor vehicle. Schoolchildren are also allowed to recreate on days they are not busy with schooling, but must be under the guidance of a park official. There is also a beach inside the park that needs to be accessible to the community. It would be through the communities' participation in recreation activities that would have an opportunity to recreate. The tourists are able to access the park because they pay all the fees for entrance and participation in activities. In addition, tourists would also have an opportunity to visit the neighbouring communities to learn about the local culture. Therefore neighbouring communities should have a positive attitude towards the park, so that they can be good ambassadors of the park.

## **2.4 THE MAIN PLAYERS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM**

The dawn of the new democratic order in South Africa has brought in new perspectives regarding recreation and tourism engagements. Previously the main stakeholders were the government, private sector and the white population group. However, in this new dispensation Black local communities, parastatal organisations and Black business entrepreneurs, under the auspices of the Black Economic Empowerment [BEE] policies, have come to play an important role. According to the Tourism White Paper (DEAT, 1996:54) communities in South Africa are expected to play a vital role in the development of tourism. Many communities and previously neglected groups, particularly around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, have not actively participated in the tourism industry.

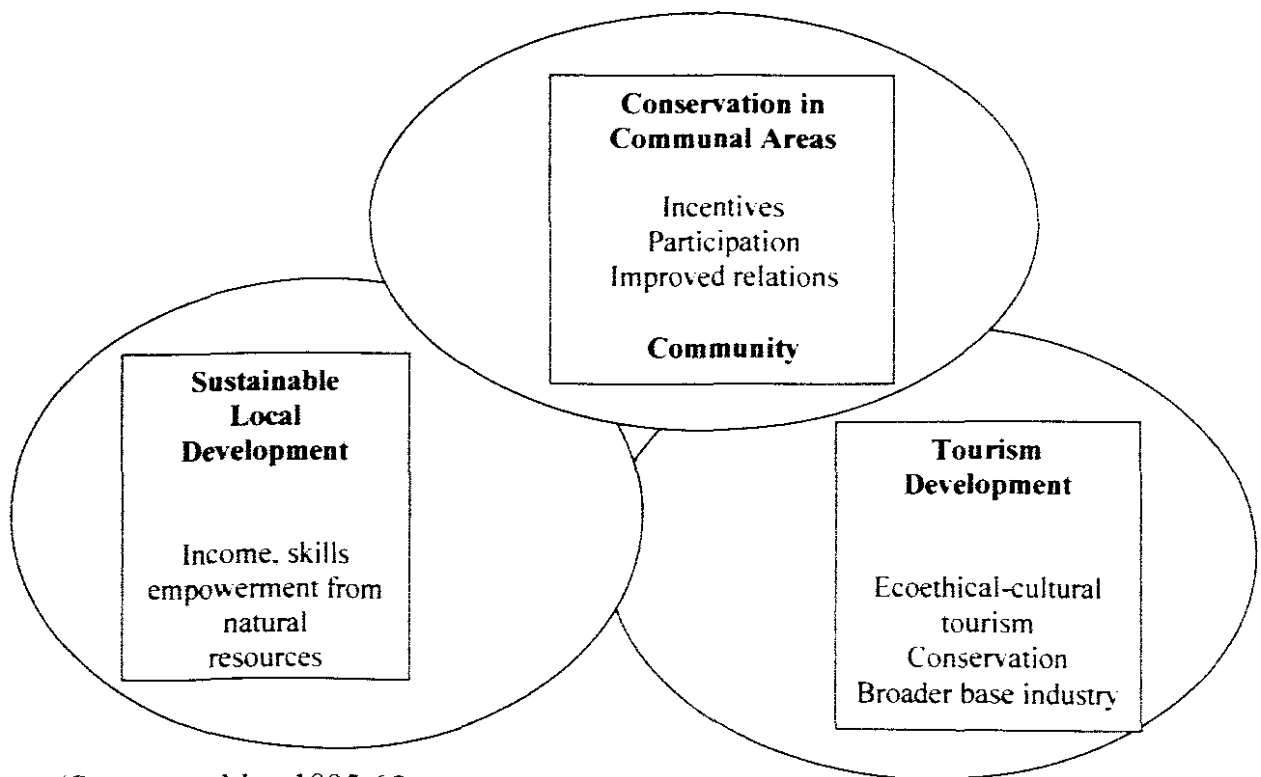
The Tourism White Paper (DEAT, 1996) proposes that communities must organize themselves as role players, identify tourism resources, seek financial assistance for tourism development, engage in partnerships, enhance the positive benefits of tourism and promote responsible tourism. On the other



hand, Ashley & Roe, (2002) propose that community-based tourism has emerged from three different perspectives, that is, conservation in communal areas, sustainable local development and tourism development (Figure 2.1).

These three elements of community-based tourism have played an important role in enhancing the understanding and benefits of tourism to the local communities. These three perspectives have progressively led to the emergence of community involvement in tourism. In South Africa it was only after 1994 that community tourism began to emerge as a specific and official approach in the management of tourism development. Community tourism actually came to focus mainly after the publication of the White Paper on tourism (DEAT, 1996).

FIGURE 2.1: THE ASHLEY COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM MODEL



(Source: Ashley, 1995:65)

In community-based tourism, tourism development is considered to be a vehicle for promoting community sustainable development and conservation of natural resources in communal areas so that all key players can benefit from tourism. It can therefore be concluded that the three perspectives are equally important and complement each other in this process. Further, that these three perspectives are important and play a community participatory and developmental role in the study area.

Both community-based tourism and ecotourism have been perceived to be some strategy of simultaneously promoting both development and conservation in communal areas through the generation of financial and social benefits. The cooperation between key stakeholders in ecotourism provides benefits for everyone involved in the tourism industry. This kind of benefit can be expected to be rooted in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park policies, that is, if the best practices in tourism were to be put in place.

#### **2.4.1 The government**

As suggested in the Tourism White Paper (DEAT, 1996) the government has a major role to play in the development and promotion of the tourism industry. For the tourism industry to flourish, the government must establish a safe and stable political environment, which is one of the indirect demands of the tourist and tourism development. Legally speaking the government in South Africa has a responsibility to facilitate, coordinate, regulate, monitor and develop the promotion of the tourism industry.

A successful tourism industry depends on the construction of partnerships between government, private sector and local communities who play a hosting role to tourists. It is the responsibility of the government to provide a range of infrastructural support, such as land, roads, electricity, water and

sewerage disposal facilities, to the industry as a whole. The provision of the infrastructure does not only benefit the tourists, the local communities also benefit in a sense that they make use of the facilities provided. This is fundamentally relevant to the subject matter of this research inquiry.

Seaton & Bennet (1994) believe that worldwide governments play an important role in land ownership, development and management of tourism. Through the government policies community tourism can become a sustainable phenomenon, even in places such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

#### **2.4.2 The parastatal organizations**

In some countries parastatal organisations and the voluntary non-profit-making organisations has become a major stakeholder in tourism development and promotion. The perceived responsibilities of the parastatal organisations are to facilitate, coordinate, regulate and monitor the development and promotion of the tourism industry. As suggested in the Tourism White Paper (DEAT, 1996:57) these organisations have the following functions:

- (a) To develop policies and plans for tourism industry, which bind the government, local communities and private sector
- (b) To assist the community and community related groups in organising themselves, preparing them to implement tourism projects
- (c) To educate, train, facilitate and bridge community on the content of the Tourism White Paper and related legislation
- (d) To assist the government by conducting tourism and environmental awareness programmes for the tourism industry.

The above-mentioned functions are rendered by the parastatal organisations and the voluntary non-profit-making organisations to develop, spread and facilitate the development of tourism. The parastatal organisations also assist the local community by attracting donor agencies to boost the projects that are developed by the community. A good example is that of woodcarvers in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

The parastatal organisations also help the local community by providing the skills such as starting a community project or cultural village, bookkeeping, management procedures and project development cycle. These management techniques are vitally important and needed by the various components of the Isimangaliso parastatal organisations.

#### **2.4.3 The local community**

It has been generally stated and agreed that local communities in many a tourist destination, are the people who enjoy or suffer the main impact of tourism. Tourism should involve and allow local communities to participate in tourism development programmes and ensure that they are given a fair opportunity to compare (De Kadt, 1979). As the tourism industry depends greatly on the goodwill and cooperation of host communities, there is no amount of attraction that can compensate for rudeness or hostility that the tourist can experience from host communities. In order to develop this goodwill, host communities need to be involved in the tourism development decision-making process in relation to tourism development. The community must be able to identify tangible benefits from the arrival of tourist in their destination or environment. The situation becomes worse if the local community had been forcefully removed from the study area, as was the case with the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

Local communities must practise responsible tourism so as to attain tourism sustainability. The main objective of responsible tourism is to bring the benefit to all stakeholders of tourism, such as the tourist, the local community and the private sector, without causing any damage that can affect those involved in tourism. It is evident that tourism developers and promoters should consider the interests of all parties involved in developing and marketing of tourism destinations (Bennett, 2002). This is a kind of practice that is highly desirable in the study area.

The Tourism White Paper (DEAT, 1996) and (Bennett, 2002) have proposed the following guidelines that can be used to encourage community involvement in the tourism industry:

- a) Communities must be encouraged to participate in land-use planning, and rural development around the nature reserves.
- b) Communities should be made to respect tourism facilities, take advantage of tourism and be encouraged to share tourist resources and amenities.
- c) Tourism planning must be based on the goals that are identified by local residents so that it can maintain the lifestyle, keep the development within the carrying capacity and balance the change pace with local desire.
- d) The local communities should oppose any development that is harmful to the local environment.
- e) Encourage broad-based involvement in tourism events, as it is the homes of local residents, which are being put on display.
- f) Communities must seek partnership opportunities with the established tourism private sector.

The involvement of local communities in tourism can lead to community development and awareness of the value associated with tourism. This involvement is an important benefit because it accommodates the interests and needs of the local community. Furthermore, involvement also encourages local communities to practise and participate in tourism as tourists. The value of tourism would be better understood if the Isimangaliso Wetland Park community also made an effort to visit other destinations similar to theirs.

#### **2.4.3 The private sector**

There is no business that can function successfully without capital. Therefore the private sector is also in the development of community tourism because most of the time the local communities lack capital. The private sector, plays a crucial role in the development and promotion of community tourism.

According to the White Paper on tourism (DEAT, 1996) the private sector provides amenities that are required to satisfy the tourist. The delivery of quality tourism services and giving the customer value for money are largely private sector responsibilities.

The functions performed by the private sector are put forward by the White Paper on tourism (DEAT, 1996) but only a few are mentioned here:

- a) The private sector must involve local community in tourism industry through establishing partnership ventures with communities outsourcing purchase of goods and services from local communities.
- b) It must develop and promote socially and environmentally responsible tourism.

- c) It must enable local communities to benefit from tourism development for example local communities' benefits directly new reticulations and village electrification programmes developed through tourism investments in rural areas.
- d) It must advertise and promote individual services as well as the country, local, regionally and internationally. Private sector must operate according to standards.

In essence, the role of the private sector in community tourism can be seen as a twofold process: to be involved as a donor or as profit making agent. It is important to note that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park needs more assistance from the private sector as it cannot expect extensive profits from the local community.

## **2.5 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM ACTIVITIES**

It is an acceptable principle and truth that communities next to natural resources need to be part of and identify potential tourism resources and attractions in the local environment (DEAT, 1996). Gone are the days when communities could expect things to be done for them by outsiders. The idea of participating in tourism activities provides a direct and authentic experience for local communities to engage and host tourists in the local environment. Participation can ensure effective utilisation of available natural resources. In this regard, the local people can take responsibility for various activities. All these improve efficiency and make the participatory projects more cost-effective (George, 2001): Based on the above statement the topic of participation in this research study is explored through looking at recreation participation of local communities, and community environmental

awareness. Community and participation in activities is an important focus of this research.

### **2.5.1 Encouragement of recreation participation in the reserve**

The White Paper (DSR, 1994:35) has suggested that recreation development must be demand-driven and be community-based. It further proposes that communities must be empowered to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of recreation programmes, so that policies are developed from the participant's perspective. Furthermore, communities must be responsible and accountable for their own development. Local communities should participate in recreation activities through community structures.

The participation of the local community in recreation and tourism activities can be achieved by establishing a joint-committee of stakeholders that will represent the interests of the community at large. Representatives would meet with all community members and get their ideas and perspectives that need to be passed on to the park authorities. It is not always viable for the park authorities to meet the entire community on a regular basis; but instead to meet with the committee that represents the community. The communities should be helped to identify their needs and have these put forward to the park authorities. Adoption of such procedures usually makes the community happy with the proceedings and representation.

### **2.5.2 Development and improvement of infrastructure**

The community has to participate in the development and improvement of the infrastructure. Fundamentally, the government and park authorities have a duty to develop and improve the infrastructure such as roads, electricity and sewage systems. But the community must not be left out of the development processes.



With a developed infrastructure major events held within and near the natural resource area would easily be linked to other recreation and tourism facilities, where the visitors could see more of South Africa, and particularly KwaZulu-Natal and more specifically the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The staging of major events has important promotional and developmental opportunities for small communities such as those found in the Isimangaliso vicinity. For example, the hosting of the 2010 World Soccer Cup in South Africa, and more specifically in Durban, would have financial spin-off effects for local communities. These benefits would come through soccer tourists who would take an opportunity to visit the game reserves in KwaZulu-Natal.

### **2.5.3 Promotion of environmental management**

Policies and legislation governing the nature reserves and the tourism industry should encourage environmental management and stewardship. A well-managed tourism industry has the potential to contribute to gross domestic product of a particular Province, as well as South Africa's natural economy. In order for such promotions to succeed, the participation of the local community is very important. This participation would also lead to good environmental management leading to sustainable and responsible tourism in the study area.

The tourism activities associated with the Isimangaliso Wetland Park can create new services and drive other sectors of the economy, e.g. subsistence agriculture could flourish and benefit the local community. Tourism can also strengthen the community through its generation of foreign exchange from eco-tourism spin-offs, thereby creating employment opportunities. Finally, tourism creates opportunities for the community-based small entrepreneurs, who in turn would promote conservation awareness and understanding.

In the Isimangaliso Wetland Park area, the promotion of environmental management could expose the local communities to opportunities to create tourism businesses such as:

- (a) Bed and Breakfast establishments or guesthouses.
- (b) Woodcarving and various arts and crafts.
- (c) Ethnic restaurant or tavern.
- (d) Cultural village.
- (e) Tour operating business
- (f) Tour guiding service and community conservation area.

#### **2.5.4 Reduction of the crime rate**

Some writers have asserted (Spira, 1996; Bruce, 1997; George, 1998) that the origin or source of tourism crime and lack of safety and security come from within the local communities themselves. Thus it is imperative for the local community to participate in the development of strategies to combat tourism crime. Fundamentally, the government and park authorities must initiate and institute effective crime prevention strategies, as well as introduce serious punitive measures against criminals who tarnish the image of South Africa as a safe tourist destination. Communities themselves must report criminal cases to the police so that the culprits can be apprehended. According to criminal statistical records, crimes that have occurred in the Isimangaliso Park vicinity are well reported and cannot be allowed to go unnoticed. Some aspects of tourism crime and the issues of safety and security are relevant to the context of this research investigation.

#### **2.5.5 Provision of Training**

The South African constitution does recognise the right of access to education and training, and the government bears the main responsibility for providing this service. The duty of the government is, among others, to

improve the educational qualifications in local communities, as such an excellent service could be offered to the tourists. The training offered should not only be restricted to nature conservation matters but also include courses and in-service training deals with: accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast establishments or guesthouses; woodcarving techniques and some arts and crafts skills; managing a cultural village as well as tour guiding and tour operating businesses.

#### **2.5.6 Community and environmental awareness**

Community participation in tourism can only thrive in any area if community awareness of tourism related activities is alive and kicking. The strategy of enhancing tourism and environmental awareness would aim to create a greater understanding of the need for sound conservation principles and sustainability, as well as the role of natural resource ecosystem. According to KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife, the enhancement of neighbourhood environmental awareness comes through an educational approach, that leads to viable neighbourhood trust and which train employees and communities in conservation awareness and understanding in such a way that they act as indirect interpreters, contribute to creating an appropriate problem-solving animal policy [<http://www.kznwildlife.com>. (2007)].

Through environmental awareness programmes, the local communities could be taught about environmentally friendly strategies at Isimangaliso Wetland Park. They could also help reduce the activities that are unfriendly to the environment, especially where affected species would be very costly to rehabilitate. The high unemployment rate, lack of jobs and increasing pressure on the natural environment have meant that rural communities are using tourism and recreation as an economic development tool. The nature of industry is one in which small players or entrepreneurs use natural resources as their selling point. However, the facts that natural resources are often

available free of charge and visitors' purchases are hard to control, mean that the environment can pay a high price for short term economic benefits (Tribe, 2000: 3).

In the area around Isimangaliso Wetland Park there are a lot of people who sell craft goods made from material from natural resources like woodcarving and wetland reeds. If they are not taught how to harvest those materials in a sustainable way, the natural resources will be depleted in the surrounding area. The people who are using the natural resources ought to be educated so as to learn to use the resources in a sustainable manner. The involvement of Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife in capacitating the local communities in various ways is very important.

In concluding this section, the overriding question in our minds is: 'what causes the lack of participation of the local communities in this destination?' This research investigation seeks to address that very question. Accordingly, Lubbe (2003) argues that host communities tend to avoid participating in destinations where the infrastructure and services are not owned by them yet where there are opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. Furthermore, destinations have a great deal of flexibility and innovative opportunities for creating tourist flow and to augment existing attractions. Arguably, if the facilities in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park accommodate host community participation, it is logical to conclude that innovative strategies have not yet been adequately put in place at this destination. There is therefore, a dire need for innovative development of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park as a tourist destination.

## **2.6 COMMUNITY AND TOURISM PRINCIPLES**

The community should understand the different forms of tourism activities and tourism principles. The comprehension of these would help the

community and related stakeholders provide the relevant service on demand. In addition, the exploration of community characteristics and tourism principles would help determine whether the community derives any enjoyment and benefits from participating in any activity that would bring in income for them. Indeed, it is one of the objectives of this research study to establish whether the community does participate in the tourism activities that bring income benefits for them. Some of the principles worth considering include: responsible tourism, community-based tourism, cultural tourism and tourism as a socio-economic benefit.

### **2.6.1 Responsible tourism**

The Recreation White Paper (DSR 1994:32) has proposed responsible tourism as the key guiding principle for tourism development. The principle implies that the tourism authorities are proactive and community sensitive in the development and management of tourism activities. Furthermore, the principle of responsible tourism not only implies or encourages conservation of the surrounding environment, but also the notion of sustainability of tourism practices. Some writers have argue (Aaronson, 2000; Warburton, 1998) that in taking care for the environment, tourism has been regarded as a vehicle of sustainability for local communities, in that tourists will continue to be attracted to a particular tourist resource, if it is not overused.

Responsible tourism also means the government and business become involved in tourism activities in a sustainable manner. Furthermore the government and business should invite the local communities that are in close proximity to the tourist facilities and attractions to participate in decision-making roles. It is important for a place such as Isimangaliso Wetland Park to involve the local community in tourism participation, so that the community can learn and internalise the tourism management practices for the benefit of

all stakeholders. If the local community is not participating in tourism activities, then they will also not take care of the environment and as a result the tourists will stop visiting the area, where the environment is not looked after. Community benefits around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park would include the following: employment opportunities, availability of natural resource materials and opportunities to sell its cultural products to the tourists.

### **2.6.2 Community-based tourism**

The concept or principle of 'community-based tourism' best suits the tourism *potential needs and prospects of the Isimangaliso local communities*, more specifically the Khula community. This can be attributed to proximity of Khula village to the park that most of the tourists going to the park pass through the Khula community. There are also various natural material found in the area for making art and crafts. For purposes of this study the principle of 'community-based tourism' has been equated with the manner in which KZNTA (1998a:1) see it, as:

Tourism in which a significant number of local people are involved in providing services to tourists and the tourism industry, and in which local people have meaningful ownership, power and participation in the various tourism and related enterprises. Community based tourism should offer some form of benefit to local people not directly involved in the tourists enterprises, for example through improved education or infrastructure.

This principle as defined complements the concept of community participation, which advocates the involvement of the community in all government and tourism official projects related to social and economic development.

In the community-based mode of tourism the community takes the initiative to develop tourism and actually gets involved from the planning stage up to the management stage. It is tourism in which a significant number of local people from the particular area in question are involved in providing services to tourists and in which local people have meaningful ownership, power and roles. The training manuals by KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority (KZNTA, 2000a: 26) describe community-based tourism as that which carries the idea that it is tourism which should offer some form of benefit to members of the community, who are not directly involved in the tourist enterprise. The latter means that, if there is natural park tourism resource, the community around should be given a platform to own some tourism activities, so that they can participate and benefit fully. This kind of approach will help in the park development, because the community will take responsibility for tourism outside and inside the park. There would be less crime affecting the tourists because the community would be cooperating.

Pearce *et al* (1985:68), in their book entitled *Tourism Community Relation* explain that community representation is the core of what tourism is all about, what the community would initiate and how its members would respond to tourism. By implication, this process highlights the issue of involving the community from the planning stage to the implementation stage of a natural park. This community-tourism relationship would enable the community to know what it would reap at the end of a tourism process. If there are any tourism benefits the community is going to get, it is important to understand the nature of those benefits and what impact they would engender in the environment.

As an example, if the community is expecting to get money directly from the natural park, and that does not happen, then the community would start being negative and resist the operation of the park. A case study of the Ndumo Game Reserve has indicated that the local people who had agreed to have the reserve established in their vicinity and managed externally, ended up with different outcome. The local community had been promised some resource and economic benefits. However, in the long run there were no direct benefits coming from the game reserve authorities. The local community then decided to claim their land back, so that they could engage in agriculture.

Lessons from this case study indicate that it is important that the local community should always be involved from the planning stage up to the final management stage, as well as getting continual explanation on how they were going to benefit from the tourism process. General indications are that, in most cases, a local community's preferences are prioritised in the following order: employment opportunities, selling of crafts and artefacts, performing cultural dance and entertainment for a fee (Ashley & Jones, 2001). It is important that the community be updated on a day-to-day basis about all tourism and related activities of the nature reserve. In most instances, conflict with the reserve authorities arises when the benefits do not meet the community's expectations, particularly, if the process was not unpacked from the very beginning. In this regard Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority should act towards ensuring that the community's benefits are visible enough so that the community can recognise the importance of existence of the park in the area.

### **2.6.3 Cultural tourism**

According to Nzama *et al* (2005), cultural tourism can be described as travel to experience and, in some cases, to participate in a vanishing lifestyle that is



embedded in human memory. This kind of tourism includes travelling for the purpose of observing cultural expressions and lifestyles of truly exotic people. On the other hand, the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority (KZNTA, 2000a) sees cultural tourism as based upon the desire of tourists to experience the ways and lives of people living in different cultural milieus from their own. It does not look upon other cultures as inferior because of their origins, instead it encourages cultures to surface so that different people can learn or experience other people's cultures.

Peter Mansfield and Associates (2000: 8) in the draft proposals for the Durban Art Association's of All- African Arts, Crafts, and Cultural Centre, refer to cultural tourism as constituting a variety of cultural and heritage events. Some of these were listed as follows: live traditional performances, craft production, cultural displays, paintings, weaving and beadwork, carving and sculptures, praise singing, herbalists, marriage ceremonies, choirs and gospel singing, oral history and story-telling, historical experiences, sangomas, traditional wear, traditional households, décor and artefacts, S'cathamiya singing, mask-making, rites and ceremonies, celebratory occasions and traditional religious occasions.

From another perspective, Nzama, *et al* (2005) sees the contribution of cultural tourism to local communities in the following quotation:

It contributes towards optimizing the economic benefits of tourism to the local population. It promotes a distinct brand of tourism to reflect values consonant with the South African way of life and create a unique South African image and identity. It also enhances local community esteem and provides the opportunity for greater understanding and communication between people of diverse backgrounds. Envisage that the

exposure of these assets to the tourism market would lead to an upsurge of creativity and innovation, skills development and local entrepreneurship.

In general, the local communities should be given a platform to showcase some of their cultural activities and artefacts to the tourists. The communities have a diversity of culture and cultural practices. The park management at places such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, should give the local communities an opportunity to showcase their cultural activities to the tourists and by so doing they would be developing the local communities both socially and economically.

In the light of this discussion of cultural tourism, it is clear that the community is playing an important role because they are the ones who know their culture. This means they have to participate, decide on their preferred activities and devise a project that will make them successful. Therefore the essence of cultural tourism is very important to this topic because it looks at the community's perceptions, participation and prospects as relevant to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

#### **2.6.4 Tourism as a community training exercise**

In (Davion,1995) report an argument is put forward that the protected areas address basic social needs of neighbouring communities, seek preferential employment for locals, involve local entrepreneurs in the economy of protected areas, and undertake to train staff in skills germane to neighbour related activities. The importance of the question of training the local community in tourism related matters within a natural environment is one which cannot be underestimated. In this regard. KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife is obliged to train the local communities in entrepreneurship so that

they can develop their own businesses rather than to depend on employment at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. It is important that the community members' mindset should be developed in relation to their own surrounding area in a way that would enable them to accumulate knowledge, love and ownership of their own conservation area.

The tourism principles explored thus far have addressed social and economic development of local communities as relevant to the Isimangaliso environment. Some principles have indicated that there should be transparency between the communities and the tourism institution or authorities. The transparency matter then leads to tackling the issue of awareness of communities about tourism and the socio-economic benefits they could get from the natural park. The latter notion fundamentally addresses one of the key objectives of this research investigation.

#### **2.6.5 Sustainable development**

Without doubt, the protection, enhancement and improvement of the various components of the total environment are among the fundamental conditions for the harmonious development of tourism. In the mid-1970s sustainable development became a global 'buzz word' but since then it has become a concept much discussed, used and abused. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1997) was the first organisation to introduce the so-called 'stewardship' role of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Hunter, 1995). Sustainable tourism development should:

- Meet the needs of the local community in terms of improving their social life styles whilst not compromising the natural baseline on which they depend
- Satisfy the demands and confirm the expectations of tourists and the tourism fraternity and continue to attract tourists into the country
- Conserve the environmental integrity of the area with a view to conserving the natural resources for posterity
- Include women, youth and the disabled so everyone is sufficiently consulted to have a say in the decision making process
- Prohibit any development which may be harmful to people.

If these kinds of guidelines are thoroughly maintained, the role of sustainable tourism development would be achieved to the best ability of rural and conservation communities. This situation could be better achieved even at places such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

## **2.7 TOURISM BENEFITS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

The involvement of local communities in tourism activities not only benefits the community and the environment but also improves the quality of the tourist's experience. Local communities can become involved in ecotourism operations, and in the provision of knowledge, services, facilities and products. The benefits should outweigh the cost of ecotourism to the host community and the environment. Ecotourism can also generate income for resource conservation management in addition to offering social and cultural benefits. The contribution may be financial with part of the cost of the tour helping to subsidise conservation projects. Alternatively it could consist of

practical help in the field with the tourist being involved in environmental data collection and analysis (Page and Dowling, 2002).

The establishment and introduction of the Khula community was aimed at facilitating a conciliatory provision of residence, since forced removals of yesteryear. The establishment also seeks providing an equitable distribution of tourism benefits from the Isimangaliso Wetland Park area. These benefits are expected to play a meaningful role in the betterment of lives of the people living near the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Such expectations will become possible through the implementation of development policies and formalising a memorandum of understanding between the authorities and communities. These legal documents stipulate the procedures on how should people go about in utilising or establishing tourism facilities for their own benefit.

There are some individuals involved in selling of local artefacts to tourists at the curio shop at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The Khula community is now able to come into contact with tourists. Though this contact is still minimal, in a matter of time, local people are going to benefit even more through this contact with tourists. Eventually this contact is expected to develop when local people will sell their products directly to the tourists. Some members of the Khula community have already started benefiting from such a venture. These ventures refer to individual who are selling crafts, performing cultural activities and other benefits they get through tourism.

### **2.7.1 Economic and financial benefits**

Among several studies that have advocated a viable relationship between tourism development and community benefits, the most prominent are those that have emphasized economic and financial benefits (Mahony & van Zyl, 2002; Ashley & Jones, 2001; Roe *et al.*, 2001). In other words, local

community benefits derived from the tourism industry ought to enhance general community development. According to Mahony and van Zyl (2002), there seems to be fewer direct tourism employment benefits from tourism development projects. There are indications that to a large extent, the local small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) are generally given project contracts on a commercial basis. To ensure that the local community is able to take up such SMME opportunities, various technical training programmes have been initiated. What has been reported by writers cited above is there has been collective economic benefit from the revenue generated from hunting and other tourist visits. The assessment also revealed that the community is given opportunities to participate economically, though the control of assets is shared with the South African National Parks authorities.

There is a great possibility that the findings associated with the economic and financial initiatives can suggest more or less the same results for the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Understandably the findings on these initiatives would facilitate the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses postulated in chapter one of this research study.

### **2.7.2 Non-economic and non-financial benefits**

It would be good to cite Mahony & Van Zyl (2002) who argue that the non-economic and non-financial developmental benefits worthy of consideration included the following: (a) The extent of capacity building and training within the community; (b) the extent to which the local community is involved in decision-making, (c) the social and cultural impacts of the initiative; and (d) the types and applicability of policies and strategies that are in place to direct progress in community development.

Furthermore, Mahony and Van Zyl (2002) argue that government views capacity building and skills development, as the key elements of local community benefit. The analysis of tourism activities and projects have indicates that, they translate as benefits to some staff members and local communities through these non-economic elements. There are also indications that the local communities benefit by participation in decision-making and management of the nature reserve.

### **2.7.3     Personal benefits**

The recorded outcomes from participating in tourism activities that operate at an individual level may be termed personal. They include personal skills development, enjoyment and all the other experiential components of participation. Tourism's personal or experiential benefits include excitement and relaxation, escape from an intimate association with other people, environment appreciation, learning and testing competence, tranquillity and stimulation (Lieber & Fesenmaier, 1983).

Further, from these experiences are more long-term benefits such as self-enhancement through improved mental health, the development of self-reliance and competence, inaugurating and building relationships of trust and communication and a renewal in both mind and body. Personal benefits include both the immediate experience and the developmental consequences for the self that endures, at least for a limited time (Lieber & Fesenmaier, 1983).

### **2.7.4     Societal benefits**

The concept 'society' for purposes of this research study may be regarded as equivalent to 'community'. Hence, outcomes from participating in tourism activities that are related to society or social groups or collectives may be

termed societal and thus also imply being communal. First of all, societal or communal benefits refer to the support and enhancement of intimate communities, those family and friendship groups that share a spatial habitat and common lifestyle. However, there are other kinds of societal benefits as well, including possible contributions to the development of larger communities and a higher level of public health. Such benefits may also be long-term, for example, as supporting conservation on an ecological basis for human life and contributing to the basis for social cohesion [<http://www.psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm>. (2008)]

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has explored many literary sources on community participation in tourism. Other related literature from the international perspective, such as Tourism Community Relationship by Pearce & others, as well as those based on a national or local perspective, have contributed to the theoretical framework adopted for this research study. Most of the relevant literary sources have expressed the need for community involvement and participation in various tourism activities. The returns that benefit the local communities usually rest on the mutual understanding between two parties: the community and tourism authorities or institutions. The emerging benefits would normally result in workable collaboration, which ensures that the tourism venture in an area would run smoothly.

It is therefore important that the local communities participate in all aspects of tourism development. They should be able to utilise the resources, found in the natural park, in a sustainable manner. If the utilisation is sustainable enough, then the community could even go to the extent of forging relationships that would result in the co-management of the natural resource.



as could happen in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In addition, with the experience the parties gain from working together, as well as with experts from KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife, considerable development in tourism could be achieved.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 2 dealt with the 'Theoretical framework' of the study, and attempted to give background to the concepts and principles associated with the study. The latter was achieved by highlighting some important references related to authors in the field. This chapter, chapter three, deals with the physical setting of the study. The chapter explores the physical elements of the study, as well as the history and background that has shaped the unique features of the study area.

There are common characteristics identifiable about most tourism features which attract people in the study area. For example, Mwandla (2002) points out that for both inland dwellers and those who live at the seaside there is a set of images or variations that are temptations for everyone to spend a day on the beach from time to time. This set of images may include the carefree, clear, calm, sunny days of bright blue skies. It is, however, important to note that all beaches have their own unique features that make them attractive or centres of recreation. Normally, the physical setting as well as recreation activities and facilities provided in the city and surrounding areas entice visitors.

The importance of the physical setting in this research is not only to give the overall picture of the physical build of the area, but also to familiarise the

readers with spatial elements and services that are offered in the area. It is believed that once this chapter has been read, one would be able to understand the basic reasons that prompted the researcher to undertake this research study. Since the topic of this study is putting the community at the centre of the study, it is believed that the reader would be interested to know whether it is the environment that has influenced the community to participation in its activities, or whether it is the community that is exerting an impact on the environment.

The discussion of the study area in this chapter has looked at the history behind the Khula village, the population dynamics and the socio-economic elements that play a role in shaping tourism behaviour in the study area. The aspect of community benefits perceived by the local community members in their spatial and non-spatial form are explored in this chapter. Some of the main items under discussion include the following: the physical layout; historical background of the places; settlement patterns; physiographic features; infrastructure; social services; land ownership; government and management structure; cultural and heritage features; and the various tourist destinations. The chapter has attempted to discuss every aspect of local life perceived by the community as having value for tourism development in the area.

## **3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The history of Isimangaliso Wetland Park is very intriguing. It has been suggested that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park [former Greater St. Lucia Wetland] area is Africa's oldest nature reserve as well as, that as a World Heritage Site; it is the largest estuarine system in Africa. The area comprises five ecosystems: Marine, Eastern Shores, St. Lucia Lake, Mkuze Swamps and

Western Shores, that offer a variety of outdoor recreation and wildlife experiences.

Originally Isimangaliso Wetland Park was occupied and owned by the Sokhulu and Mbuyazi clans of the Zulu nation. In the 1700s the attention of the European people began to focus on the economic and conservation importance and viability of the area. In 1897, the area was annexed to the colony of Natal and designated as game reserve. In 1989, a mining company proposed to strip-mine titanium and other metals on the along the eastern peninsula. The South African Government, after an environmental impact assessment study was undertaken, rejected the proposition [[http://www.phinda.com/Attractions/st\\_lucia.aspx](http://www.phinda.com/Attractions/st_lucia.aspx). (2008)].

Between 1935 and 2000 a variety of legislative Acts were promulgated as an attempt to protect the park as well as to secure the biodiversity and conservation of the natural qualities and attributes of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Some of these include: the Sea-Shore Act No.21 of 1935; the Water Act No.54 of 1956; the Natal Nature Conservation Ordinance No.15 of 1974, (refers to National Park, St. Lucia Game Reserve and St. Lucia Park, False Bay Park, Sodwana Bay); the Forest Act No.122 of 1984 (refers to Cape Vidal State Forest, Eastern Shores State Forest, Maphelane Nature Reserve, Nyalazi State Forest and Sodwana State Forest); the Ramsar sites of 1986: the St. Lucia System, the Tongaland turtle beaches & coral reefs (155,500 hectares); the Sea Fishery Act No.12 of 1988 (refers to St. Lucia Marine Reserve and Maputaland Marine Reserve); and Environment Conservation Act No.73 of 1989; the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act No.9 of 1997; and the

World Heritage Site status of 2000 [[http://www.eoearth.org/article/Greater StLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica](http://www.eoearth.org/article/Greater-StLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica). (2008)].

After these promulgations communities continued to live in some sections the Isimangaliso Wetland Park but were forcibly removed in the mid 1950s and 1980s after the area was declared a state forest and conservation area. The people who were removed from their original places were transported to Mpukunyoni. They, however, came back to their place of origin, Dukuduku. Dukuduku forests was declared as a conservation area, therefore they were given an alternative place, namely Khula village. Some people stubbornly remained in Dukuduku while others moved to Khula village. In 2008 the government allowed the people who remained in Dukuduku to stay there permanently.

In 1996, the government embarked on a programme of job creation for the Isimangaliso area by stimulating national and international tourism. However, after being awarded World Heritage Site status in 2000 as an area of outstanding natural value, the Isimangaliso Wetland Park was now fully protected from external threats. Notwithstanding these achievements disputed land claims, squatting in protected areas, uncontrolled fishing practices, and the spread of exotic plants, which present challenges to achieving sustainable development of the area remain problems on government and affect tourism development [[http://www.phinda.com/Attractions/st\\_lucia.aspx](http://www.phinda.com/Attractions/st_lucia.aspx). (2008)].

Interestingly, it has been argued that Isimangaliso Wetland Park is one of the last remaining areas in the world that still supports its original plant and animal populations in pristine habitats [[www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm), (2008)]. As such the area has to be protected and conserved in a sustainable manner. In this

regard, this research study also seeks to investigate the extent to which the local community is aware of the importance of ecotourism in the study area.

### **3.3 PHYSICAL LAYOUT OF THE STUDY AREA**

This chapter focuses on describing the location of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park [Formerly the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park] as well as the Khula village in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It is anticipated the map will give the reader an idea of the relative position of the study area.

#### **3.3.1 Location of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park**

Geographically, the study area is in the country of South Africa and situated at the north-eastern coast of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It is starting from the east of Mbonambi town and stretches down o the east of N2 road to the Kosi Bay until the borders of Mozambique It is situated in the Umkhanyakude district municipality. The District Municipality of Umkhanyakude is the main urban designated area, although the entire area is largely rural in character. Umkhanyakude is located between latitudes 27° and 33° south and longitudes 27° and 28° east. The main study area is at Khula village which lies near the town of St Lucia, which is east of the Mtubatuba local municipality. It is important to note, from Figure 3.1, that the town of Mtubatuba often regarded as the gateway to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park [formerly known as the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park before November 2007]. It is characterised by unique locational features, which are described later in this section [Refer to Figure 3.2].



# The Kingdom of the Zulu

**THE KINGDOM OF THE ZULU**

**MPUMALANGA**  
VOLKSRUST  
Paulpietersburg  
Utrecht  
Louwsburg  
Pongola  
ITALA GAME RESERVE  
Jozini  
Mkuzi  
Mkuzi GAME RESERVE  
SODIWAH BAY NATIONAL PARK  
WREATER ST LUCIA WETLAND PARK  
LAKES ST LUCIA  
Hushlwwe  
Cape Vidal  
St Lucia  
ST LUCIA ESTUARY  
Mtubatuba

**SWAZILAND**  
GILEA BORDERPOST  
MAPUTLAND  
TEMBE ELEPHANT PARK  
MAPUTLAND MARINE RESERVE  
Lake Sibaya

**MOZAMBIQUEKosi Bay  
MAPUTLAND MARINE RESERVE  
Lake Sibaya**

**FREE STATE**  
TO JOHANNESBURG  
N  
W  
E  
S  
HARRISMITH  
ROYAL NATAL NATIONAL PARK  
Bergville  
Winterton  
Cathedral Peak  
Champagne Castle  
LESOTHO  
Giant's Castle  
UKHahlamba DRakensberg Park WORLD HERITAGE SITE

**NEWCASTLE**  
Kingsley  
Dannhauser  
DUNDEE  
Wasbank  
Nqutu  
Mahlabathini  
ULUNDI  
Babanango  
Pomeroy  
Meimoth  
EMPANGENI  
Eshowe  
Richards Bay  
Mtunzini  
Gingindlovu

**BATTLEFIELDS**  
LADYSMITH  
Colenso  
Weenen  
GREYTOWN  
MOOI RIVER  
STANGER  
Zinkwazi Beach  
Blythedale Beach  
Ballito  
Tongaat Beach  
Umdloti  
UMHLANGA  
DURBAN  
AMANZIMTOTI  
Illovo Beach  
Umkomaas  
Scottburgh  
Park Rynie  
Port Shepstone  
Uvongo  
Margate  
Ramsgate  
Port Edward

**ESTCOURT**  
Rosetta  
MIDLANDS  
HOWICK  
TONGAAT  
VERULAM  
KwaMashu  
DURBAN  
PINETOWN  
Richmond  
Ixopo  
Franklin  
Harding  
KOKSTAD

**DRAKENSBERG**  
Sani Pass  
Drakensberg Gardens  
Pietermaritzburg  
Himeville  
Boston  
Bulwer  
Underberg  
Swartberg  
Metsabele  
Cederville

**EAST GRIQUALAND**  
SOUTH COAST  
Ifafa Beach  
Hibberdene  
Sunwich Port  
Southport

**INDIAN OCEAN**  
AFRICA  
SOUTH AFRICA  
KZN

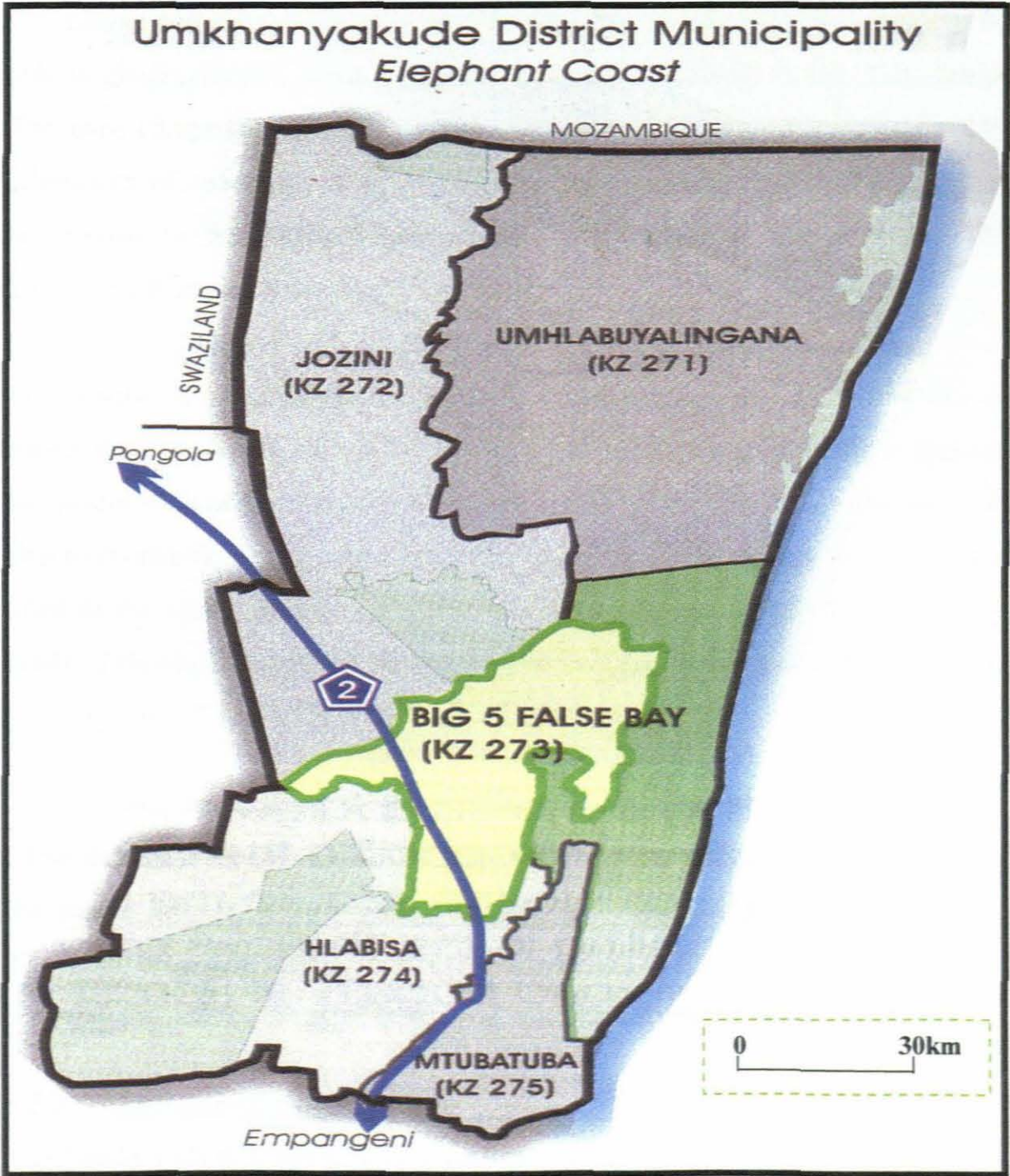
**KEY:**  
National Road (Freeway)  
Major Provincial Route  
Rivers  
WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Only major roads are shown. For minor roads, please consult a detailed road map.

62



**FIGURE 3.2      ABSOLUTE LOCATION OF UMKHANYAKUDE**



[Source: Umkhanyakude District Municipality (UDM), 2004]



The location of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park can be described in terms of its relative location [situation] and its absolute location [site]. The description of the relative and absolute location of the study area would assist the reader to be able to geographically locate where the study area is placed in KwaZulu-Natal. The park comprises 328 000 hectares and stretches along approximately 280 kilometres of coastline. It starts south of the St. Lucia Estuary and stretches northwards to the Mozambique border. Isimangaliso Wetland Park is 27 kilometres from the town of Mtubatuba.

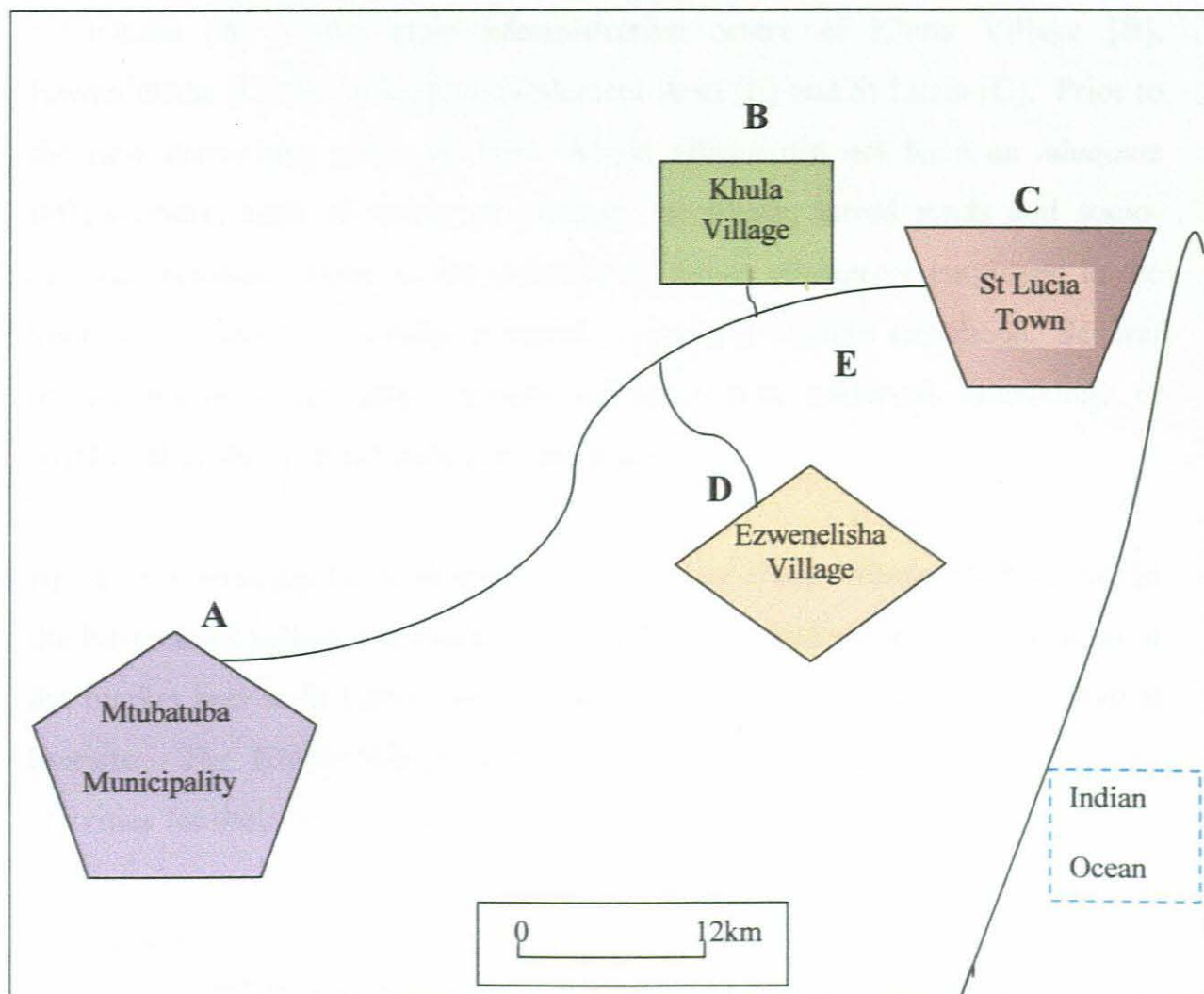
The entire Umkhanyakude District Municipality could be visualised as consisting of two geographical sections. On the one hand, the northern section, has places such as Umhlabuyalingana and Jozini. The northern section which is characteristically a flat low-level area away from the ridges evident more towards the south, hence it is called ‘Umhlabuyalingana’ (homogeneously flat land). This area contains the northern sections of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park [See Figures 3.1 and 3.2]

On the other hand, the southern section contains areas such as The Big-Five False Bay, Hlabisa and Mtubatuba, and portions of the St Lucia Estuary which is the central feature of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, the World Heritage Site. The study area falls mainly within the jurisdiction of the most southern section, covering the mainly the Mtubatuba local municipality [see Figure 3.2 and 3.3].

### **3.3.2 Location of Khula Village**

The Khula Village (Figure 3.3) is a township located about 10 kilometres west of town of St Lucia, falling within the jurisdiction of the Mtubatuba local municipality and the larger Umkhanyakude District Municipality. The main

**FIGURE 3.3** RELATIVE LOCATION OF KHULA VILLAGE TO  
MTUBATUBA MUNICIPALITY



village is, therefore, located approximately 12 kilometres from the southern section of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The residents of Khula village are part and parcel of the physical environment and tourism facilities and activities to be found in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park [See: Figure 3.3 & Appendix-C].

Khula village [B] is a 'township' predominantly occupied by rural communities directly linked with the people who were removed from parts of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. Khula village has approximately 3600 inhabitants

and is semi-rural. The spatial distribution of these semi-rural households ranges from 50 metres to about 100 metres. Shown in Figure 3.3, the Town of Mtubatuba [A] is the main administrative centre of Khula Village [B], Ezwen'elisha [D] the Dukuduku Settlement Area [E] and St Lucia [C]. Prior to the new democratic order of 1994, Khula village did not have an adequate infrastructure, such as water reticulation, electricity, tarred roads and socio-cultural facilities. Some of the residents of Khula village are employed in the town of St Lucia [C], working in homes, restaurants, lodges and shops. Several of the residents are either owners of small time craftwork (hawking) or employed by the well-off sector of this region.

Apart from working for businesses in town, some Khula village residents are in the business of selling craftwork on the side of the road going to St Lucia, or at the market area at St Lucia, which is patronised by domestic and international tourists. The Khula village community is therefore dependent on tourism activities for their household income [Appendix-C].

It is important to note that Dukuduku [E] is an outlying rural area that is located some 15 to 20 kilometres south of St Lucia Town [C]. The Dukuduku area is a beautiful subtropical area, well-endowed with wild indigenous trees as well as fruit trees (mango, paw-paw, avocado, granadilla and banana). It is also rich in sugar cane, which is not exploited on a large scale. During the formative stage of this research investigation, it was discovered that about three of the designated subject communities were seriously affected by ill-health due to the prevalence of common and contagious diseases. The health information including statistics is available at the local clinic at Khula village.

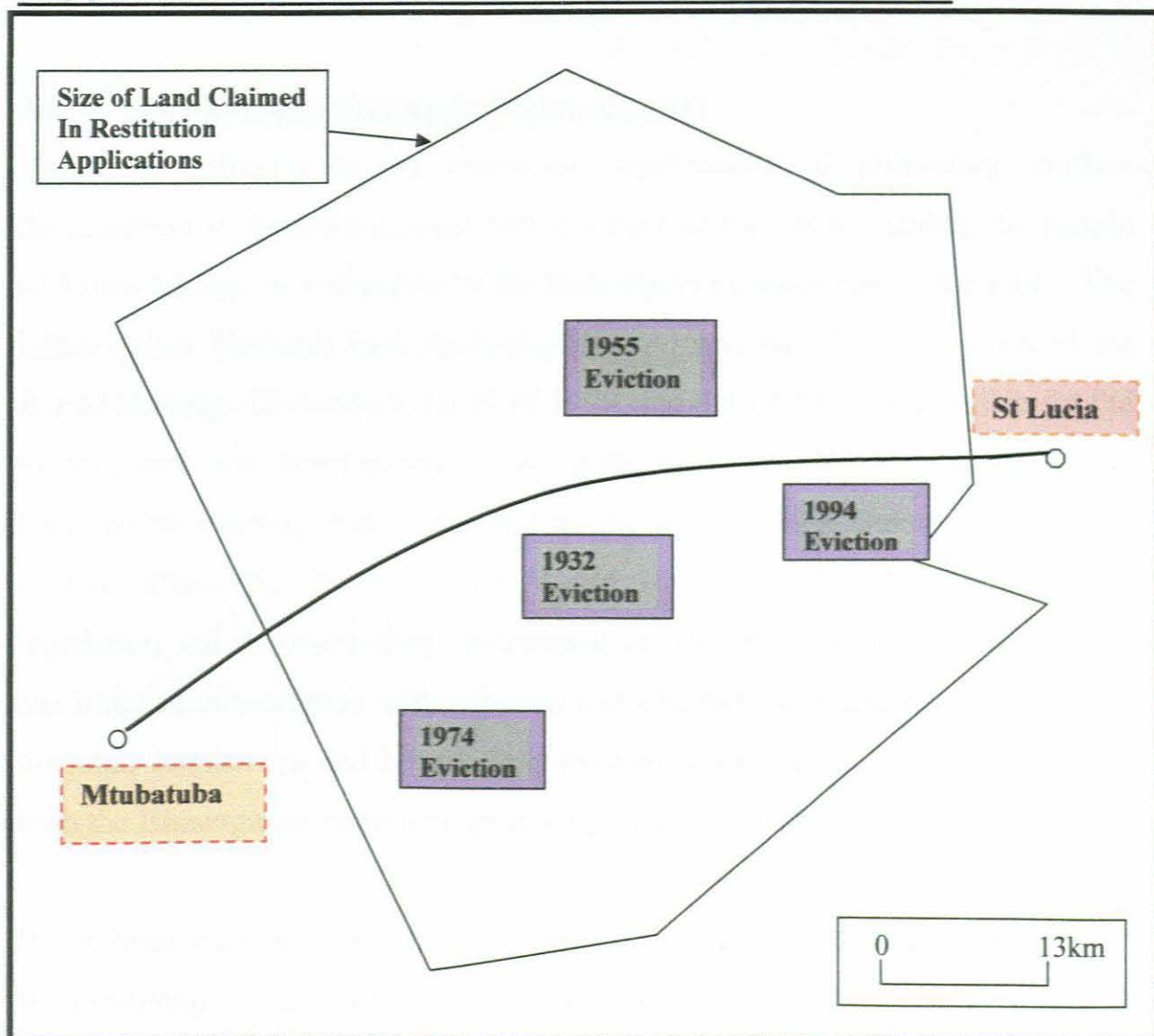
### **3.4 SETTLEMENTS AND EVICTIONS IN ST LUCIA AREA**

So far the locations of both the Isimangaliso Wetland Park and the Khula Village environment have been described. The reason for considering settlements and evictions in this section is because these processes have influenced the local communities in determining their participation in tourism activities within the study area. Furthermore these processes have impacted on the running of the park. The settlement and eviction dichotomy also facilitates the investigation of some of the objectives of the study, which include: (a) the establishment of the extent to which the local communities are aware of the importance of ecotourism in the area; (b) the exploration of whether the communities are given a platform to express their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park; and (c) the investigation of whether there are any tourism development initiatives or practices that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authorities are offering to the local community. In other words, the sustainable development of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park and its delivery of a viable tourism product or programme are dependent on the local community of Khula village responding positively to questions of tourism awareness, participation, preferences, practices and community benefits.

Settlement of the community in the context of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, and as investigated in this study, means that the Khula village community should be willing to support the tourism programmes of the park. The Khula village people might have be willing forget the land claims, the invasion of conservation lands and co-operate with responsible tourism programmes taking place in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

Since the history of eviction from the conservation lands is seen by the Khula Village communities as basis for complaining and seeking to claim back the land from which they were evicted, it is necessary that an agreement must be reached between the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park Authority and the Khula Village community. According to the Association for Rural Development [AFRA, 2002] the eviction history can be seen as reflected in Figure 3.4.

**FIGURE 3.4: EVICTION HISTORY FROM 1932 TO 1994**



[Source: (AFRA, 2008): Online: <http://www.afra.co.za/upload/files/AP16a.pdf>].

In 1932 eviction was from settlement areas to grazing to make way for tree planting by the government. In 1955 again eviction reasons were for tree planting by the government. In both these occasions no resistance was offered by the local community. In 1974, the eviction of people living in Dukuduku forest was to establish a plantation. Finally, in 1994 the army forcefully moved people from Dukuduku to Khula Village. The reason behind the eviction was to establish a conservation area since government had realised that the area had potential for such scheme.

#### **3.4.1 Isimangaliso Wetlands Park Authority**

The park authority is an important organization in promoting tourism development in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park as well as persuading the people of Khula Village to co-operate in the sustainable management of the park. The Isimangaliso Wetlands Park Authority [IWPA] was established in terms of the *World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999*, and the IWPA is responsible for the management and development of the potential of the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park World Heritage Site. In terms of the proclamation Dukuduku Forest is located within the extent of this World Heritage Site. According to the legislation and its own policy documentation, the IWPA is responsible for and has initiated consultation with adjacent and affected communities regarding the potential for tourism and economic empowerment opportunities in conjunction with the Isimangaliso communities and those of the Dukuduku Forest.

It has been suggested that the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park Authority has met with challenges, regarding the consultation initiatives with the people of Khula Village. The IWPA's analysis of the economic opportunities of the agricultural and craft products, which they have developed are that there is limited scope for

residents of Khula village. The Khula village community has reported harassment and denial of access to resources and markets in the park area.

Given the location of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, the environmental context and the availability of resources, there is attainable potential of the Khula residents to realise their economic and social objectives. Similarly, there exists real potential for co-operative initiatives between the Khula Village residents and the IWPA in the development of ecotourism and other economic joint ventures, in accordance with the intentions of the Mtubatuba Integrated Development Project and the community empowerment programmes of the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park.

### **3.5 PHYSIOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE**

The Isimangaliso Wetlands Park environment is characterised by a variety of physical attributes which give the park a unique character. These unique physiographic characteristics enabled the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park to achieve World Heritage Site status. The attributes of the physical environment of the park are discussed under the following headings: topography, hydrology and general climate.

#### **3.5.1 Topography**

The topography of the Isimangaliso Wetlands Park is dominated by the undulating dunes of the KwaZulu-Natal coastal landscape, consisting of huge waterways and coastal forests. It comprises tall-vegetated coastal dunes, which are regarded as the tallest in the world. The geomorphology of the area relatively flat and of typically weathered sandstone in dune-formation, delineate

towards the north to floodplains. The altitude in the area ranges from 10-170 metres above sea level at the town of St Lucia. The highest point in the entire Isimangaliso Wetlands Park is on average just above 172 metres above the sea level. Typically, Isimangaliso Wetland Park is full of wetlands that are adjacent to Dukuduku indigenous forest. There are also grass and wetland reeds, therefore these form a natural habitat for hippos which are abundant in the area [<http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm>.(2008)].

The geology within the study area comprises cretaceous sedimentary rocks of the St. Lucia formation. Sedimentary rock of the St. Lucia formation is known for its richness in fossil remains. Dukuduku Forest is a mixed, subtropical climax community. Some of the subtropical plants species removed from clearings are endemic to Dukuduku Forest, as a result they have become extinct, consequently resulting in the forest's potential as tourist resource being badly damaged [<http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica>.(2008)].

### **3.5.2 Hydrology**

The hydrologic system of Isimangaliso Wetland Park is dominated by three types of coastal water systems, which have formed behind the coastal dunes, these are the estuarine (Lake St. Lucia and Lake Kosi), the freshwater (Lake Sibaya, Lake Bhangazi North, Lake Bhangazi South, Lake Mgobezeleni); and the St Lucia river system (the Mkuze, Mzizene, Hluhluwe, Nyalazi and Mpate). Lake Sibaya is the largest freshwater lake in South Africa and helps to sustain a variety of aquatic species and animals.



The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is washed by a system of five rivers, most of their catchments lying outside the boundaries of the Park. North to south these are the Mkuze, Mzizene, Hluhluwe, Nyalazi and Mpate. The Mfolozi and Msunduze rivers in the south enter the sea together close to the mouth of Lake St. Lucia. These rivers are seasonal, flowing during the wet summer months and reduced to isolated pools and seepage through bed sediments in winter. All these rivers are responsible for the moderately dense vegetation cover of the wetland. In many places the waterways are shaded by forest and shrub vegetation [KZN-NCS, 1999; [[\(http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica\)](http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica).(2008)].

### **3.5.3 General climate**

The climatic conditions of the study area are important in determining whether climate as a factor has any influence on the tourism activities within the study area. The influence would occur because climatic conditions impose one of the most unyielding constraints, where outdoor activities are concerned. The rhythms of the seasons affect both the hours of daylight and the extent to which temperatures are conducive to participant comfort in the outdoors (Patmore, 1983).

Since the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is located on the east coast of South Africa, it is under the influence of the warm Mozambique current which causes climatic variations which are characterised by hot summers and moderate winters. The mean daily maximum temperatures around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park are 26°C in January and 21°C in July. Mean daily minimum is 19°C in January and 9°C in July, with extremes falling to 8°C and 3°C respectively. Direct light or shade is one of the main factors determining growth

on the forest floor. The climatic conditions in this area make it more attractive in summer than in winter months. The attraction is mainly due to the vegetation which offers a scenic view and game is found in abundance in summer as compared to winter months when most animals hibernate [KZN-NCS, 1999; [http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.South Africa](http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica), 2008].

The Isimangaliso Wetland Park lies between tropical and subtropical zones with warm, moist summers and mild dry winters. The mean annual rainfall in the study area is about 1250 millimetres (mm) and the rainy season falls between November and March. At the coast it varies from 1200 to 1300 millimetres (mm) per annum with 60% of the rain falling in summer. Evaporation rates are high and there is occasional large-scale flooding [[http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.South Africa](http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica), (2008)].

### **3.6 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SERVICES IN THE STUDY AREA**

The socio-political standing of issues relating to the sustainable management of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park and the tourism development for the benefit of all, are important as policy directions to be followed. The meeting held with the South African government in the offices of KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Services in St Lucia in 1999, is a foundation for good outcomes [AFRA, 2008; <http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm> (2007)]. The question regarding the governance of land purchased by the government for resettlement was raised by the local *inkosi* [king]. The question was raised because the then Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry [Prof Kader Asmal] had previously mentioned that relocated people would be under the Transitional Local Council. It was later agreed that the various local tribal authorities, such as the Hlabisa Regional

Authority, Mpukunyoni Tribal Authority and Uthungulu Regional Council would play a role in the governance of the new area.

Responding to a question on how the community would benefit from the project; the Director in the Department of Water Affairs mentioned the following [<http://www.mtuba4u.co.za/galleries/default.htm>. (2008)]:

- The community will have 100% share ownership of all proceeds generated by sugar cane from the two purchased farms.
- The community and Government will jointly manage the forest as per provision of the new Forest Act.
- Profits generated from the forest will be split evenly with Government taking 50% and the community the other 50%.
- Government's share will be used for the maintenance of any profits generating activity whilst the community's share would be used by the community for its own benefit.
- All job opportunities that arise in the forest will be given to the community and the community will continue to have access to the forest.
- Responding to a question on how to ensure maximum tourist attraction to Dukuduku, Dr Mjwara, the then Director in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry said the issue of Dukuduku was attracting a lot of attention in the international arena and once settled, Dukuduku would become a major tourist destination.

The community benefits listed above are important to stimulate participation in sustainable tourism development in the study area. Also associated with such

political annunciations are setting up social systems, which would be good for tourism development. Some of the topics worth discussing in this section include: education, agriculture, infrastructure and visitor facilities in the area. The aim of discussing these topics is to bring into focus the spatial elements of education and other aspects, so as to contribute to tourism development. Understandably, the development of the area plays an important role in the participation of the community in tourism activities.

### **3.6.1 Education**

The Mtubatuba local municipality, the town of St Lucia and more specifically the Khula village have an insufficient number of education and training institutions that offer general education. These areas do not have tertiary institutions, but a few secondary schools. For example, in Khula Village there are only three (3) schools, two of them are primary schools and one is a high school. There are also two crèches and one of them is funded by the KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife.

The scarcity of schools therefore suggests that there would be fewer young people being educated to take up positions in tourism, conservation and entrepreneurship. This therefore does not augur well for the tourism industry in the study area.

### **3.6.2 Agriculture**

As intimated earlier in this chapter the soil in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park and Khula Village is relatively fertile and it could maintain planting a commercial crop as well as a vegetable garden. Notwithstanding, this benefit, the people of Khula Village are not enthusiastic or proficient vegetable growers. There are

two vegetable gardens and an orchard at Khula Village. Poultry is also kept, bee-farming and indigenous tree-planting projects operate. All these projects are facilitated by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture, SiyaQhubeka Forests (Pty) Ltd and Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority.

### **3.6.3 Infrastructure**

On the whole, existing infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, health facilities, transportation and water reticulation, around the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is found in the developed municipal areas. There is only one main road which is tarred from Mtubatuba to St. Lucia town that goes through between Khula village and Ezwen'elisha village. There are also access gravel roads that go through Khula village. There is no health clinic at Khula village; instead there is a mobile clinic that comes on certain days of the week from Mtubatuba. The mobile clinic uses an old building in the area. However the clinic are servicing properly because they are able to keep all the files of the patients as well as the statistic information for the area.

The Khula Village does not have adequate recreation and tourism facilities for its inhabitants, let alone for tourists. What was observed is that there were a few informal soccer grounds that are very small in size when compared to ordinary official-size soccer grounds. There are no official soccer grounds and most of the existing grounds are soil-covered, none have a lawn or grass finish. Soccer is the most popular sport, yet it is poorly provided for. It seems out of the question to have other sports facilities such basketball and tennis courts, swimming pools and community halls [AFRA, 2008; <http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm>. (2007)]

### **3.6.4 Visitor Facilities**

Approximately one million visitors enter the Isimangaliso Wetland Park each year from nine entrance points. The Park can accommodate approximately 5,736 persons per night in chalets and camping facilities. About 2000 additional beds are provided privately in the town of St. Lucia, mainly by guesthouses, and bread and breakfast accommodation owners. There is also one privately owned game-ranch next to the park. At Khula Village there are very few privately owned accommodation facilities.

Visitor access to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is controlled and managed by the KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife or through concessions. Recreation access is via wilderness trails, guided walks, vehicle and boat tours and a network of roads for viewing game. There is also a crocodile breeding centre at St. Lucia which is the main interpretive centre for the region [AFRA,2008; [http:// www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm). (2007)].

### **3.7 GOVERNMENT'S BROADER INITIATIVE**

Management of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is vested in the provincial organization known as the Board of the KwaZulu-Natal Ezemvelo Wildlife, working in collaboration with the provincial administration in accordance with national and provincial legislation. There is potential for future trans-frontier development with Mozambique and the establishment of buffer biosphere reserves to the west. Existing land uses in the region of the park consist of formal and informal agriculture and forestry, nature conservation, mining and ecotourism which are a significant industry. A strategy to provide a development framework and policy guidelines for the development of the region

in which the park is situated is being compiled by the KwaZulu-Natal provincial authorities. The KwaZulu-Natal provincial government, with the governments of Mozambique and Swaziland, is also undertaking a multi-stakeholder planning initiative for the Richards Bay-Maputo corridor area (the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative) to protect catchments and promote further agriculture and tourism in the area. There are threats from infestation by alien plants and to the hydrology of the wetland systems. To counter them three programmes have been started: the removal of exotic tree plantations, the removal of alien plant infestations from important water-producing catchment areas (part of a nationally funded programme), and the re-establishment of the natural hydrological regime by the allocation of water for Lake St. Lucia <http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica>. (2008).

The Khula Village leadership's participation in the broad scheme of the government, the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative is important for the country. The fact that the Khula village are semi-rural and under traditional leaders, namely, Induna Mkhwanazi, is important for the participation of traditional leadership in broader tourism initiatives in South Africa. In addition, Khula village has the benefit of the local municipality councillor who looks after the interests of the area, focusing on development issues. The municipality councillor has less authority than the Induna. It is important to note that the Khula village authority is part of a tripartite alliance, made up of councillors from Khula village, Ezwen'elisha and Bhangazi Village. The forum focuses on the development issues of the three areas. The development activities in the tripartite alliance is facilitated by Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility therefore the development initiatives are more related to conservation and tourism.

### **3.8 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY AREA**

Since KwaZulu-Natal does not have extensive mineral resources, it depends on mainly on tourism as the leading economic activity that has substantially boosted the gross domestic product of the province. The Durban Metropolitan Area, Richards Bay municipality and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park have some of the busiest tourist activities in the country. The coastal position of these areas, leads to more visits from domestic and international tourists. With the coastal areas being overwhelmed by up-country visitors, there is a tendency to advocate for more international tourists visiting places such as the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

#### **3.8.1 Accommodation**

The provision of accommodation for tourists is one of the leading activities that bring most of the revenue for the people of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The park authorities are the leading accommodation providers followed by the business sector, and then the private individuals. It has been indicated that the community members at Khula Village have different types of accommodation for the tourists visiting Isimangaliso Wetland Park. There are also Zulu cultural huts that accommodate tourists and some modern houses that can accommodate visiting people. More than housing tourists, Khula Village house workers from faraway places who are visiting on a temporary basis, until their work programme in the area has been completed. Accommodation is becoming one of the ways in which Khula village people to get money into the area.

#### **3.8.2 International market**

In order for the Isimangaliso Wetland Park to gain its much needed revenue to be economically viable, it has to depend on international tourists visiting the



natural area. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority (KZNTA, 2000b) the international source markets for the coastal area of KwaZulu-Natal and Durban consist of the following places: United Kingdom; Germany; United States of America; France and Netherlands. The international tourists prefer visiting the Isimangaliso Wetland Park to experience attractions such as the estuary, dune-forests, game, aquatic animals, birds, and participating in a variety of water-based recreation activities. The latter information suggests that part of the active touristic recreation patterns are to be found in the the Isimangaliso Wetland Park environment. In view of the international market's preference for coastal areas, we summarise that the study area plays a vital role in promoting the tourism industry. Therefore it becomes necessary to investigate whether these facilities and visitors to the study area have an impact on the sustainable development of the tourism resources.

### **3.8.3 Empowerment initiatives**

The physical presence of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park in the area where it is represents an opportunity for an empowerment initiative for all the local people who were dispossessed of their land. The benefits of tourism development, such as earnings from tourism products, can be regarded as the means of rewarding the local tourism stakeholders for a long time to come. Some of the spin-offs that would accrue from tourism within the Isimangaliso Wetland Park include encouraging young entrepreneurs from Khala village to become part of the future business sector of the area. Some of the tourism business activities would be in the following sectors accommodation, transport, cultural activities and craftwork. The Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and KwaZulu Natal Ezemvelo Wild Life are helping those community institutions through financing and capacitating them respectively.

### **3.9 CULTURAL AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY AREA**

Cultural and heritage activities are becoming an important tourist attraction. Fundamentally, the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is heavily reliant on big to small game, flora, water-sport, birdlife and the fact that it is a heritage site, to attract both domestic and international tourists. Isimangaliso Wetland Park was declared as South Africa's first World Heritage Site through the UNESCO protocol. This protocol established the park as the most ecologically and historically diverse park in Southern Africa, that is home to many natural features. As mentioned earlier the park has five ecosystems, situated on the southern extension of the African coastline. The park has hundreds of fish species, turtles and dolphins, and a large migratory population of whales in winter. It is estimated that there are more than 1300 hippo found in the area and over 2000 crocodiles [AFRA, 2008; [http:// www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm). (2007)].

#### **3.9.1 The cultural heritage attribute**

The Isimangaliso Wetland Park is known world-wide for its World Heritage Site status. It is this status and the attribute that is responsible for many tourists visiting the area. It has been argued that human heritage at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park dates back to the Late Stone Age, where ancient cultures may have inhabited the Maputaland and the Isimangaliso area. The Maputaland plain is known to include the area of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, which was widely settled by agriculturists in the early and late Iron Ages (250-1840 AD) [<http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark>. (2008)].

Small scattered settlements of the Sokhulu people existed between Sodwana and the St. Lucia estuary, evidenced by several traditional burial sites. These people associated with the Khula village people and may have smelted bog iron, felling trees to produce charcoal for their smelters. Another heritage attribute is linked to the Portuguese, who named the place St Lucia. The Portuguese nonetheless, did not settle the area. It was during the time of the Natal colony when the wildlife sanctuary was established in 1895. The Mkusi Game Reserve and Isimangaliso Wetland Park are regarded as the oldest game reserves in Africa.

### **3.9.2      Cultural activities in the study area**

It is noteworthy that a number of tourism activities are located in and around the tribal areas and Khula village. These include arts and craft making, historical/cultural activities, cultural events and guest entertainment. Historical and cultural sites have not been identified or recorded. The game and nature reserve activities have taken more attention than any other recreation or tourism activities. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority, approximately 25% of all foreign tourists who visit the province visit the Zulu cultural villages north of the Tugela River. International tourists visiting the Khula village area have shown interest in cultural activities like *Indlamu* (Zulu dance), *Isicathamiya* (Traditional group singing) and others. The community members have organised themselves into groups that perform cultural entertainment in different areas of the village, so as to get money.

In the area of Khula village that is characterised by poverty the money that is brought in by cultural activities performances, craftworks, and isicathamiya has not gone unnoticed by the community. The income generated by these activities

has influenced them to change their thinking positively towards them. At the local schools the environmental education, cultural activities and craftwork have been added to their curriculum. These developments are helping the local youth at an early stage to position themselves since tourism is becoming the popular industry in the area.

**FIGURE 3.5 ZULU CULTURAL DANCE AT THE KHULA VILLAGE**

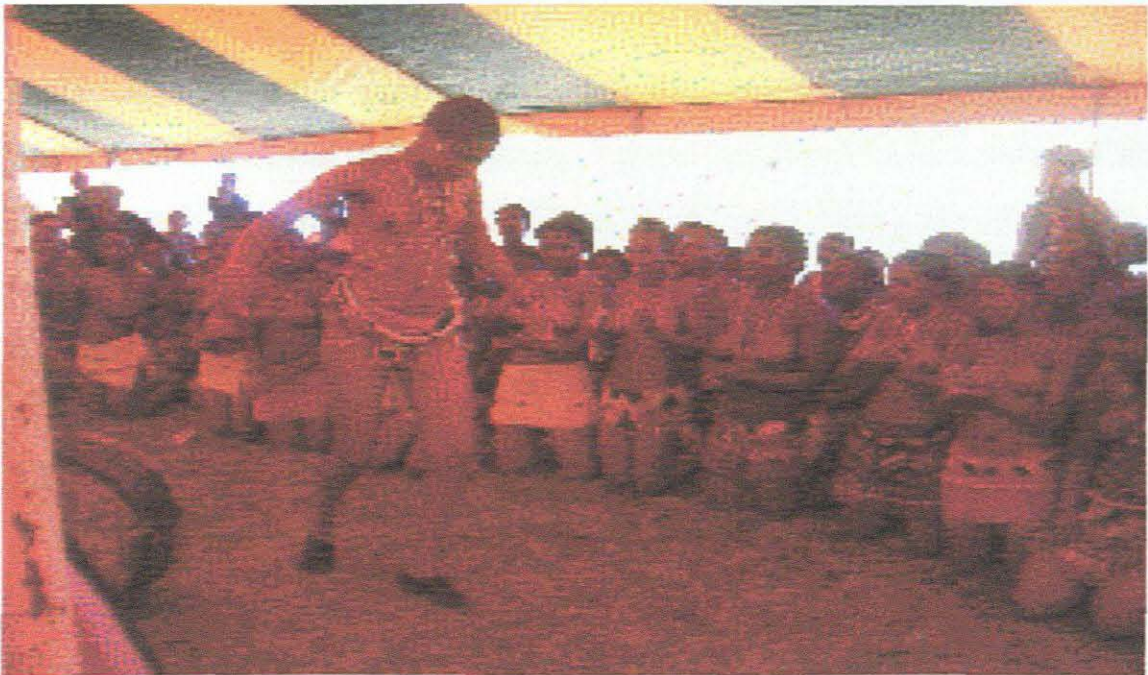


Figure 3.1 shows a group of girls performing a cultural dance during the Cultural Day celebrations at Khula Village. It is on such occasions that new unknown dance groups are seen by tourism service providers and invited to perform during the Isimangaliso Wetland Park programmes. The advantages of these activities are that they add to the conservation of the cultural heritage of local communities, as well as providing an opportunity to get financial benefit. The activities also help reinforce a sense of pride among the residents about their culture, particularly when they are showered with praise from the tourists.

### **3.9.3     Craft work**

The people of Khula Village are very skilful in craft making. The tourists visiting the area are also very impressed and are prepared to buy the crafts and artefacts. It is from this perspective that the local people are producing craftwork that impresses the tourists and at the same affects some of the endangered trees, animals and plants.

It is clear that the professional support and training facilitated by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authorities, has helped empower the people of Khula Village and its surroundings in the field of art. There are also local arts organisations and cultural institutions that take samples of the local artwork to bigger markets outside the area.

### **3.10     FUTURE OF ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK**

The future of Isimangaliso Wetland Park depends to a large extent on the effective management of the reserve and how they cement their relationship with the Khula village community. The neighbouring communities have the potential to hinder progress in development of this relationship by either *harassing the tourists or destroying their resources*. *The resources is referring to* tourists attractions that may be of natural or man made resources The future of the park is dependent on the perceptions the local communities have of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. It is important for the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to ensure that their relationship with local community is managed properly for the sustainable tourism in the area.

### **3.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the physical setting of the area was presented. The chapter has attempted to give a global view of the physical facilities and activities related to tourism, that play a role in showcasing the Isimangaliso Wetland Park and the Khula village. In the presentation, the location of the study area relative to KwaZulu-Natal was given. In addition, the history, settlement patterns, physiographic, social, political, economic and cultural attributes of the park was described.

The information given in this chapter has laid the foundation for the next activity of the researcher, that is, to embark on data analysis and interpretation. It is also worth mentioning that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park as the study area of inquiry has the potential to enhance tourism development, not only through nature conservation, but also through cultural tourism. This process would thus empower the local communities economically and socially. It is also important to note that Isimangaliso Wetland Park is being eyed for the trans-frontier project development, which will make the park achieve even more sustainable for development.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

It has been argued that the analysis of data can be achieved through the process of description, explanation and prediction, all these depending on measures used for analysis and the related statistical measure employed (Magi, 2005). It is nonetheless important to indicate that the analysis of data does not in itself provide answers to research questions, but interpretation of data goes a long way towards providing a clearer picture. "Essentially, interpretation converts the results of analysis and makes inferences about the various sections of the research design" (Magi, 2005: 125). As such, this chapter contains the ordering and summarising of data so as to get answers to the research questions.

Fundamentally, this chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected during the survey phase. This is presented by means of statements, tables, graphs and diagrams of various forms. Furthermore, the data presentation is based on demographic information, emerging relationships between Isimangaliso Wetland Park and local communities, reflecting on their awareness, preferences and participation with regard to management practices at the Park. This analytical process is expected to help this study fulfil its intended objectives. It is therefore imperative in this section to give an outline on what will guide both the analysis and interpretation

of data. In analysing the data, as was mentioned in chapter one, the utilisation of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was solicited to achieve the above mentioned outcomes. The interpretation of data in this chapter has been largely guided by both the objectives and hypotheses of the study. As such, it is important to once more reiterate these research measures.

## **4.2 RESTATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES**

The reason behind restating the objectives and hypotheses is that both these research methods are central to the solution of the research question in this study. This means that any tourism issue discussed, especially in subsequent sections, is handled with the intention of finding answers to the fundamental research questions. The objectives and hypotheses are important in driving the research process and coming out with research findings. These hypotheses will either be approved or disapproved in the final analysis.

**Objective 1:** To reveal the extent to which the local community is aware of the importance of tourism in the study area

**Hypothesis 1:** The majority of the local community is not aware of the importance of tourism in the study area.

**Objective 2:** To establish whether the local communities participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that bring income benefits to them.

**Hypothesis 2:** The local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would bring income to them.



- Objective 3:** To determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities.
- Hypothesis 3:** A negative relationship exists between the local communities and the park authorities.
- Objective 4:** To explore whether the communities are given a platform to express their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.
- Hypothesis 4:** Local communities are indeed given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.
- Objective 5:** To investigate whether there are any tourism development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authority is offering to the local community.
- Hypothesis 5:** There seems to be adequate development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is offering to the local community.

It is anticipated that these objectives and postulated hypotheses would enable the researcher to reach reasonable and informed conclusions with regard to this study. In other words, in this chapter the objectives of the study are thoroughly interrogated in collaboration with the data collected with a view of achieving the outcomes of this research. As such, the restatement of objectives and hypotheses, seeks to facilitate the making of judgements and drawing of conclusions and recommendations using these research techniques. Now that the hypotheses and objectives of the study have been revisited, the analysis of demographic variables is now presented.

### **4.3 ANALYSIS OF BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

The collected data relating to biographic characteristics of the respondents plays an important role in reflecting the personal attributes of the people of Khula village adjacent to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. These respondents varied widely in respect of personal attributes ranging from, gender, age, marital status, level of education, employment status and levels of income. It is anticipated that the analysis of these demographic selected and socio-economic attributes and opinions would offer better understanding and awareness of the role they play in influencing the various research statements and questions. Some of questions relate to perceptions, community awareness, participation, preferences, grasp of tourism management practices and derived community benefits from tourism activities.

In this section the data is presented in the same order as it appears in the attached questionnaires (Appendix-A), which respondents were asked to complete. The section has therefore, investigated the personal background and characteristics of the respondents interviewed in the study area. The demographic variables considered include the list shown in Table 4.1. These variables were analysed in terms of absolute frequency and their frequency percentage. In some questionnaire sections were for certain respondents. For example, tourists were considered not to be relevant in the contested issues between the park authorities and the local communities. However, park authorities and officials, tourism service providers and the local community were seen as central to the demographic analysis.

**TABLE 4.1: BIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF  
RESPONDENTS [n = 122]**

<i><b>VARIABLE</b></i>	<i><b>SUB-VARIABLE</b></i>	<i><b>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</b></i>	<i><b>FREQUENCY PERCENTAGE</b></i>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	34	28%
	Female	88	72%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%
<b>Age</b>	16 – 20	18	15%
	21 – 35	57	47%
	36 – 50	37	30%
	Over 51	10	08%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	83	68%
	Married	25	21%
	Widow	08	07%
	Divorced	04	03%
	Separated	02	01%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%
<b>Level of Education</b>	Below Grade 10	35	29%
	Grade 11 – 12	67	55%
	Tertiary Level	16	13%
	Uneducated	04	03%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%
<b>Employment</b>	Self employed	22	18%
	Govt. Employee	08	07%
	Priv. Sector	30	25%
	Unemployed	42	34%
	Student	20	16%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%
<b>Monthly Income</b>	R0.00 – R500.00	60	49%
	R501 – R 1000.00	27	22%
	R1001.00 – R1 500.00	14	12%
	R.1 501.00 – R2 500.00	08	07%
	R 2001.00 – R2 500.00	02	01%
	R 2 501.00 & above	11	09%
<b>TOTAL</b>		122	100%

#### **4.3.1 Gender**

The reason behind including gender as one of the variables in the questionnaire was to determine whether males or females perceive tourism participation in the study area differently. This state of affairs could be attributed to the fact that many a time women happen to be responsible in the study area than men. Furthermore it was noted that the majority of women are single parents and they would like to be exposed to more opportunity in the study area.

On analysing the gender variable for the total sample, it was found that about 72 percent were females and 28 percent were males. Not surprisingly, females were in the majority, since females are locality bound as well as family bound, with commitments which prevent them from participating in activities outside the home. World Travel Organisation (UNWTO, 2000), however, has identified changes in gender tourism with more women being motivated to travel and participate in tourism, in order to escape from routine or the domestic environment.

The distribution of gender among the local communities revealed that about 72 percent of respondents were females. This distribution suggests that there were more females' community members who were prepared to participate in the survey. This is supported by the fact that the rural and semi-rural populations in KwaZulu-Natal are generally dominated by females. On the other hand, it may be argued that regarding the park officials, almost 5 in 6 respondents (83%) were males and 27 percent female officials. It should be remembered that tourism officials in Wildlife organisations have always been dominated by males. One of the social objectives highlighted in the Tourism White Paper

(DEAT, 1996) is that tourism should be used as a catalyst for human development, focusing on gender equality.

#### **4.3.2 Age**

The issue of age has been included in the study to determine what age group happens to influence perceptions and participation in tourism activities. The age distribution shown in Table 4.1 reveals the outcomes that there was a bias towards the young adult age groups. The young adults (21-35) were in the majority (47%) in terms of responding to the questionnaire. The middle-age group (36-50) respondents were the second largest in responses (30%), whereas less than 15 percent of the youth (16-20) and senior adults (51-80) responded to the questionnaire.

Most of the responses were drawn from the young adults ranging from 21 to 35 years because these subjects were readily available in the study area, as well as that they were the most prepared to respond to questions without much persuasion. With regard to the age structure of the local community, a large majority of the community members (47% and 30%) fell within the young adult age-group (21-35 years) and the middle-age group (21-35 years), respectively. A relatively small sector of the local community members (10%) were in the senior adult group (51-80 years). The age distribution could suggest that the local community is relatively poor as it is made up of more less-educated and fewer high-income group, community members as shall later be seen in the discussion of the socio-economic related variables.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the age variable in the study area, revealed the dominance of the older generation among the officials and particularly in the

community. The local communities, however, are dominated by the younger adults who do not have high financial resources.

#### **4.3.3 Marital status**

Marital status plays an important role in South African Black communities because it gives and also deprives powers and privileges to other partners. In a married couple situation, the man is usually in control and can do as he pleases, whereas the wife has to report to the husband for any activity she would like to undertake. It was therefore from that perspective that the marital status was included in the study, because it has some influence on the tourism participation patterns in any activities in the park.

What is shown in Table 4.1 is that the majority (68%) of the respondents were single. Respondents who indicated that they were married accounted 21 percent of responses. Less than 7 percent of the respondents were widowed, divorced or separated. It should be noted that the majority of the respondents make up the 'singles' category were boosted by the number of students who were interviewed.

#### **4.3.4 Educational level**

The education variable tends to influence the socio-economic status of the respondents in tourism as well as the participation patterns in tourism activities. According to Torkildsen (2005) the type of education, the length of education and educational attainment are closely related to upbringing, class, occupation, income and other related factors. Education is known to have a positive influence on individuals' tourism participation and organisations' management practices.

It is noticeable that from Table 4.1, the majority of the respondents (55%) indicated that they had attained an educational level that goes up to grade 12. The second largest number of respondents (29%) indicated that they had an educational standard below grade 10. Very few of the respondents (13%) indicated that they were people with tertiary education, and 3 percent had not attended school. The reason behind the fact that the majority of the respondents have had the level of education that is up to matric and below is perhaps many of the people in the area could not afford to attend tertiary institutions, mainly because of financial constraints.

#### **4.3.5 Employment**

It is generally known that one of the aspects that bring income in the communities is employment. It is therefore from this notion that the aspect of employment was brought to the study to be explored in relation to the percentage of people who are employed and those who are not. The more people are employed in any area; the better will be their quality of life because their economic standard of living would be relatively improved. In order to participate in the activities that take place in the park, visitors and communities have to pay entrance fee, therefore it stands to reason that the rate of unemployment will affect the Khula village residents, among whom this survey was done.

What is shown in Table 4.1 is that most of the respondents (34%) were unemployed. The latter concurs with the fact that unemployment figures in KwaZulu-Natal are generally high, approximately the rate 23%. [<http://www.sagoodnews.co.za/employment/unemployment>. (2008)]. Thus the Isimangaliso

area has a very high degree of unemployment. It is worth noting that about 25 percent of the respondents, who indicated that they were employed, were engaged in the private sector. Surprisingly, only 7 percent of the respondents were employed in the government sector. In many rural areas communities expecting that the government would offer employment, directly or indirectly as consultants. About 18 percent of the respondents indicated that they were self-employed, possibly in their own private enterprises or through tender-based government jobs.

#### **4.3.6 Income per month**

The subject of income was brought into the study so as to give general information about the economic and salary status of the inhabitants of Khula Village. A good income for any person suggests that there would be freedom to participate in tourism projects, activities and employment generating schemes. Lack of income, could be the reason why some people did not participate in tourism activities. For example, if the income of a community member was too low, it would make it difficult for that member to participate in the tourism activities within the study area. Even though entrance to the park was free, money is still needed for buying food, during the recreation activities.

In terms of the data collected from respondents, as shown in Table 4.1, the majority (49%) of the respondents indicated that they earned less than R500.00 per month. The second highest number of respondents (22%) revealed that they were in the R501.00 to R1000.00 per month category. These two categories (71%) of respondents and their earnings reflect that the income, and therefore quality of living, in the Khula Village environment was very underprivileged and deprived. This situation somehow justifies the expectation that Khula



community members should be given employment by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authorities. However park and government officials (9%), indicated that they earn approximately R2500.00 and above, but they are few in number and are a special case.

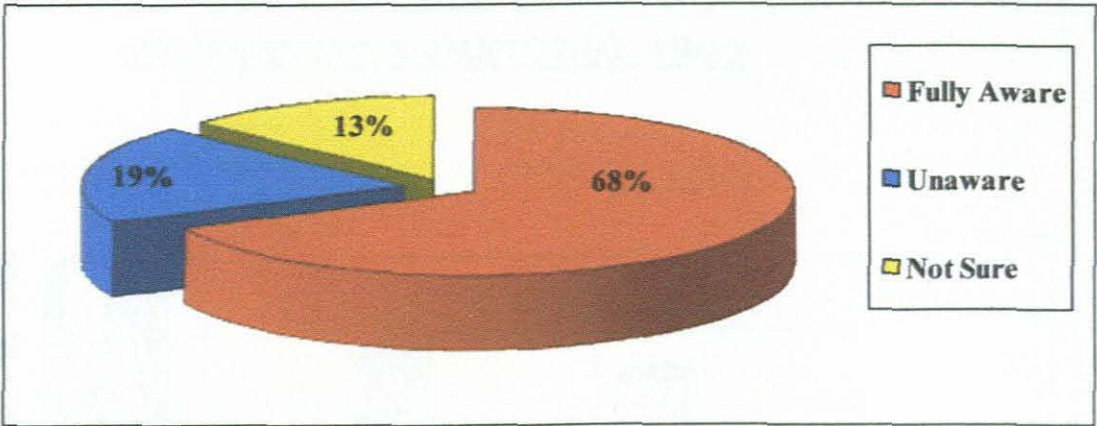
#### **4.4 COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM IN THE STUDY AREA**

The understanding and awareness of how tourism and the tourism industry works, is an important prerequisite for the improved development and promotion of tourism delivery and the tourism industry. According to McIntosh *et al*, (2002) tourism as an industry brings both economic and non-economic benefits and costs to host communities. The benefits include, provision of employment opportunities as it is a labour-intensive industry; generating a supply of needed foreign exchange; increases incomes; spreads development; improves the quality of life related to a higher level of income and improved standard of living. What is important is that even the Isimangaliso Wetland Park communities must understand the working of tourism and its benefits. As such the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authorities can play a significant role in ensuring that the local communities within their jurisdiction enjoy these benefits by engaging in tourism development and promotion.

In order that tourism should be appreciated as a beneficial human activity, it is important that it should be well understood by any community. A well understood tourism activity usually has many social and economic spin-offs. In this regard, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness about the importance of tourism in the context of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. On

the whole, Figure 4.1 shows that a significant majority of respondents [68%] indicated that they were fully aware of tourism activities and facilities in the study area. On the other hand, only 19 percent and 13 percent of the respondents indicated that they were unaware and not sure respectively.

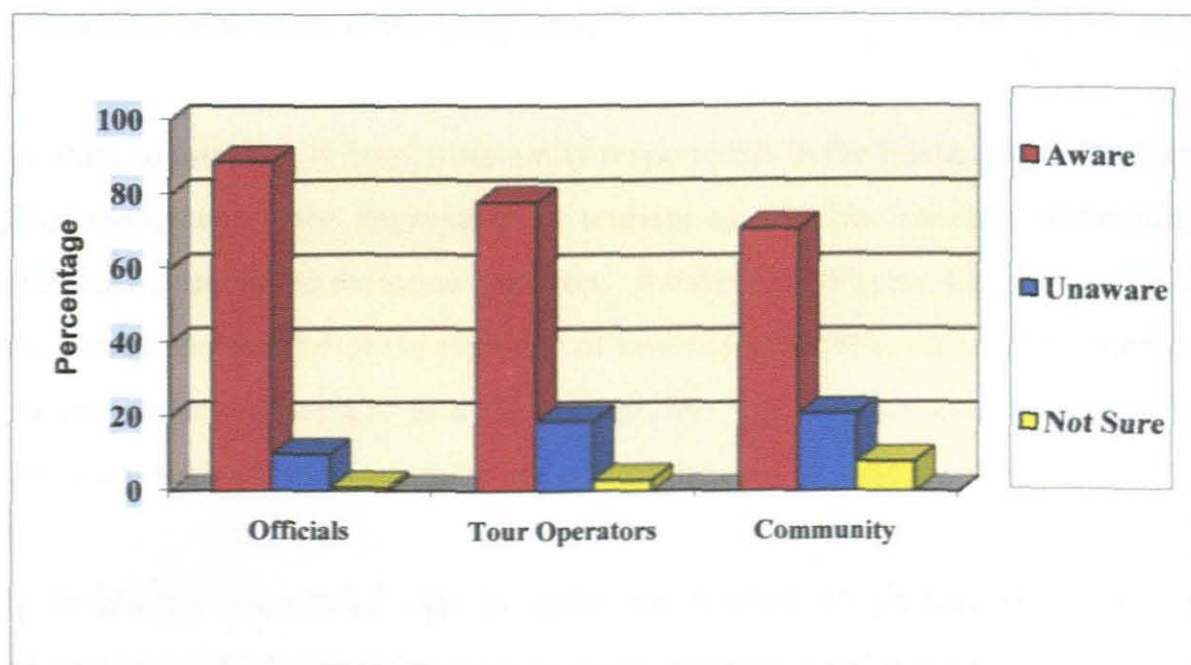
**FIGURE 4.1      THE AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF**  
**TOURISM**



A significantly large percentage of the positive response [68%] may be accounted for in that the majority of the respondents were aware that the existence of the park was on their ancestral land. On the other hand, it may be inferred that the bulk of the respondents who were unaware of the importance of tourism in the study area have been newcomers from outside the area. In view of these outcomes that the majority of community members attest to their awareness of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, it is reasonable to conclude that Hypothesis 1, which states: *That the majority of the local community is not aware of the importance of tourism in the study area*, is not supported and therefore rejected.

In order to establish the variance among the responses to tourism awareness in terms of categories of stakeholders, namely officials, tour operators and the community, the various outcomes of the analysis about tourism awareness are reflected in Figure 4.2 below. On the whole the responses reveal that the majority of surveyed respondents have a relative awareness of the importance of tourism in the study area.

**FIGURE 4.2    RESPONDENTS' AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE  
OF TOURISM IN THE STUDY AREA**



The awareness level was drawn from the sample of 32 tourists in order to get their level of tourism awareness. The results achieved [refer to Figure 4.2] were that the majority of respondents [88%] are fully aware of the importance of tourism as a human activity in the study area. Only 11 percent of the nature reserve officials were either unaware or not sure of the situation. It may

similarly be reasoned that the park officials have high levels of tourism awareness, because the nature of their jobs is to market, sell or promote tourism as an activity.

The responses emerging from interviewing tour operators indicate that the majority of them [69%] are fully aware of the importance of tourism mainly, as a business activity in the study area. Only 20 percent of the tour operators were unaware of the situation and 11 percent were not sure of the importance of tourism. Because the majority of tour operators are better educated and derive income from tourism, this may be the reason why they are fully aware of the importance of tourism in the study area.

In order to establish if local community respondents in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park are aware of the importance of tourism as a viable industry, community members were asked the same question. As shown in Figure 4.2, the results of the survey indicated that the majority of respondents [70%] were fully aware of the importance of tourism as a human activity. Only 30 percent of community members were either unaware or not sure of the situation.

It should be understood that in order for tourism to prosper then tourism awareness ought to be supported, so as to promote good tourism management and delivery. As such, tourism awareness is an important factor that plays a role in ecotourism development and other aspects of tourism such as tourism crime, safety and security. Following from the outcomes of the analyses carried out in this section, it stands to reason that Hypothesis 1, which states: *“That the majority of the local community is not aware of the importance of tourism in the study area* is not supported and therefore disapproved. The basis for this

conclusion is that the majority respondents were fully aware of the importance of tourism for purposes of strengthening the tourism industry in the study area. Yet it is another matter that there are community members that engage in illegal acts in the study area.

#### **4.5 BENEFICIAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM ACTIVITIES**

The purpose of this research study, among other things, sought to discover how the local community participated in tourism activities, with a view to benefit financially. According to Pigram (1983) participation can be defined as those activities by which members of the society share in the selection of ruling and directly or indirectly in the formation of public policy which directs their involvement in recreation and tourism activities. On the other hand, Torkildsen (2005) views participation as the core of the experience, the times of encounter with the resource and activity opportunities offered to the local community members or visitors. In other words, in this context participation may be used to determine the level of community participation and the way in which they share certain activities offered by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authorities.

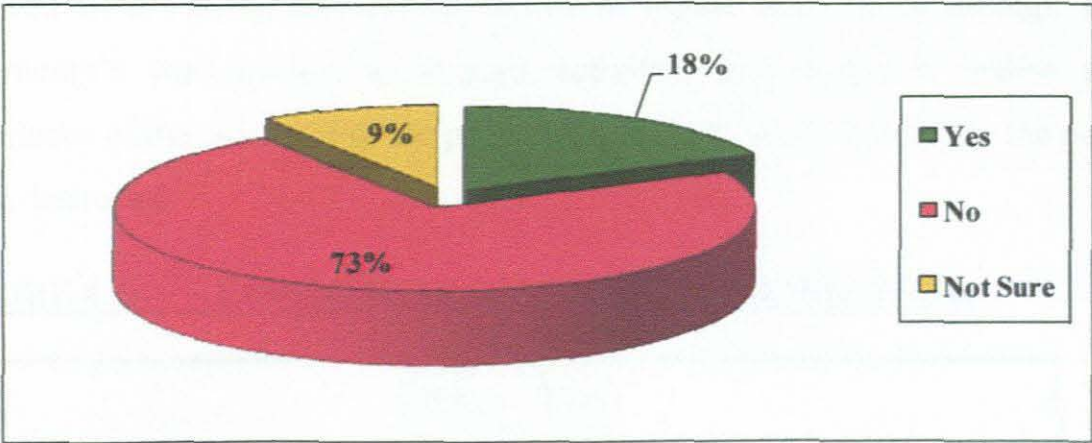
In certain communities the level of participation in sustainable ecotourism activities is very minimal. The community's participation may be solely on performing survival tourism activities or mundane tasks assigned to them by the park authorities. In the context of the study area, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of participation in activities that promote sustainable ecotourism and benefits in the study area.



**4.5.1 Increased tourism participation in the Isimangaliso Park**

Tourism participation of local communities in Isimangaliso Wetland Park tourism activities is advantageous for achieving sustainable tourism development as well as getting stakeholder by in, in park management practices.

**FIGURE 4.3 BENEFICIAL TOURISM PARTICIPATION IN THE ISIMANGALISO ENVIRONMENT [n=122]**



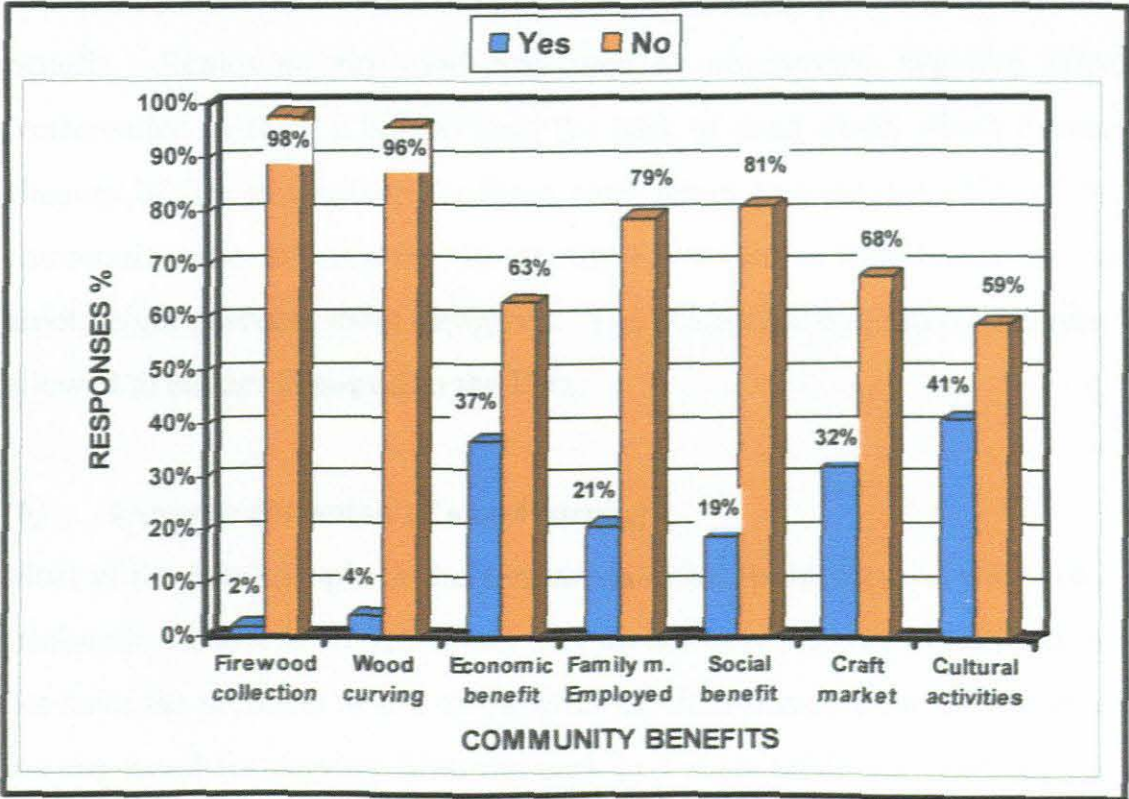
When respondents were asked to reveal their responses towards the perceived local community participation in tourism activities, the responses indicated in Figure 4.3 were identified. A majority of 73% of the respondents agreed that there was no beneficial participation in tourism activities in the study area. The main possible reason is that, on the whole, respondents do not have the capacity required because they do not have necessary skills required, owing to the relatively low level of tertiary education attained. Surprisingly, a minority of 18 percent of the respondents showed a positive response towards the beneficial participation in tourism activities in the study area. This outcome suggests that even though respondents are aware of the importance of the park, they are not happy with the tourism participation levels.

From the analysis above it may be concluded that **Hypothesis 2-** which states: *That the local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would bring benefits to them,* is supported and therefore accepted.

**4.5.2    Community participating in tourism benefits**

The crux of the objective on participation of community members in tourism beneficial activities was to determine whether the community are actually involved in a variety of benefits shown in Figure 4.4. It is through the community’s participation in tourism activities that would it realise the importance of the existence of the park and whether it would like to see the park being destroyed.

**FIGURE 4.4:    COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM THE PARK**



[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

As globally shown in Figure 4.4 below, the majority of respondents [between 59% to 98%] actually indicated that there was no significant participation in community benefiting activities from the Park. Expected benefits could come from wood collecting and carving, general economic benefits, employment, craft market, cultural activities and social benefits but these were perceived or found to be either inadequate or missing. Numerous arguments are presented to explain this situation.

***(a) Access to the collection of firewood***

The aspect of access to the collection of firewood was raised as part of the benefits the community might get if they were nearer to the park, particularly where there was firewood. It was indicated earlier that the area is affected by poverty in such a way that many cannot afford electricity. Therefore, community members could use firewood for energy purposes as an important benefit. Removing firewood was seen as not having negative effects on conservation instead, it helped clear the park of dead wood, which decrease the chances of fire in the forest. There were about two percent (2%) of sampled community who said that the community had access to firewood in the park but ninety eight percent (98%) disagreed. The position is that the community is not allowed to collect firewood in the Park.

***(b) Access to collection of wood carving***

Most of the local people in the area are talented wood carvers, who make good craftwork and artefacts. However, they do not have enough wood to carve so do not have the products to sell to the tourists. It is possible for the community to use the wood for carving from the park in a sustainable way and still have the carvings as part of a financial benefit. In response, there were about four



percent (4%) of the subjects who agreed that the community had access to the park to collect wood, and ninety six percent (96%) disagreed on this matter. The majority of the respondents indicated that the local community is not allowed to collect dead-wood for carving purposes.

***(c) Community's social and economic benefits***

The social benefits in this instance relate to any tourism related activities, for example, local people having access to the Park free of charge or during cultural festivals organised by the Park, are allowed to participate or perform cultural activities for tourists and get paid. The respondents who agreed that there were economic benefits for the local communities comprised thirty seven percent (37%) and sixty three percent (63%) disagreed. Only nineteen percent (19%) felt that the park brought on social benefit for the local community and eighty one (81%) disagreed with that. It may then be concluded that the community did not benefit socially or economically from the park.

***(d) Family members working in the Park***

The question of Khula village communities working in the park is important for many reasons already mentioned earlier; such job opportunities and employment as well as trading in craft-ware. The issue of family members working in the park was brought in as part of the benefits the community could get from the Isimangaliso Wetland Park so as to increase levels of employment. Only twenty one percent (21%) of the respondents indicated that their family members are worked in the park and seventy nine percent (79%) did not have family member working in the park. There was a general feeling that the park was adequately supporting the community with employment.

**(e) Community craft market**

The Khula Village community members believe that their area has a significant number of talented craft-makers and workers, who could benefit substantially by selling craft and artefacts to tourists if there were an organised craft market. Thirty two percent (32%) agreed that there was a community craft market at the park and sixty eight percent (68%) disagreed. It was also felt that there was no craft market to enable the local community to participate in the craft business subsidised by the park authorities.

**(f) Cultural activities**

Besides craft making, there were other different cultural skills or cultural activities in the area that have been passed from one generation to another. These are typical and only known in the area. Some of these relate to singing, dancing, story-telling and soothsaying. If local community were to be given an opportunity to showcase some of their unique cultural activities, with a view of getting some revenue, then this would be regarded as a significant financial benefit associated with the park authorities. In this regard, forty one percent (41%) agreed that the community does get an opportunity or platform to perform their cultural activities to the tourists, and fifty nine percent (59%) disagreed with this notion.

On the basis of all these community related participation benefits, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 2, which states: *That the local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would bring benefits to them*, is supported and therefore approved. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents were fully in support that there

were no significant community based participation benefits that were supported by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority.

#### **4.5.3 Community participating in tourism activities by age**

Age has been regarded as an important variable in determining levels of participation in recreation and tourism activities. It is therefore significant to categorise respondents in terms of age, so that this could help be determined whether age has an influence on the various statements in the research study. The respondents in the study area were asked to indicate if the community was adequately participating in tourism initiatives. Table 4.2 demonstrates the different understanding of the community participation in tourism activities in the study area by the different age groups.

**TABLE 4.2: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ECOTOURISM ACTIVITIES BY AGE**

<b>Responses on Participation</b>	<b>16-20</b>		<b>21-35</b>		<b>36-50</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>
Full Participation	02	02%	08	07%	07	05%	17	14%
Moderate Participation	05	04%	12	10%	11	09%	28	23%
Non-Participation	11	09%	37	30%	29	24%	77	63%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100%</b>

Accordingly, a majority of 63% of the various respondent age-groups agreed that there was non-participation in tourism activities in the study area. In other words, all the various age categories: the youth (16-20); the young adults (21-35) and the middle and senior age-groups (36-80), were all of the view that there

was non-participation in tourism activities in the study area. The next number of respondents (23%) who expressed a view that there was moderate participation in tourism activities was mainly representative of the three age-groups. It should also be noted that the young adults were the most responsive age group of all.

Considering all the analyses engaged in above, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 2, which states: *That the local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would bring benefits to them*, is supported and therefore approved. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority various age-group respondents were in support of the notion that there was non-participation in tourism activities in the study area.

In an attempt to improve the tourism participation position of youth (16-20 age-group), the authorities and government officials should consider establishing special programmes aimed at addressing the needs of the youth. In particular, address the backlogs in skills training, job creation and tourism management, such programmes must include:

- (a) The creation of summer jobs in the tourism industry to expose youths at an early age to the travel and tourism industry. This could include for example internship at hotels and restaurants, tour guides, trackers and hospitality ambassadors at airports, points of interest and tourist attractions.
- (b) Commitment on the part of the tourism industry to provide career guidance and in-service training for the youth.
- (c) Expansion of range and scope of education and training programmes and skills training opportunities.

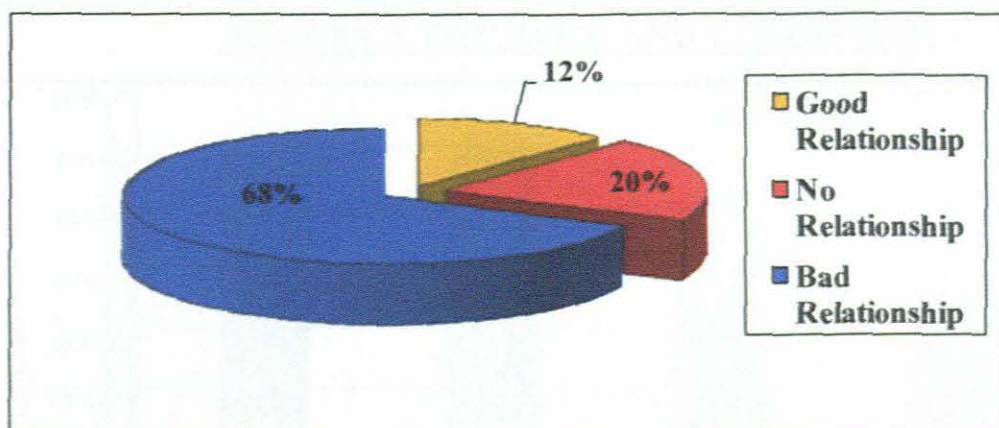
- (d) Support and promote capacity building programmes for youth involvement in the tourism industry, particularly in areas such as Isimangaliso Wetland Park.
- (e) The development of a youth travel market where young people are encouraged to travel. Special prices for the youth travel and accommodation should be encouraged as well as the development of youth hostels, summer camps and inter-provincial exchange programmes.

#### **4.6 PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE PARK**

One of the objectives of this research inquiry was to determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities. In other words, this is to explore the relationship between Isimangaliso Park and the Khula Village community with regard to sharing tourism activities. This objective is the cornerstone of the co-operation envisaged between the two tourism stakeholders. It is through the existence of a good relationship that the intrusion of community members into the natural park can be eliminated. If the relationship between Isimangaliso Wetland Park and the local community is not good, that could result in the local community disobeying the rules and regulations of the park. Disregard for the rules and regulation could lead to the unmanageability of the park resources and the people involved. It was therefore from this notion that the relationship between the park and the local communities was explored. Therefore, the respondents' perspectives about the relationship with the park were a determining factor of the disagreement.

In an attempt to determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities, respondents were asked to reveal their perceptions. What was investigated was whether there was a good relationship or a bad relationship between these two parties associated with the park. In this regard, Figure 4.5 shows that the majority [68%] of the respondents were of the view that there was a bad relationship between the local communities and the park authorities. To further reinforce the negative perception about 20 percent of the respondents indicated that there was no relationship between the entities. Only a few respondents (12%) thought there was a good relationship between the local communities and the park authorities

**FIGURE 4.5 PERCEIVED EXISTENCE OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PARK AND THE COMMUNITY**



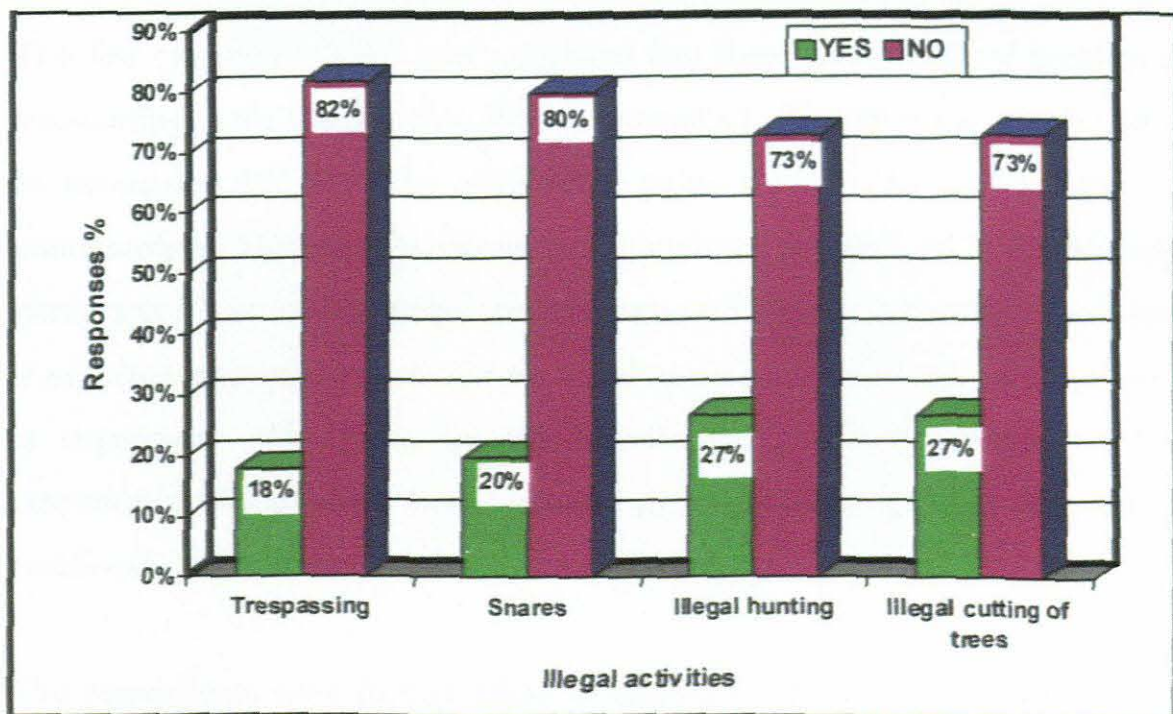
The reason for the negative responses could have been influenced by the history of evictions associated with the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, as well as that there seems to have been little evidence of the park authorities giving meaningful support to the Khula Village communities. A meaningful relationship between any two bodies or entities has to be sustained or supported by meaningful socio-economic benefits for all involved.



From the information provided above, it is reasonable to conclude that conclude that **Hypothesis 3**, which states: *That there exists a negative relationship between the local communities and the park authorities*, is supported and therefore approved. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents thought that there were too many factors negatively affecting the relationship between the Park and the community.

To further investigate the relationship between Isimangaliso Park and the Khula Village communities, it was thought necessary to identify the factors playing a role in the relationship. As shown in Figure 4.6, the relationship between Isimangaliso Park and the communities was then assessed in terms of the following variable: trespassing into the Park; setting of snares; illegal hunting; and illegal cutting of trees.

**FIGURE 4.6      FACTORS AFFECTING THE RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN THE PARK AND COMMUNITY**



[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

Regarding these variables, it was established that the majority of respondents (average 72%) viewed the variables shown in Figure 4.6 as negatively affecting the relationship between the park and the community. All the above-mentioned variables must be viewed as an appropriate tool to determine the positive elements of the relationship between the two entities, the park and the community.

From Figure 4.6, it became evident that the majority of respondents (82% and 80%) considered trespassing and as snares setting the most negative actions meted out at the park by the community. A significant number (73%) of the respondents indicated that there were illegal activities that take place in the park, namely hunting and tree-cutting. The outcomes of this finding may be caused by the fact that community members next to park have the idea that the park authorities are not doing enough to support the poor lifestyles of the community.

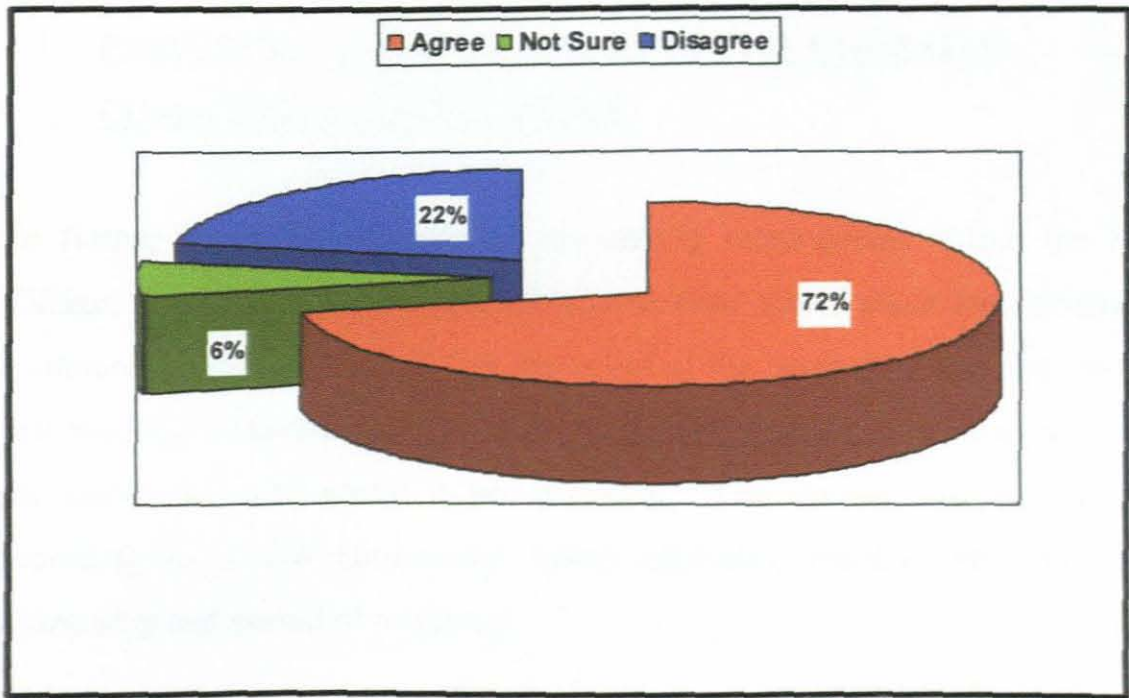
The few responses (27%) that suggested that there was no illegal hunting and tree-cutting in the Isimangaliso Park is interesting. This response may be caused by perception that a cordial relationship exists between the park and the local communities. However, pursuant to the analyses engaged in, in the preceding paragraph it may be concluded that Hypothesis 3, which states: *That there exists a negative relationship between the local communities and the park authorities* is supported. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents thought that there were too many factors negatively affecting the relationship between the Park and the community.

The respondents were further asked to express their views or perception about the existence of illegal activities meted out against the Isimangaliso Wetland



Park. As shown in Figure 4.7, it transpired that that about 72 percent of the respondents agreed that there were illegal activities (trespassing, setting of snares, illegal hunting and cutting of trees) that took place in the Wetland Park. The main reason for such an outcome is that the local communities largely view the Isimangaliso Park land as having been forcefully taken from them, and tend to justify most illegal activities of some of the Khula Village residents.

**FIGURE 4.7      GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK**



On the contrary, only 22 percent of the respondents disagreed that there were illegal activities that took place in the Wetland Park. The main reason for such a response is that the some local community members do not want to accept that the illegal activities that are happening in the Park are actually caused by members of the Khula Village community.

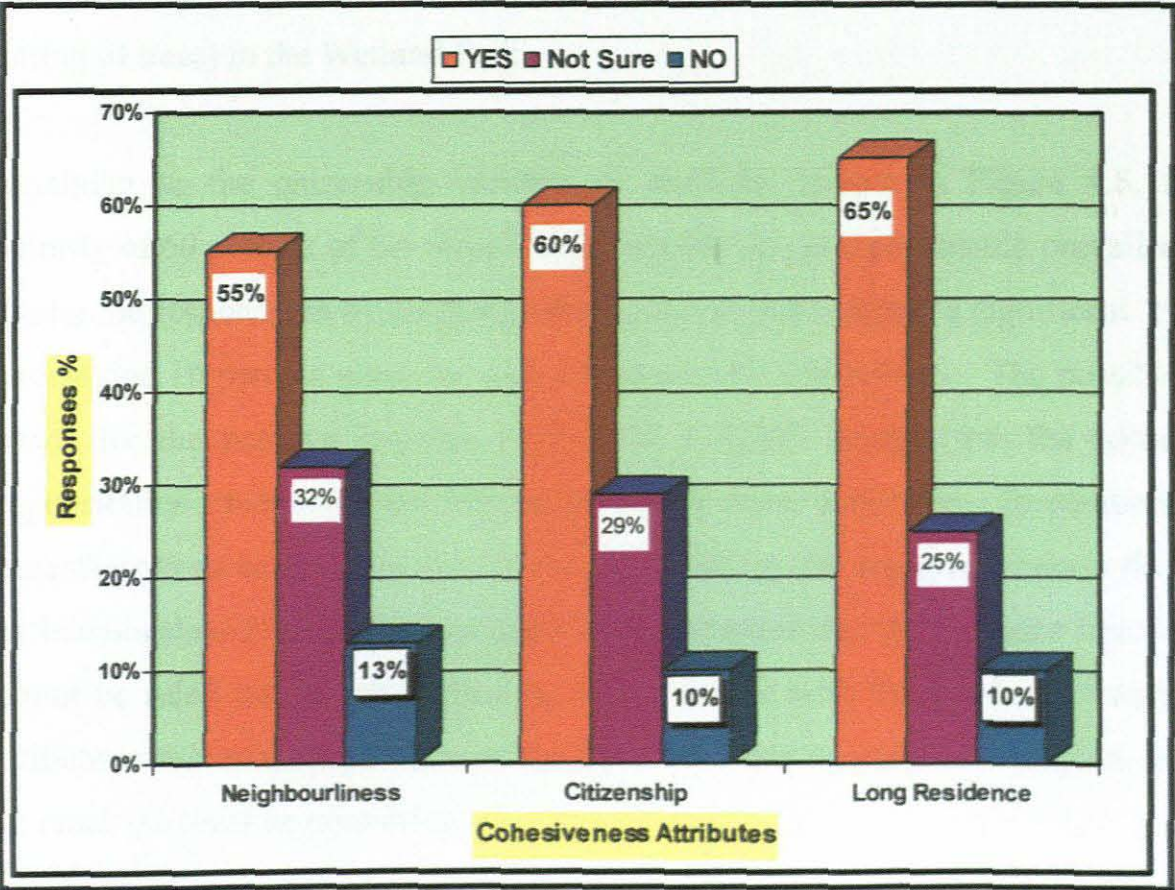
Following on the discussion above it may be concluded that Hypothesis 3, which states: *That there exists a negative relationship between the local communities and the park authorities* is supported. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents have agreed that there were illegal activities that were taking place in the Park environment. According to Pearce, *et al.* (1985) it is normal that if members of a community are not happy with certain issues or if their relationship with authorities is not good, then they would perform certain illegal actions that would be detrimental to the core function of that particular organisation.

#### **4.7 PERCEIVED ATRIBUTES MAKING UP A COHESIVE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP**

To further assess the strength of community relationships within the Khula Village, respondents were asked to express their views about the existence of community cohesiveness. It was the belief of the researcher that a community that has high cohesiveness standards would be responsible to its members and the authorities with whom it was working. The respondents were assessed according to a few community based attributes, namely: neighbourliness, citizenship and period of residence.

The analysis of these three attributes: neighbourliness, citizenship and period of residence, is shown in Figure 4.8. The attribute of neighbourliness, would imply that where it existed, it would suggest the existence of a good relationship between the park and the local community, what could be called cordial neighbourliness between the two. Literally a neighbour is someone who stays next you and is expected to cordial and helpful to you, most of the time.

**FIGURE 4.8    PERCEIVED ATTRIBUTES OF COMMUNITY  
COHESION**



[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

Figure 4.8 above shows that a majority of 55 percent of the respondents agreed that there was a sense of good neighbourliness with the Park, whereas a significant 32 percent and 13 percent were not sure and disagreed, respectively. The results therefore suggest that neighbourliness does exist. They suggest that a good neighbour is someone who takes cares of the next person, next door. In this case, 55 percent of the Khula Village residents considered Isimangaliso Wetland Park as its reliable neighbour. Also the respondents considered Isimangaliso Wetland Park as a good neighbour to the Khula Village. These responses let one to believe that there were a substantial number of things the



Isimangaliso Wetland Park had done for the people of Khula Village. Beneficial neighbourliness is a notion that is apparent in the study area, though there is the existence of illegal activities (trespassing, setting of snares, illegal hunting and cutting of trees) in the Wetland Park.

Pertaining to the citizenship variable or attribute, shown in Figure 4.8, a majority of 60 percent of the respondents agreed that good citizenship prevailed among the respondents in the study area. On the other hand, a significant 29 percent and 10 percent were not sure and disagreed, respectively. The possible reason for the positive response is that the majority thought that the social responsibility attempts of the Isimangaliso Park were noticeable. In addition, some these respondents may have been persuaded by the reported projects that the Isimangaliso Park authorities offer local communities. At the same time it cannot be ruled out that the minority, who disagree with the good citizenship attribute in the area, do so because the Park's tourism development projects do not reach the local communities.

With regard to the attribute of long time residence in the area, supported by a majority of 65 percent of the respondents, who agreed that there was a sound history of long time stay in the area. On the other hand, a significant 25 percent and 10 percent were not sure and disagreed, respectively. The reason for the support is that evidently the majority of respondents see the long time stay in the area as attribute worth achieving. The long time residence is associated with the original ownership of the land in the area by the people of Khula Village.

Flowing from the analyses given above, in connection with community cohesiveness, it is evident that Hypothesis 3, which states: *That there exists a*

*negative relationship between the local communities and the park authorities* has to be rejected and therefore approved. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents thought that there was good neighbourliness, citizenship and long residence in the study area. The results also suggest that these attributes go a long way in assuring a good relationship between the Park and the community.

#### **4.8 COMMUNITY'S PREFERENCES ABOUT THE PARK**

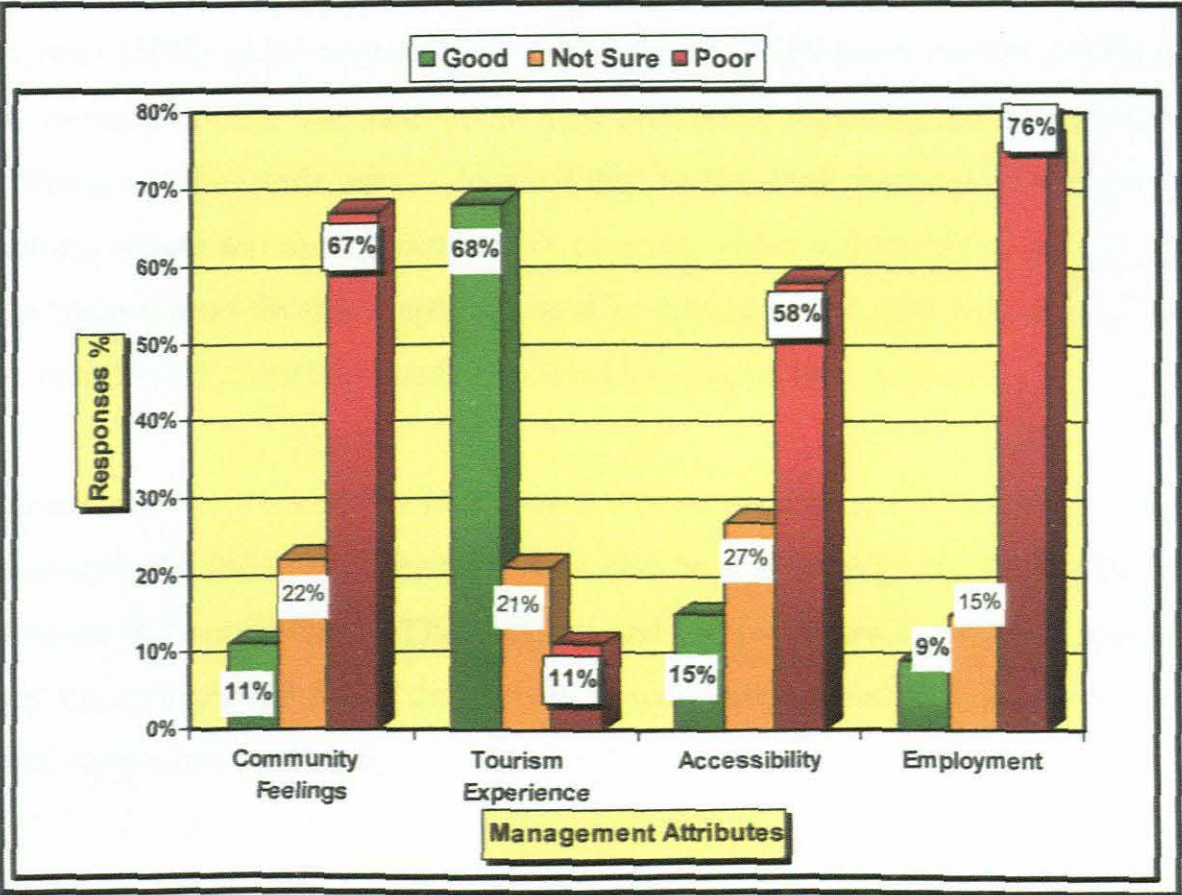
One of the important objectives of this research study was to explore the extent to which local communities have a platform for expressing their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In other words, respondents in the study area were to reveal their preferences about the existence and offerings of activities, practices and benefits. The topic of preferences was included in the study to refer to whether the communities have likes or dislikes about the management of the Park. If their preferences were given a hearing, then the community would feel as being part of the Park.

The analysis of the variables or attributes associated with Park management included the following: (a) community feelings; (b) tourism experience; (c) accessibility; and (d) employment opportunities in the Park. These variables were analysed on the basis of being either, good, poor or not sure about.

Related to Table 4.9 below, respondents were asked to comment on their management preferences of the Isimangaliso Park, according to the prelisted attributes mentioned above. Under the variable 'community feelings' the majority of respondents indicated that there were poor management attributes

associated with the Isimangaliso Park environment. The main reasons for this outcome were that the local communities were not given an opportunity to express their feelings about the Park. It may also be intimated that the local community members have indicated the lack of exposure to tourism as their dominating feature in the study area. As such, the community does not have the platform to express its preferences about the Park.

**FIGURE 4.9    PREFERRED MANAGEMENT ATTRIBUTES  
IN THE STUDY AREA.**



[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

Pertaining to the ‘tourism experience’ variable, the majority of respondents [68%], on the contrary, indicated that there were good management attributes

associated with the study area. The possible reasons for this response, was that the respondents may have been thinking about tourists' experience rather than tourism experience in general. A response of this nature suggests that the community is having interest in what is happening in the Park, because even though they are not given the platform to express their preferences, they do see that tourism activities were suitable for the tourists. Only 21 percent and 11 percent of the respondents felt the situation was not certain and poor, respectively.

On the question of 'accessibility' as an attribute, it was found to be poor by the majority [58%] of the respondents. Interestingly, a significant number [35%] of the respondents felt 'not sure' about their preference regarding the management attributes in the study area. Accessibility to the Park because of locational factors, affects the local community's position, either negatively or positively. The main reason for this response could be related to the high cost of entering the natural park, which is usually afforded by international tourists.

Accessibility may also be looked at from the perspective of wild animals, where these animals, particularly the dangerous one, have easy access to the residential areas of the respondents. The security and socio-economic problems arising may for example manifests themselves in wild animals putting the lives of the local community in danger.

On the subject of 'employment', which was regarded as important by the Khula Village residents, the majority of respondents [76%] felt that this management attribute was poorly handled. On the other hand, only 15 percent and 9 percent of the respondents felt the situation was not certain and poor, respectively. The

reasons for this outcome may be that pursuant to the high unemployment rate in the country, the Wetland Park area was expected to have poor employment opportunities. The argument that tourism is the highest employing sector and revenue generator does not seem to carry weight in the study area.

The various outcomes of this analysis in this section, suggest that on the whole there are several factors militating against management attributes found in the Park area. The responses given above and the related justification suggest that Hypothesis 4 which states: *That the local communities are indeed given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park*, should not be supported and therefore disapproved.

#### **4.8.1 Ranked community needs from the Park**

It was also important to get the views of the respondents about their expectations and preferences of what they would like to see the Park doing for them. If the Park authorities could know what the local communities would prefer about the Park, this would make the task of the authorities much easier. If the local community were to be closely linked to the Park in term of work, accommodation, cultural entertainment and reaping of resources, then there would be less conflict directed to the authorities.

The analysis of ranked community needs, requirements or expectations, were based on preselected variables such as: wildlife experience or learning; job opportunities; conservation; accommodation; skills development; employment of local people; heritage sites promotion; tourism schools and school tours to the park. The acquisition of these community needs would imply that the existence



of a good relationship and neighbourliness between the park and the local community would benefit all the stakeholders involved.

**TABLE 4.3: RANKED COMMUNITY PREFERENCES OF ATTRIBUTES.**

<b>RANKED ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</b>	<b>FREQUENCY PERCENTAGE</b>
Job opportunities	89	73%
Wildlife experience	83	68%
Skills development	82	67%
Accommodation	76	62%
Employment of local people	71	58%
Conservation	65	53%
Heritage sites promotion	63	52%
Tourism schools	61	50%
School tours to the Park	59	48%

[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

To assess the nature of perceived ranked community needs using statements indicated above, the results shown in Table 4.3 are interesting. The tourism management attributes or community needs at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park would facilitate and encourage tourism participation of stakeholders in the study area. The Table 4.3 shows that the majority of respondents [73%] selected job opportunities as the important need that they have as a community. Job creation and opportunities are what the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority has not been supplying adequately to the Khula Village communities. The community also expects the Park to afford the skills and learning so that they could in the

future be part of the Isimangaliso Park management. This attribute perceived as the most favoured tourism attribute because many of the local communities are unemployed and always wish somebody could offer them a job. Also that tourism is regarded as an employment creator as it is continually advertised by the government in KwaZulu-Natal.

The second most favoured community attribute or need by 68 percent of the respondents was wildlife experience or learning. The respondents may have been keen to be exposed to wildlife so that they may learn more about and be able to aspire into management jobs in that sector. The respondents could have also associated their exposure to wildlife as means of curbing tourism crime and other illegal acts in study area.

The third most favoured ranked community attribute or needs related to skills development opportunities in the Khula Village area. A skilled person may be regarded as one who has the knowledge, ability, competence and experience to acquire a high level of proficiency in activities available in the study area. About 67 percent of the respondents regarded skills as vital for the global development of the area and as an equitable reward from a natural resource the community has owned for a long time. The skills development issue is highly ranked respondents are aware that there are not enough training centres for many of the Blacks communities in the area entering the tourism industry. It could also be that most stakeholders are aware that they as individuals do not have the knowledge and understanding of what tourism really is about in the context of wildlife and conservation.

The fourth most favoured community attribute or needs was related to accommodation offering to the tourists in the study area. About 62 percent of the respondents felt that they need to be given accommodation providing contracts. The local community has strongly advocated that the tourists have to be encouraged to also stay at the Khula Village.

The fifth ranked community attributes or needs relate to employment of local people from the Khula Village area at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. About 58 percent of the respondents indicated that the employment of locals at the Park has the ability to forge a lasting relationship between the Park and the community. The envisaged plan of creating tourism jobs in the study area has stimulated the notion that jobs would encourage the respondents not only to acquire tourism education, but to have an amiable relationship with the Park authorities in the study area. The exposure to local jobs at the Isimangaliso Park, would give the respondents an opportunity to improve their participation in tourism entrepreneurship, involving starting a business in managing their own curio stalls or craft-shops, tour guiding, and selling food to tourists.

The sixth and seventh ranked community attributes relate to conservation and the promotion of heritage sites. About 53 percent and 52 percent respectively, thought that these two attributes were important for the Khula Village communities that stay around a nature reserve. The exposure and knowledge of the local community about conservation and heritage sites matters, would facilitate their understanding of these resources, as well as begin to be protective of them. At another level, the community would begin to take participate in the curbing tourism crime and other illegal acts in study area.

The eighth and ninth ranked community attributes relate to tourism schools and school tours to the Park. About 50 percent and 48 percent respectively, thought that these two attributes were of educational significance for the Khula Village communities. The role of education in understanding tourism training cannot be taken lightly if it is to contribute to the development of the local community and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. It is great pity that tourism schools are hard to find anywhere in KwaZulu-Natal and more specifically in rural areas such as the study area. According to Torkildsen (2005) the type of education, the length of education and educational attainment are closely related to upbringing, class, occupation, income and other related factors. These factors are needed to play a developmental role in the study area.

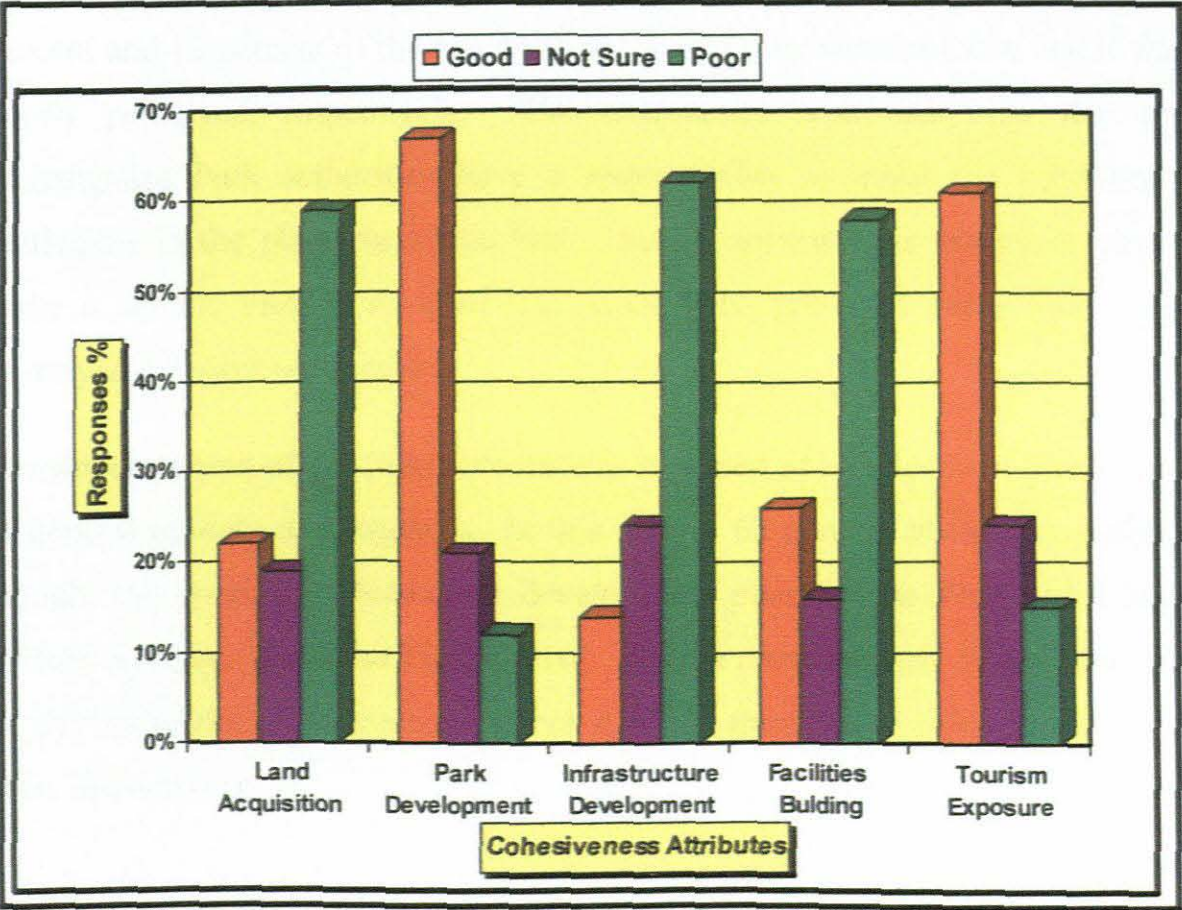
If we are to bring all the analyses engaged in, in the preceding sections dealing with attributes ranging from job opportunities to heritage sites promotion, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 4, which states: *That the local communities are indeed given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park*, should be not be supported and therefore disapproved. The basis for these findings is that most of these attributes are highly desired and necessary in the study area.

#### **4.9 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES PLANNED FOR THE STUDY AREA**

It has been argued that tourism development tourism relates to the process of improving human well-being through re-allocation of resources in such a way that the environment can be modified to benefit the community as a whole (Aaronson, 2000). For purposes of this study it was necessary to establish the extent to which tourism development practices are planned for Khula Village

and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In other words, it is implicit that tourism development has to do with the establishment and promotion of new tourism products and activities, as well as upgrading those that are existing already. The objectives of the study were to investigate the existence or planning of tourism development practices in the Isimangaliso Park. To achieve this objective, a pre-selection of tourism practices [See Figure 4.10] were given to the subjects to respond to.

**FIGURE 4.10 PERCEIVED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN THE STUDY AREA**



[n = 122. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each variable]

As shown in Figure 4.10, **land acquisition** for the Park and communities was perceived to be poor and negative by the majority of community respondents (59%), whereas 22 percent and 19 percent thought it was good and uncertain, respectively. The notion of land development was negatively perceived possibly because the respondents were thinking about their own case of the need for land, since it was forcibly taken from them. They had been promised land for settlement before and those promises have not been fulfilled.

With regard to the question of **park development**, for purposes of introducing more game (wild animals) and developing the game reserve in Isimangaliso Park, the notion was perceived positively by 67 percent of respondents. Only 21 percent and 12 percent of the respondents thought they were not sure and it was poorly perceived, respectively. The community is of the view that the Isimangaliso Park authorities have a responsibility to make the community participate in the planning of the Park. Such community involvement would make it see the Park as an asset that needs to be protected rather than to be destroyed for short term gains.

The **development of the infrastructure** is regarded as an important component of general tourism development. In this regard, 62 percent of the respondents thought the present infrastructure development plan for the Park and Khula Village was poor [Refer to Figure 4.10]. On the contrary, only 24 percent and 14 percent of the respondents were not sure and thought the infrastructure was poor, respectively.

Considering that the infrastructural development consists of all underground and surface developmental construction such as roads, water supply systems, sewage

disposal system, electricity lines, drainage systems, roads, communication network, and other many commercial facilities, the respondents understood that not half of these facilities were available in their area. In fact, the access roads to Khula Village though not tarred; the roads are used by tourists visiting the Park. The tourists would use them when they want to get a social-cultural experience with the local people. These roads therefore need to be maintained properly. Some of the responsibility to upgrade the infrastructure rests with the Park authorities.

The **building of facilities** within the Park and in Khula village is another important development initiative that respondents were asked to express their views on. These facilities include structures like market area, chalets, curio shops and cultural museums. The analysis as shown in Figure 4.10 revealed that a majority [58%] of the respondents felt that development of facilities was poor. On the contrary, only 16 percent and 26 percent of the respondents were not sure and thought the facilities were poor, respectively. In other words, the majority of respondents were positively disposed to the development plans pertaining to building chalets, curios and so on. The possible reason is that most of these developments are community based and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park may know very little about them.

The notion of **tourism exposure** for the stakeholders and community in particular is an important element for tourism development. In this instance, respondents were asked to express their perceptions. In this regard, 61 percent of the respondents thought the present tourism exposure initiative in the study area was good. [Refer to Figure 4.10]. On the contrary, only 24 percent and 15 percent of the respondents were not sure and thought the tourism exposure initiative was poor, respectively. The possible reason for this outcome is that

the community felt neglected because they were not taught about tourism, nor were they encouraged to get lessons at the Park itself.

The outcome of these analyses, suggest that, on the whole, there are several factors that militate against tourism development initiatives or practices. The responses given above and the related justifications suggest that Hypothesis 5 which states: *That there seems to be adequate development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park is offering to the local community,* should be not be supported and therefore disapproved. The basis of conclusion is that the community does not have or participate in development initiatives in the study area, nor does it have the chance to engage in any decision-making process.

#### **4.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has focused on the analysis and interpretation of measures that discuss the development and promotion of tourism as well as the participation patterns and practices that would benefit the communities at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The analysis and interpretation of data was achieved by utilising the objectives and hypothesis as point of departure. The demographic characteristics of the respondents (officials, tour operators and local communities) revealed the varying, and at times similarity, in thinking, regarding their perceptions of the tourism participation patterns in the study area. These conclusions lead to some recommendations presented in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter contained the analysis of data collected from various respondents from the Khula Village and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park environment. The chapter produced some findings relating to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. This particular chapter presents some of the general conclusions, recommendations and the final conclusion of the study based on all chapters. Under summary the chapter reflects on the existing relationship between Isimangaliso Park and the neighbouring community, mainly referring to preferences about the Park, community participation in the study. The summary is built around the objectives and hypotheses of the study, with a view of achieving solutions to the problems stated.

The emerging suggestions and recommendations are presented in this chapter as a possible contribution towards the formulation of policy aimed at addressing the participation patterns of stakeholders at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The recommendations are also expected to help improve the facilities, activities and practices of the Wetland Park. It is also hoped that the suggestions put forward will help in getting the local community more involved in the tourism activities at this tourism resource, since it has been shown that there is a general lack of community involvement as tourists, service providers and decision-makers.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

The fundamental aim of this study was to investigate the participation patterns of stakeholders at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The entire study is divided into five chapters which are now summarised below.

Chapter One, presented the introduction to the research study. It orientated the reader to the key areas of the research process: the problem statement, the objectives and hypotheses, the delimitation and significance of the study, and the methodology adopted. Chapter Two, explored various authors' ideas related to the topic of the study. By so doing it gave direction to the theoretical findings linked to the research findings in study, so that they could offer reasonable interpretation, reliant on a wider scope that comes from other authors on the same subject matter.

Chapter Three, described the actual physical layout and matters related to the study area. It considered, among other aspects, the historical background, settlement and land tenure development, and the physiographic and climate characteristics. Social services and governance structures were also considered. Chapter Four, dealt with the analytical procedures engaged in and the findings of the study were documented and meaning attached to them. The outcomes of the analysis lead to making conclusions about the acceptance or rejection of the various hypotheses postulated in accord with stated objectives. The chapter also set the scene for generating conclusions and recommendations arising from the study.

In conclusion Chapter Five provides a summary of the findings and then proposes some recommendations.

The study was conducted to explore certain problems that were highlighted in chapter one. These were presented as hypotheses that were formulated to address the research question. The study was then conducted around stated objectives which are now revisited for ease of discussion.

### **5.2.1 Community awareness of the importance of tourism**

Community awareness was discussed under the heading associated with the following objective:

**Objective 1:** To reveal the extent to which the local community is aware of the importance of tourism in the study area

In order to achieve this objective an analysis into what the community was aware of regarding the importance of tourism was conducted. Awareness would allow tourism to be appreciated as a beneficial human activity, and seen to contribute significantly to the welfare of the people of Khula village and the work of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. A well-understood tourism activity usually has many social and economic spin-offs. In this regard, and after this analysis, the respondents were able to reveal their level of awareness about the importance of tourism in the context of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The result was positive in that it was clear that the local community appreciated the value of tourism development associated with the park. This should also apply to Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority if they want to manage their relationship well with the communities that they need to make them aware of tourism benefits.

### **5.2.2 Community participation with income benefits**

Community participation was discussed under the heading associated with the following objective:

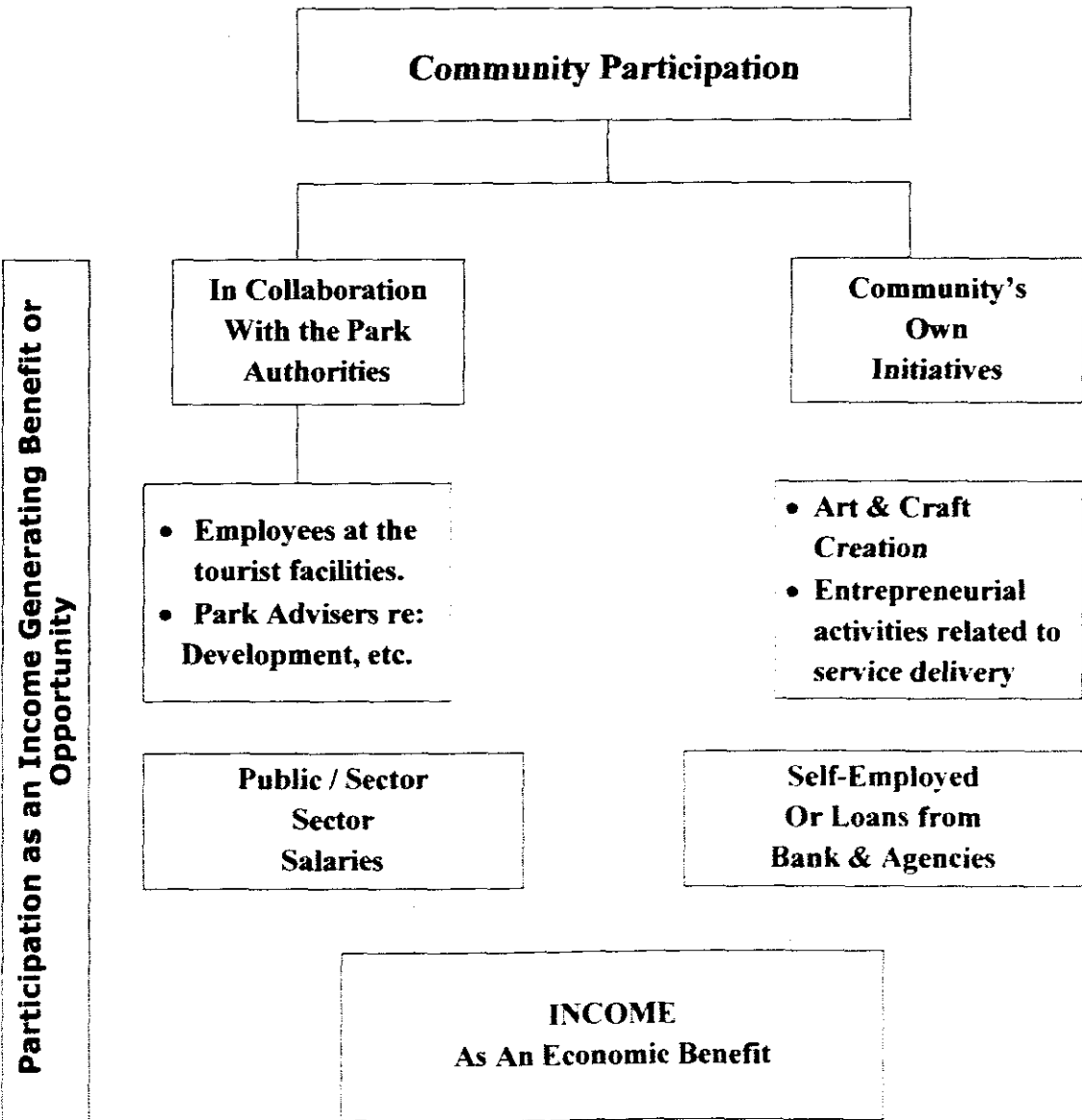
**Objective 2:** To establish whether the local communities participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that bring income benefits to them.

One of the intentions of this research study was to discover how the Khula village community participated in the tourism activities often in the neighbouring park, with a view to benefiting from an income. In this regard, participation was seen as relating to those activities in which members of the community could share in the selection of personnel who directly or indirectly implement public policy which would channel their involvement in recreation and tourism activities. In this context participation could be used to determine the level of community involvement and the way in which local members share in certain activities offered by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authorities.

After analysis the study was able to determine that the local communities could participate adequately in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park tourism activities, in such a way as to bring reasonable income benefits to them. In the case study, community participation in sustainable ecotourism activities was found to be very minimal.

Flowing from the analysis of the participation modes of the local communities in the Isimangaliso park environment, specifically to engage in tourism activities that would bring social and economic benefits to them, the model given below makes interesting reading or illustration of the situation.

**FIGURE 5.1      COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS**



[Source: Adaptation from Evans, et al. (2003)]

As shown in Figure 5.1 community participation towards achieving economic benefits or opportunities, could be generated from the community's own

participation as well as from the park authorities. The activities leading to income generation involve the following: art & craft creation, entrepreneurial activities related to service delivery; employees at the tourist facilities; park advisers on skills development and facilities development. All these activities not only lead to income generation seen as an economic benefit, but also as associated with social benefits.

### **5.2.3 Relationship between local communities and the park authorities**

The relationship between the community and the park was discussed under the heading associated with the following objective:

**Objective 3:** To determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities.

One of the objectives of this research inquiry was to determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities. In other words, this was to explore the relationship between Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and the Khula Village community with regard to sharing tourism activities. This objective was seen as the cornerstone of the co-operation envisaged between the two tourism stakeholders.

After analysis, it came to light that the majority of the sampled community responded, indicating that there were some illegal activities the local community was accused of performing like trespassing, putting of snares, hunting, and cutting of trees. The findings among others were that the majority of the respondents thought that there were too many factors negatively affecting the relationship between the park and the community. The factors that might contribute towards bad relationship were the history of eviction, and minimum

support of Khula village community by the park in terms of local economic development.

#### **5.2.4 Community's management preferences in the park**

Community based management preferences were discussed under the heading associated with the following objective:

**Objective 4:** To explore whether the communities are given a platform to express their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority.

One of the important objectives of this research study was to explore the extent to which local communities have a platform for expressing their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In other words, respondents in the study area were to reveal their preferences about the existence and offerings of activities, practices and benefits.

The outcome of this analysis in this section showed that on the whole there were several factors mitigating against management attributes found in the park area. The factors referred to are community feelings, accessibility of the park and employment of local people which were not doing well as indicated in chapter four Figure 4.9. The majority of respondents made it possible to conclude that the local communities are not given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

#### **5.2.5 Tourism development initiatives or practices**

Community based management preferences were discussed under the heading associated with the following objective:

**Objective 5:** To investigate whether there are any tourism development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authority is offering to the local community.

For purposes of this study it was necessary to establish the extent to which tourism development practices are planned for Khula Village and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In other words, it is implicit that tourism development has to do with the establishment and promotion of new tourism products and activities, as well as upgrading those that are existing already. The objectives of the study were to investigate the existence or planning of tourism development practices in the Isimangaliso Park.

The outcomes of the investigation concluded that there seemed to be adequate development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park offered to the local community. The basis of conclusion is that the community does not have or participate in development initiatives in the study area, nor does it have the chance to engage in any decision-making process.

### **5.3 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY**

Under this topic the objectives which were set up are related to the findings with a view of establishing what outcomes matching the objectives would be transformed into recommendation. The conclusions which have emerged are structured on the basis of accepted hypotheses.

The fundamental objective of **Chapter One** was to establish the extent to which the local community was aware of the importance of tourism in the study area.



Since the majority of community members attested to their awareness of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, it was found reasonable to conclude that the local community is aware of the importance of tourism in the study area.

The objective in **Chapter Two** sought to discover how the local community participated in tourism activities, with a view to benefiting from them in the study area, specifically the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In this regard, participation was seen as the core issue of the research problem. The finding was that, even though respondents are aware of the importance of the park, they were not happy with the local tourism participation levels. The outcome of the study has established that the local communities do not seem to participate in the Isimangaliso tourism activities that would benefit the community.

Another finding of the study was that the various age-groups in the study area, were in support of the notion that there was non-participation in tourism activities within the study area. The basis for this conclusion is that the youth particularly were stressed about the absence of participation in tourism activities.

The **Chapter Three** related objective intended to determine the existing type of relationship between the local communities and the park authorities. In other words, this was to explore the relationship between the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and the Khula Village community with regard to sharing tourism activities. From the analysis engaged in it was reasonably concluded that *a negative relationship existed between the local communities and the park authorities*. The basis for this conclusion was that the majority of the

respondents thought that there were too many factors negatively affecting the relationship between the Park and the community.

One of **Chapter Four's** objectives was to explore the extent to which local communities had a platform for expressing their management preferences relating to the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. In other words, respondents were expected to reveal their preferences about the existence and offerings of activities, practices and benefits in the study area. The various outcomes of this analysis suggested that there were several factors that mitigated against management attributes found in the Park area. In other words, the local communities were not given a platform to express their preferences about the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

In **Chapter Five**, one of the intentions of this research study was to discover whether there were any tourism development initiatives or practices the Isimangaliso Wetland Park authority offered the local community. The outcome of various analyses led to the finding that there were several factors that mitigate against tourism development initiatives or practices in the study area. Also that the development initiatives or practices offered to the local community by the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority were inadequate.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations that are presented here are based on the findings of the study. The findings relate to the relationship between the local community and the park, community participation in the park's activities, community preferences, and development initiatives. These recommendations might be subjective, but they are based on the findings.

#### **5.4.1 Relationships**

The study recommends that the good relationship between the local community and Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority be maintained and increased. With a healthy relationship between these two parties, the local community could act as security officials for the park and report any trespassers. The sample community expressed themselves, through the questionnaire, that they regarded the park as a good neighbour and citizen. Based on relationship this perception the park has with the local community could extend so that the two would work together to fight crime.

#### **5.4.2 Community participation**

It is recommended that the Isimangaliso Wetland Park realise the need to develop the business skills of the local community so that they would be in a position to participate effectively. The study indicated that community participation, especially with regard to economic side is actually minimal.

#### **5.4.3 Community preferences**

The sample community indicated that the community were not consulted concerning their views about the park, hence the community members distanced themselves from the park and this was not good. It is therefore recommended that the park communicate with the community and given the opportunity to raise their views and even their concerns. The preferred communication would in the form of community workshops so that every community member felt that they were welcome. Since the community were originally from the area they should not be undermined and be given the platform to air their preferences and

also advise the park authorities concerning certain issues of which they might not be aware.

#### **5.4.4 Community development initiatives**

The sample drawn from the community, showed strong regard for the social community development initiatives, which were developed in the park environment. These development initiatives have the potential to concretise the relationship between the community and authorities. However, the local economic development initiatives for the community did not do very well as reflected in the questionnaire responses and the resulting analyses. It is recommended that the park sustain its high level of social development initiatives for future benefit, and should further try to improve the level of local economic development.

#### **5.4.5 Other recommendations**

- Improving the accessibility status of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park by charging affordable entrance prices
- The establishment of tourism programmes associated with the creation of jobs, which would expose the local communities to the travel and tourism industry
- Commitment on the part of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to provide career guidance and in-service training for the members of the local communities
- Expansion of the range and scope of education and training programmes and skills training opportunities within the Isimangaliso Wetland Park area for the benefit of the local communities.

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

The final chapter offered a summary of the findings of this research study. These findings explained in the summary were the ones that formed the core of the study. They focused on the relationship between the local community and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park, community participation in tourism for economic benefit, platform for the provision of a community preferences and consideration of development initiatives. Comments about airing the objectives of the study were also included in the general conclusion to confirm the validity of the investigation. After the study was conducted suggestions were made concerning the relationship between local community and Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. The recommendations that were discussed have sought to make a meaning contribution to research problem investigated. It is hoped that this study has given positive perceptions about local community participation possibilities regarding the need for sound practice to enhance tourism experiences at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The prospects for both the local community and the Isimangaliso Wetland Park have emerged as indeed good and sustainable.

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# APPENDIX - A

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Mark with a cross in the provided spaces and where necessary furnishes the required information using a ball point or a pen. Anonymity and confidentiality is guaranteed. Please feel free to provide the required information.**

### 1. [SECTION A] PERSONAL DETAILS

1.1. Where do you stay?

Khula Village	01	Ezwen'elisha	02
---------------	----	--------------	----

1.2. Gender

Male	01	Female	02
------	----	--------	----

1.3. Age

14-20	01	21-25	02	26-30	03
31-35	04	36-40	05	41-45	06
46-50	07	Over 50	08		

1.4. Marital Status

Single	01	Married	2	Separated	03
Widow	04	Divorce	05		06

1.5. Level of Education

Standard 8 & below	01	STD 9-10	02	Tertiary Education	03
--------------------	----	----------	----	--------------------	----

1.6. Employment

Self Employed	01	Government Employee	02	Private Sector	03
Unemployed	04	Student	05		

1.7. Income per month

R0.00- R500.00	01	R501-R1000.00	02	R1001.00-R1500.00	03
R1501- R2000	04	RR2001-R2500	05	R2500-and above	06

### 2. [SECTION B] RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISIMANGALISO & COMMUNITIES

2.1 Do community members trespass into the park?

Yes	01	NO	02
-----	----	----	----

- 2.2 Are there any snares found in the park put by community members illegally?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 2.3 Are there any community members hunting illegal in the park?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 2.4 Are there any trees cut illegal from the park?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 2.5 Can you consider Isimangaliso as a good neighbour?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 2.6 Can you consider Isimangaliso as a good citizen?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

### 3. SECTION C] PREFERENCES ABOUT THE PARK

- 3.1 Do local communities given a chance to express their feelings about the park?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 3.2 Do you think the recreational activities found in the park are suitable for the tourists?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 3.3 Is the park in the right position for the tourists?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

- 3.4 What would you like to see in the future inside the park?

.....

- 3.5 Would you consider the development of Isimangaliso as

Good		1	Fair		02	Poor		03
------	--	---	------	--	----	------	--	----

- 3.6 Would you consider the future development of Isimangaliso as

Good		1	Fair		02	Poor		03
------	--	---	------	--	----	------	--	----

### 4. [SECTION D] COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM BENEFIT

- 4.1 To what extent do people participate on maintaining infrastructure of the park through tender process?

Good		1	Fair		02	Poor		03
------	--	---	------	--	----	------	--	----

4.2. Do the community have access to collect fire wood?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.3. Do they have access to collect wood for curving crafts?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.4. Is there any economic benefit the park brings to the communities?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.5. If there is any, name them.

.....

4.6. Is there any family member who is working at the park?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.7. If there is what is her/his position?

.....

4.8. Is there any social benefit the reserve brings to the community?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.9. To what extent do people participate on the management of the park?

Good		1	Fair		02	Poor		03
------	--	---	------	--	----	------	--	----

4.10. Is there any community craft market at the park?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

4.11. Do the community get a platform to perform their cultural activities to the tourists?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

## 5. [SECTION E] DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

5.1 Are there any tourism related business training brought by Isimangaliso to the communities?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

5.2 Are there any tourists guide training facilitated by Isimangaliso in the communities?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

5.3 Is there any conservation training by Isimangaliso?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

5.4 Any other development projects brought by Isimangaliso to the communities?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

5.5 Is there any infrastructural development by Isimangaliso in the community areas?

Yes		01	NO		02
-----	--	----	----	--	----

## 6 [SECTION F] PERSONAL OPINION QUESTIONS

6.1 What is your personal opinion regarding the following statement pertaining to relationship of local people and Isimangaliso Wetland Park Authority?

6.1.1 There is no good relationship between the local communities and the park.

Fully Agree		01	Agree		2	Uncertain		03
Disagree		04.	Fully Disagree		05			06

6.1.2 The communities do not participate in the park activities that bring income.

Fully Agree		01	Agree		2	Uncertain		03
Disagree		04.	Fully Disagree		05			06

6.1.3 The communities are not given platform to express their preferences about the park.

Fully Agree		01	Agree		2	Uncertain		03
Disagree		04.	Fully Disagree		05			06

6.1.4 There are no development initiatives the reserve is offering to the local community.

Fully Agree		01	Agree		2	Uncertain		03
Disagree		04.	Fully Disagree		05			06

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**  
**YOUR COOPERATION IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED.**

## APPENDIX - B

### **University of Zululand**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & TOURISM**



**Private Bag X1001**

**KwaDlangezwa 3886**

South Africa

Tel: 035 902 6000

Fax: 035-902 6073

Ref: mrt/ms/2006

1 August 2007

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir /Madam

#### RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Mr Z.S. Gumede is part-time student of the Department for Recreation and Tourism at the University of Zululand. He is doing the Masters in Recreation and Tourism [MRT]. The attached questionnaire is part of his research project seeking to establish tourism participation patterns in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. The title of the research project is:

#### ***Tourism Participation in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park: Perceptions, Practices and Prospects***

This research inquiry is undertaken mainly for academic purposes among the Isimagaliso Wetland Park Authorities and the Khula Village communities. It is hoped that the findings of the study will make a meaningful contribution



to the fields of tourism, as well as the understanding tourism participation pattern in the study area.

All information collected from you through this questionnaire will be kept in strict confidence.

Your assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Magi', is written over a horizontal line.

Lindisizwe M. Magi (Prof.)

Centre for Recreation and Tourism

University of Zululand

cc. Mr Z. A. Gumede (Researcher)

