

**COASTAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
IN THE TOWN OF ST LUCIA, KWAZULU-NATAL:
CONSERVATION VERSUS COMMERCIALISATION**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research study entitled: *Coastal Tourism Development Strategies in the Town of St Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal: Conservation Versus Commercialisation*, presented in subsequent pages is my own work both in conception and execution. Except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, all the theoretical information and related sources that have been used or quoted have been 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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- The respondents who were confident enough to furnish me with required information.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Mrs B.T. Ntuli, for her kindness in offering support and motivation, during the writing of this work. She did this without any hesitation, until the completion and success of this research work.

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ABSTRACT

Coastal tourism development strategies are a new phenomenon in the world of community development and community conservation. The development of tourism products as compared to their conservation, is an ongoing debate, which has been tackled by many tourism scholars. The management of natural and cultural environments is of utmost importance in the development of ecotourism in places such as the Town of St Lucia, as well as in the St Lucia Estuary.

This research study, therefore, sought to assess on comparative basis the conservation and commercialisation [commodification] of tourism resources, paying particular attention to the application of coastal tourism development strategies. In other words, the research study involves identifying key management practices and strategies that would contribute to the conservation of tourism resources. In this regard the basic objectives of this study include the following:

- (a) To reveal the extent to which stakeholders understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.
- (b) To find out if the coastal tourism resources in the study area are adequately supplied.
- (c) To determine the level to which tourism management and development strategies are employed or utilised in the study area.
- (d) To find out which ecotourism policy approach the stakeholders favour for the study area, between conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification].

- (e) To establish how stakeholders perceive the existence and application on tourism development policies in the study area.
- (f) To establish the extent to which the local community benefits from ecotourism related activities or practices.

The government and municipal authorities believe that tourism could enhance the development of rural areas on an ecologically and economically viable basis and improve the quality of life of the local people. The study has several hypotheses in this regard, and has utilised the qualitative and quantitative approach in collecting, analysing and interpreting data. In fact, data was analysed through use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to establish frequency tables, bar graphs, and cross-tabulations in representing statistical data.

The findings of the study included the following: (a) the stakeholders were found to have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of ecotourism development; (b) the supply of coastal tourism resources was found to be inadequate; (c) the tourism management and development strategies were not up to the required standard; (d) the stakeholders favoured the policy of conservation as compared to that of commercialisation or commodification; (e) the existence and application of tourism development policies were found to be inadequately implemented; (f) the ecotourism benefits for the local community were found to be available and adequate. Finally, the emerging conclusion of the study was that, notwithstanding that the stakeholders favoured the policy of conservation, they were of the view that ecotourism management and development strategies, as well as community beneficiation, were not up to the required and expected standard in the study area.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been recognised as one of the most vibrant sectors and with the leading potential to contribute to the regeneration of economic growth in the African continent, and more specifically in the South African economy (Wahab, 2000; Rogerson & Visser, 2004). This growth could be achieved through the diversification of South African economies, and generation of foreign exchange earnings. It has also been argued that tourism is also one of the fastest growing industries in South Africa (SAT, 2004). Tourism development has commonly been advocated as an alternative to traditional natural resource-based economic development, such as timber production, agriculture and mining (Kline, 2000).

Recently, many advocates of tourism have promoted, seemingly new tourism concepts, such as nature-based tourism, responsible tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism (DEAT, 1996). These new forms of tourism are promoted as an environmentally safe way for rural communities to use and generate income from natural resources. These principles are advocated, particularly in developing countries, because many developing countries possess a comparative advantage over developed countries in their abilities to provide relatively pristine natural settings (Cater, 1993; Pigram & Wahab, 2000). Affluence, education and conservation, are all seen as contributing to the increasing tourist

visitation to wild lands (Laarman & Sedjo, 1992). Transportation, food production, tour-guiding and souvenir sales are part of this tourism growth.

One of the main objectives of this study was not only to establish the level of community participation in the management of coastal tourism development around the Town of St Lucia Town, but also to reveal how stakeholders perceive the application of conservation measures as compared to commercial undertakings in the study area. Thus for purposes of this study conservation relates to the wise utilisation of natural resources, which promotes enlightened usage resulting in low visitor impact, and provides for the socio-economic benefits and involvement of the local communities (Nzama *et al*, 2005).

1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In addressing the intention of this research study it is important to give some background information so as to better understand the research question that is being pursued. In the recent past the St Lucia Greater Wetland Park, now called Isimangaliso Wetland Park was classified as a World Heritage Site in December 1999, and since then became even more renowned and popular than before. The Wetland Park achieved the World Heritage status because of its unique ecological processes; superlative natural phenomenon and scenic beauty, exceptionally rich biodiversity (Nzama, 2008; Magi & Nzama, 2009a). These attributes have made iSimangaliso Wetland Park to be one of the prime eco-destinations in South Africa with a potential to attract both domestic and international tourists. Amidst this change and increase in the number of tourists, the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings has become popular and congested with visitors. It is under these circumstances that this study is being pursued.

The Town of St Lucia and its natural surrounding areas with indigenous dune forest, grass lands, game and nature reserves, is from one perspective, under threat from the increase of visitors and commercialisation of activities. From another perspective there is need to engage in more conservation of the coastal tourism resources by instituting effective management strategies. As a conservation area, the St Lucia natural environment is entrusted to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and has been regarded as an innovative and highly dedicated custodian of eco-tourism development in the region (Nzama, 2008). Town of St Lucia and its surroundings understandably, is regarded as one of the major tourist attractions and vacation spots worthy of treating with care and good management. Its coastline has a wide range of natural and human-made attributes that make the area an attractive tourist and recreational destination.

The St Lucia coastline provides an excellent area for swimming, fishing, angling, surfing, water-skiing, boating and sailing. The area that is being studied has a special significance to cater for the needs of outdoor recreation participants. The marine recreation area comprises the beach and estuary. Marine tourism development, coastal development and management thereof involve a wide variety of governance institutions (Glavovic, 2000) including government, the private sector, parastatal organizations, statutory bodies, community-based and non-governmental organization, as well as civil society.

1.3 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

As mentioned earlier, tourism is considered to be one of the fast growing industries in South Africa and in the whole world. Tourism is also becoming a major contributor to the global economy, currently contributing an estimated

10.1% to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Whereas the South African tourism industry contributes to the country's GDP an amount of about 7.3% in 2003, accounting for approximately 800 000 direct and indirect jobs (SAT, 2004). In South Africa, and more specifically in places such as St Lucia Town, tourism development, in general, and coastal development in particular, mainly depends on nature-based tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

This research investigation focuses on looking at the coast, which has three components: economic, social and biophysical. It seeks to find out the perceptions of stakeholders relating the approach which needs to be adopted in the area, conservation versus commercialisation of resources. Understandably, it has become difficult for the developers of coast resources and facilities to observe and satisfy all the three components of coastal development. It seems that current behaviour patterns of tourists and recreators, reflects an "I-don't – care" attitude when it comes to the actual conservation of recreation and tourism resources, particularly in the coastal environment. It is well known that the marine resource in particular the beaches are the most popular attraction, but still 4 percent of all visitors of KwaZulu-Natal travel to the province only visit Durban's beaches (KZNTA, 2001).

Following on the above stated viewpoints, the main intention of this research investigation was to look at coastal tourism development around the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings, paying attention to conservation versus commercialisation of tourism resources and facilities. In directly, the study also intended to look at the existing relationships between stakeholders, as well as the planning and co-ordination efforts among all levels of decision makers, environmental planners and managers on the preparation of tourists and

recreators for intelligent use of the coastal environment as well as their participation levels.

1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Pursuant to the study background and statement of the research problem, there are numerous questions which need to be understood and cleared in as far as the development of coastal tourism resources is concerned. More important is to establish the existing balance between conservation and commercialisation of resources as well as how existing tourism and conservation policies are positively implemented to benefit the local community. In reality the research study sought to answer a number of questions, up and above those that are selected as the main objectives of this study. Some of the questions requiring answers include the following:

- Is the theoretical and philosophical meaning and value of tourism, conservation and development understood by the communities of the St Lucia and its surrounding area?
- How does policy and practice of conservation and development relate to the principle of sustainable tourism development?
- To what extent is the St Lucia Area embracing coastal development with a view of sustaining the World Heritage Site status of the area?
- What future development plans are in place for St Lucia Town and its surrounding natural environment?
- What socio-economic impacts does the Town of St Lucia have on the local communities and business people in the area?

- What existing conservation and environmental management strategies help to sustain the St Lucia area?
- Is there any improvement in the level of participation in tourism activities in the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings?
- Are there any specific variables influencing participation in tourism activities in the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings?

This study has not restricted itself in answering all the questions listed above, but has also attended to question which are fundamental and pertinent to the research question, as well as those portrayed in the research objectives.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

In order to make the intention of the study clearer, it is necessary to craft some objectives that need to be followed. 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 stakeholders understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.
- (b) To find out if the coastal tourism resources in the study area are adequately supplied.
- (c) To determine the level to which tourism management and development strategies are employed or utilised in the study area.
- (d) To find out how stakeholders perceive the application of conservation measures as compared to commercial undertakings in the study area.

- (e) To establish how stakeholders perceive the existence and application on tourism development policies in the study area.
- (f) To establish the extent to which the local community benefit from ecotourism related activities or practices.

Relative to the study design on coastal tourism development, with the view of benefiting the local community, this study seeks to explore ways of adding value to the ongoing debate. It is anticipated that this approach would make a contribution to the resolution of this research problem, using most of the objectives listed above.

1.6 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypothesis has been defined by Wellman and Kruger (2001) 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. The following hypotheses are therefore postulated:

- (a) That the stakeholders have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.
- (b) That the coastal tourism resources in the study area are not adequately supplied.
- (c) That the level of tourism management and development strategies that is employed or utilised in the study area, is not up to the required standard.

- (d) That the stakeholders perceive the application of conservation measures as compared to commercial undertakings in the study area, to be proficiently executed.
- (e) That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented.
- (f) That the local community benefit significantly from ecotourism related activities or practices.

Together with the objectives of this study, the validity and assessment of the above-stated hypotheses were either supported or rejected in trying to establish the findings of the research investigation. These hypotheses would also facilitate the process of arriving at translatable results and conclusions of the study (Magi, 2007).

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study area is delimited to cover the Town of St Lucia and its surrounding area, more specifically, its coastal tourism environment and natural resources. As such, in order to cast light on the exact spatial area that this study is investigating as well as the concepts that need explaining, it was felt appropriate to start describing the spatial and conceptual delimitation of the study. These two concepts offer some clarity to the study, so that the dimensions of investigation should be well understood. The idea of delimitation can also be equated with the notion of scoping, which is defined as the process of determining the spatial and temporal boundaries and key issues to be addressed in an environmental study (DEAT, 2004b).

1.7.1 Spatial delimitation

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 dissertation. This goes to the extent of providing the map of the study area to give more practical insight to the readers of the thesis about the area in relation to municipalities around and even beyond the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. Geographically speaking, the study area is confined to the KwaZulu-Natal Northern Region covering Umkhanyakude District Municipality and its surrounding areas of Town of St Lucia, which is located within the Isimangaliso Wetland Park reflected as the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park in Figure 1.1 below. Located next to the Town of St Lucia are important key landmarks such as the St Lucia Estuary and the Town of Mtubatuba with villages such as Dukuduku, Khula Village and Ezwen'elisha, which are relatively near the Town of St Lucia. These villages did not form part of the study, however, villagers were interviewed when they came to St Lucia.

As explained earlier, the surrounding area to the Town of St Lucia is endowed with natural features, the beach, flora and fauna. The area is rich in diversity of plant and animal life and the diversity of habitats that protects a high level of endemic and globally threatened species, especially birds and plants, was also considered to be of outstanding universal value. As can be viewed in Figure 1.1 the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park [now called Isimangaliso Wetland Park] consists of a number of natural features such as marine resources, the beach, the river and the estuary. In these natural resources many tourism and recreation activities were participated in. Some of these include: beach swimming, camping, picnicking, local craft making, birding, and wildlife watching

FIGURE 1.1: RELATIVE LOCATION OF THE TOWN OF ST LUCIA



[<http://www.zulu.org.za>. (2008)]

The eastern part of the Town of St Lucia is dominated by the St Lucia Estuary, which is part of the Isimangaliso Westland Park, a World Heritage Site, which encompasses the entire northern coastline from Mapelane Game Reserve in the south to Kosi Bay in the north. The St Lucia environment thrives from the attributes of the Isimangaliso World Heritage Site, which take in its biodiversity, breathtaking ecosystems, spectacular landscape, varieties of species of flora and fauna, as well as its reputation among international tourists.

1.7.2 Conceptual Delimitation

The intention of conceptually delimiting of the research study is to afford the reader a simplified meaning of some of the core concepts of the study. In this case, there might be the definition of concepts which are offered by different authors, bearing a different meaning from the usual, perhaps because of the author's experiences. For example, in the context of this study, the concept of 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 natural resources in the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings. The concepts of 'Black' and 'African' is being used interchangeably and synonymous in meaning in this study, and refers to the 'Black South African' population.

There are also a number of principles that have been used in the text of this study, which need to be noted. 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 1.9).

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Since there are concepts that are frequently and repeatedly used in this study, it is therefore incumbent on the researcher do define them so that they are used in their proper context. Hence, these concepts that are frequently used need to be judiciously explained and elucidated so as to remove any ambiguity and equivocality, so as to better understand the contextual meaning of these terms and concepts (Magi, 2007). As such, to make some of the terms useful and more applicable to this research study, the following operational definitions are presented:

1.8.1 Tourism

The definition of the concept of tourism has tended to vary with the organisation using it as well as in terms of the author explaining what the concept is all about. According to Goeldner & Ritchie, (2009: 616) tourism viewed institutionally relates to:

The entire world industry of travel, hotels, transportation and all other components, including promotion that serves the needs and wants of travellers. Tourism today has been given a new meaning and is primarily a term of economics, referring to an industry.

At another level McIntosh, *et al*,(2002) have argued that tourism relates to and comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in place outside their usual environment for more than one consecutive year for leisure, recreation activities, business and other purpose. For the purpose of this study the term tourism is used to mean travelling of people to coastal outdoor recreation facilities. According to the White Paper on Tourism (DEAT 1996) tourism is

described as travel for whatever purpose, which results in one or more nights being spent away from home especially in commercial accommodation. In this study tourism refers to both national and international tourism. It is the study of people about a minimum of fifty kilometres away from their place of residence and work for a period of about twenty-four hours or more but not exceeding one year. This could be for the purpose of business, pleasure, education, and so on, and the whole industry that arises to cater for the needs of such travellers (Holloway, 1998; Cooper, *et al*, 2008).

1.8.2 Ecotourism

Ecotourism can be looked at in two ways: where it promotes ecological processes to operate within a specific environment, alternatively, protect the integrity of the ecosystems, as well as use and enjoy maximally the use of the environment or nature (Goeldner, *et.al*, 2006). 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 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 population.

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 nature 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 definitions cited above specifically related to this research study.

1.8.3 Development

The concept ‘development’ is one of the most diversely meaning concepts, which tends to mean various things to different individuals. The White Paper on Environmental Management (DEAT,1997) sees development as a process of improving human well-being through a reallocation of resources that involves some modification of environment. It addresses basic needs, equity and the redistribution of wealth. It focuses on quality of life rather than the quantity of economic activity. In this study the term ‘development’ would imply the establishment and promotion of new coastal tourism development related facilities and activities. These would facilitate the betterment of the livelihood or lifestyle of a society or community from one level of growth to another.

The concept of development has been recognised as not only referring to the improvement of facilities, but also economic, environmental and educational opportunities and training. Hence, Booth and Snower (1996) argue that training in this regard entails the acquisition of skills, knowledge and expertise to do the jobs effectively as well as an in-service or on-the-job training bring about some improvement to the trainees. All these education and training opportunities are expected to leads to the improvement of society.

1.8.4 Coastal Development

In the context of coastal development and tourism development, these concepts may be seen and equated to a form of spatial and real estate development, where whilst seeking to improve human well-being, they add to the pressures on the use of land without breaking down the constraining factors associated with growth and (Cooper, *et al.*, 2008). In other words, coastal and tourism development relate to process for improving human spatial welfare through re-allocation of resources that involves some modification of the environment (DEAT, 1997). That is, coastal development also implies the establishment and promotion of new tourism facilities and activities, upgrading and marketing of already existing ones around the coast, and creating a safe and user-friendly environment for tourists and local communities.

For purposes of this study, ‘coastal development’ also embraces the process of spatial change or transformation of the economic and social structure of communities and specific areas, such as the coasta areas. Development in this study is seen as creating a better quality of life for people rather than just economic growth (Twamasi, 2008).

1.8.5 The Coast

The concept ‘coast’ relates to the area of land next to and along the sea, also called beach. The coast or coastal zone includes estuaries, onshore area, and offshore area, whenever they form an integral part of the coastal system (DEAT, 2006). The coast has also been described as a distinct but limited spatial area that gets its character mainly from direct interaction between the land and the sea. Related to this term the concept of coastal resources, which are natural and human-produced goods and services that either dependent on the coast for their

existence or whose value is considerably enhanced by location at the coast. All these processes and functions of the coastal products depend on good coastal management practices (DEAT, 2006).

1.8.6 Nature Conservation

Conservation is broadly known as the maintenance of environmental quality and functioning of spatial, atmospheric, natural features (DEAT, 2006). Nature conservation is defined as the wise use of natural resources for the benefit of both present and future generation. It is concerned with the rate, purpose, and efficiency of utilisation of the natural resources (Hackett, 1993). Conservation does not mean stopping all consumption and development. Rather, it deals with the regulation of consumption and development to ensure that there is an adequate supply of resources and services. It is usually applied to a relationship between man and nature with the aim of improving his quality of life.

1.8.7 Commercialisation / Commodification

There is not a clear, distinct and established definition of the concept *commercialisation* of tourism products. Therefore, operational purposes the term *commodification* is used synonymously with the term *commercialisation* in this research study. Essentially, commodification is the commercialisation of an object or activity that is not inherently commercial, as ecotourism is not a commercial product. In this study, commercialisation can therefore, be described as the process of introducing a new product into the market, with a view of achieving improved product development. The commercialised status of the product would be achieved through most moneys being spent on advertising, sales promotion, and other marketing efforts [<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/commercialisation>. (2009)].

Another view advanced in that commodification can also seen as the transformation of goods and services (or things that may not normally be regarded as goods or services) into a commodity. In other words, it is the assignment of a commercial value to a product or activity which may have been invaluable or valueless, that is, giving a market value to some previously non-commercial goods and services [<http://www.en.wiktionary.org/wiki/commodification>. (2008)].

1.8.8 Strategy:

Fundamentally the term ‘strategy’ refers to putting up some actions in order to influence the behaviour of another person, persons or organisation, which may be following on existing policies or not. A strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal or outcome, most often to gain the upper hand in a challenge or contest [<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy>. (2007)]. In other words, a strategy is a plan of action relating to how a specific campaign shall develop, as well as how the plan components are fitted together so as to contribute most advantageously, to achieving its objectives. Strategy generally leads to some organisations doing well in their business, for periods of time in conditions of relative stability, low environmental turbulence and little competition for resources [<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy> (2007)].

This research study adopts this approach in defining the concept of strategy.

1.8.9 Policy

According to Mwandla (2002) the term ‘policy’ in the widest sense of the term is a course of action adopted by a government or party or person to achieve a specific result. A more comprehensive definition of tourism policy, therefore, is a course of action guiding principle, or procedure considered to be expedient or

advantageous in the planning and management of tourism facilities and activities to Mwandla (2002). However, policy-making requires the use of personal discretion and expert knowledge in the handling of individual situations. During the natural course of events the corporate effect is to mould decisions in specialized area, and this frequently becomes the basis for policy (Rodney and Toalson, 1981).

1.8.10 Practice/Practices

The terms ‘practice’ and ‘practices’ are used here synonymously, only recognising their singular or plural usage. Generally the term ‘practice’ is understood to be the opposite of ‘theory’. The emphasis of the meaning of practice or practices is on the idea of continuous actions with regard to use of tourism 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> (2008)].

For purposes of this research investigation the term ‘practices’ relates to the actions that the respondents are participating in as a way of concretising the provisions of the tourism policy. In other words, the term relates also to the manner in which stakeholders perceive the conservation of tourism as against the commercialisation of tourism.

1.8.11 Community

The concept of ‘community’ has a diverse connotation of meanings and depends on who is writing or is being written about. McIntosh, *et al.* (2002) regard the community as relating to the local people, who get employed as a result of tourism related activities, and who have a face to face relationship with the

tourist. The identified community may be based on geographical areas or localities ranging in size from a single street through estates, neighbourhoods, and wards, other smaller administrative areas such as school, catchment areas and parishes, villages, towns, district, counties to nations and even groups of nations (Murray, *et al.* 1994). Another view is that the local community relates to those people who are impacted on by tourism activities (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). 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.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As mentioned earlier, the study focuses on coastal tourism development strategies, as well as how the coastal resources are managed and utilised by the stakeholders in the context of conservation and commercialisation [commodification]. It is anticipated that the findings of the study will be of great assistance in the improvement of the current situation at the Town of St Lucia. Looking at the coastal development principles or guidelines, the study is expected to introduce basic principles upon which to identify the means and ways of developing the area in a responsible and sustainable manner. As the study compares the coastal development process, in two ways, that is, the conservation perspective and the commercialisation approach. It is therefore, anticipated that the respondents in the study area, would select the most effective approach that they perceive as having the potential to improve their livelihoods, as people who are dependent on coastal resources and facilities.

A number of communities in the St Lucia environment were forcefully removed from the iSimangaliso Wetlands Park area, and also characterised by poverty and unemployment. The findings of this research study are expected to ameliorate the negative feelings of these communities. It is hoped that coastal tourism development initiatives would enhance the provision of job opportunities in the study area.

Academically, it was anticipated that the study would contribute to the body of literature dealing with coastal tourism development, tourism policies and strategies, as well as the conservation and commercialisation of natural resources. Also worth noting as a point of contribution, is the outcome of the perceptions of the local people about whether they understand the policies and management practices carried out by the tourism and conservation authorities in KwaZulu-Natal. If the perceptions of the community are positive about tourism and conservation, then the arguments against industrialisation is half won.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study on the analysis of the coastal tourism development strategies and practices in the study area, as well as evaluating the conservation versus commercialisation practices, is carried out giving due recognition to the independent views of the respondents. Furthermore, the study was designed in a way that attempts to focus on the expected ethical standards and principles related to research. These include the following:

- Ethical issues relating to individual to researcher, that is, the research study shall not be undertaken for personal financial gain.

- Research and academic plagiarism shall be totally precluded from this study, particularly as relating failing to acknowledge all secondary sources used in the study and any materials cited.
- Misuse of privileges afforded to the researcher by the respondents, that is, invading the respondent's privacy during the data collection stage of the research process.
- Confidentiality and privacy of the information provided by the respondents shall be protected by keeping the information given not to be disclosed.
- Anonymity of the respondents, as well as the identity and privacy of the respondent shall remain be protected as was promised from the very onset of the investigation.
- The researcher had acquired a voluntary and informed consent of the respondents to the study. The study shall therefore conform to the principle of voluntary consent where the respondents shall participate in the study willingly. Informed consent shall be based on information, an identification of the researcher.

Inclusive of the ethical considerations listed above, there are those that directly relate to the researcher such as about the dissemination of research findings, which will be publicised. Finally, the observation of academic freedom as well as institutional rights, relating to issues of intellectual property, are some of the matters that would be given due recognition.

1.11 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Rumsey (2005) research has one aim, that is, the ultimate discovery of truth. Its purpose is to learn what has never been known before; to

ask a significant question for which no conclusive answer has been found, and through the medium of relevant facts and their interpretation, to attempt to find the answer to those questions. The methodological procedure of this study following the research components listed below. In other words this study investigates the different types of people, ranging from the users of coastal resources (tourists/recreators), local communities and, coastal resource developers and managers. The study is interested in the accurate assessment of the characteristics of the above mentioned components. Among methods given priority, is the survey method, which would measure variables and produce statistical information (Neuman, 2000: 247). In addition, the usage of existing sources, such as the internet, statistical data, newspapers, interview results and historical comparative data, becomes extremely important.

1.11.1 Research Design

This study has used the non-experimental study design. Fisher, *et al*, (2002) has pointed out that this type of the study designs is the most appropriate for collecting descriptive information or for conducting small case studies. The researcher also thought that the study design was useful as a diagnostic study to determine the reasons why the problem existed. Relating to the methods of collecting and analysing data in this study, these have been selected in such a way that they should yield results that would resolve some of the issues investigated. Data was collected mainly via the questionnaire, with a view of reaching various stakeholders in the Town of St Lucia and surroundings.

1.11.2 Study Population

The target population for the study consisted of the local communities, tourists or visitors, the authorities, service providers and the business sector operating in

St. Lucia and surroundings. The service providers would be those that are marine resource users in particular (include both beach users and estuary users), the national and international tourists available. The local communities would be those that can be associated with tourism activities and include people of the Town of St Lucia and those staying in surrounding villages such as Khula, Dukuduku and Ezwen'elisha.

1.11.3 The Sample

A proportionate sampling procedure was used to select the category of people from which questions were distributed as categorised in the heading above. For purposes of this research study, a randomly stratified sample of 135 respondents was used for collecting relevant information. The different categories of the sample eventually came out as follows: (a) local community members constituting a sample of 82 respondents; (b) the service providers, 20 respondents; (c) the tourists about 18, and (d) the Isimangaliso Park employees or officials making up a sample of 15 respondents. These categories of samples were interviewed, comprising respondents with a variety of activities, jobs and responsibilities. Some examples of these respondents included: national tourists, beach users, estuary users, local street vendors, shop owners, guest house owners, and accommodation managers, community leaders, traditional leaders, municipal officers and the conservation officers..

1.11.4 Instrumentation

Since the sample for this study was large enough to permit statistical analysis, it was thought convenient to use a structured interview than an un-structured interview, since according to Fisher (2002) the former lend itself better to quantitative analysis and the latter would create serious data processing

difficulties, particularly if the sample was large. In this study, a structured interview schedule, using a researcher-administered questionnaire was utilised. This was to ensure that respondents were asked similar sets of relevant questions in the same sequence. The research questions comprised closed-ended and open-ended questions. All questions were designed and coded to suite the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) computer programme, available at the Department of Recreation and Tourism at the University of Zululand. The analysis of data was presented in the form of frequency tables, frequency percentages, columnar graphs and pie graphs, as well as cross-tabulations

1.11.5 Collection of Data

The research data was collected from the various stakeholders in the study area. The relevant community protocols, like asking for permission to hold a meeting with the communities in tribal areas, were followed. It is important to note that the interviewers asked questions verbally especially to local community members some of whom were illiterate. The more literate community members were presented with the questionnaires to read and complete on the spot, with guidance of the interviewers. The telephone and email facilities were not used in interviewing the respondents.

The observation method was also used as a supplementary method of collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher was successful in observing some of the activities taking place in the study area. These were recorded to back up statistical evidence acquired from the respondents. With regard to acquiring documentary evidence from organisational sources, the researcher was able to access the documents of the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife. In addition a

formal request was made to the municipality to allow the researcher to have a look at their local economic development plan or strategy.

1.11.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The responses received from the interviews and the findings from observations and documents were analysed using the content analysis method that grouped data into relevant categories (Kerlinger, 1986). After data collection was achieved, data presentation, analysis and interpretation were embarked upon, immediately. Frequency-percentage tables, graphs and cross-tabulations were used to present that analysed data. As mentioned earlier the questionnaires were analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The study therefore, used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The statistical representation of data was achieved through frequency-percentage tables were then interpreted to reveal respondents' views and perspectives. The statistics used were based on the frequency of responses and converted to appropriate percentage values. The resultants 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.

1.11.7 Pilot study

Approximately twelve questionnaires were prepared to pilot the study. They were distributed among the stakeholders to reveal the level of accuracy and understanding of the questions completed. 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 the respondents explaining the objectives of the study so as to ease the possibility of

any tensions that might arise. All the respondents that were interviewed resided within the Town of St Lucia and surrounding areas. To reiterate, the primary aim of the pilot study was not only to establish whether questions were clearly understood, but also to test whether the questions solicited expected responses, as well as reveal the consistency in terms of meaning and expression attached to them. In other words the pilot study was done in order to test the reliability and validity of questions. 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.

1.12 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study consists of five chapters, that is, the introduction chapter, theoretical background chapter, physical setting chapter, data analysis and interpretation chapter, and a summary and conclusion chapter.

Chapter 1: The orientation to the study serves as a prelude to other chapters and describes the overall character of the study. In other words, in this chapter a tentative orientation of the study is revealed. Terminology that is prevalent in this study is explained and conceptualised. It also deals with the objectives and significance of the study. Furthermore it introduces concepts that are central to the study and these terms are defined and conceptualised. One of the most important components of this chapter is the statement of objectives and related educated conjectures, which are a projection of the possible outcomes of the research. This chapter has exposed the core problem underpinning the study. It

has given the layout and procedure that has been followed in the study towards solving the core problem of the study.

Chapter 2: The theoretical framework focuses on some of the literature that relates to the study. This chapter reflects what other scholars or researchers in the field of recreation have written in relation to the topic. It provides a conceptual framework for purposes of generating objectives and outcomes for the study. It actually looks at the existing literature works and investigates how previous scholars addressed the concepts that are covered in this study. It is upon the basis of these literary works that authentic generalisations can be made.

This chapter in turn forms the theoretical foundation on which the study is build. It explores other studies that have been undertaken on tourism provision and utilisation. Firstly, definitions of recreation and other related concepts are presented. Secondly, it scrutinises the provision of tourism facilities. Thirdly, it focused on the management strategies associated with the prospects of tourism delivery and; lastly, it reflects on peoples' perspective towards policy formulation and implementation in the study area.

Chapter 3: Setting of the study area provides a general background, the history of the study area, and the actual location map of the area was give, that is, the map of the Town of St Lucia and surroundings. The chapter focuses on the nature of the study area, such as geographical features and geomorphological landscape, climate conditions and vegetation. The infrastructure in the Town of St Lucia and surroundings was also highlighted. The latter includes roads, educational facilities, tourism facilities, and natural tourism resources. This

chapter also focuses on the geology, climate, natural vegetation and wild life in the area. Accessibility to the study area is given some attention.

Chapter 4: The data analysis and interpretation of the study is presented in this chapter. More importantly the analysis of data is presented in the form of tables and graphs. Analytic and interpretive discussions of data collected are presented, attempting to produce judgements emanating from the analysis. In this chapter an attempt was also made to discuss some general guidelines that ought to be considered when providing community tourism facilities and programmes. This chapter is regarded as the core of this research investigation in that the empirical analysis and synthesis of data and ideas are put into effect. It is at this point in the analysis of information that inferences are made about findings of the study. Importantly, the objectives of the study are fully assessed at this point.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations. This chapter gives the summary of the findings and make recommendations pertaining coastal tourism development in the study area. The study also contains a comprehensive bibliography of the literature, the books, journals and websites consulted during the theoretical research of the study. Also included are the questionnaires and transmittal letters used for purposes of collecting data.

1.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to give the reader some orientation to the study as a whole. Some introductory statements relating to the research problem, objectives and methodological and analytical approaches pertinent to the study

have been addressed. The understanding of ecotourism in relation to the importance of supply and demand, the utilisation, conservation, commercialisation of resources, as well as the existence of policies, and community benefit, were clarified. Furthermore, the chapter also addressed the possible needed policy changes in order to achieve ecotourism development in the study area. To achieve these aims this chapter has set out the orientation of the study, giving appropriate objectives, hypotheses, definition of terms and the research methodology.

The increasing significance of the tourism outputs at the Isimangaliso Wetland Park resources management options, mounting attention to benefit-cost analysis of tourism conservation versus commercialisation has become important in this research study. Finally, the provision of tourism facilities is rooted in the shared responsibilities for and commitment to economic and social development of the municipality. This clearly means that provision of tourism facilities requires co-operation between public and private organisations, introducing partnerships and joint decision-making at all levels within the municipality and the local communities.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism in its broadest context could be seen as having the potential to enhance the development of local economies. In this regard, ecotourism could enhance conservation of both natural and cultural resources and improvement in the quality of life of St Lucia people. It is therefore of utmost importance to establish the possible correlation between ecotourism development and the impact tourism could have on local areas with diversity of resources (Odendaal, & Schoeman, 1990). According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion on Tourism (DEAT, 1996) a positive impact of tourism on the environment could only be achieved, if there was adequate training opportunities for previously neglected groups in the South African society. Therefore the greatest deficiency in the tourism participation system in the Town of St Lucia and surrounding, is the absence of adequate education, training and awareness opportunities for the locals.

The main aim of this chapter, designated as the theoretical framework, is provide an overview some of the related literature, models and principles associated with tourism supply, participation, provision and development in the study area – The St Lucia Town and its surrounding. In this regard, literary sources connected with the principles and philosophies of ecotourism

development and particularly demonstrated in the objectives of the study, are well described in this section. Some of these key principles and philosophies revolve around: levels of understanding tourism meaning, supply, strategies, utilisation, conservation, commercialisation, commodification of ecotourism, as well as the perceived community benefits from engaging in coastal tourism development.

2.2 UNDERSTAND THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM

The comprehension of the meaning of ecotourism highly depends on the provision of good education and training. Fundamentally, it is essential to understand the nature of ecotourism, its development and its sustainability. As mentioned earlier, from its inception tourism, as a concept and industry, has been growing from strength to strength. In the 21st Century, tourism has come to be regarded as the most leading industry and revenue maker for many countries of the world. Tourism is not only the world's biggest industry but also one of the fastest growing. It is a multidimensional industry, growing fast and becoming a major social and economic force in the world and has thus moved from being mainly for the rich to being accessible and affordable to almost everyone throughout the world (McIntosh *et al.*, 2002).

Ecotourism denotes that ecological and other associated impacts be predicted and identified for social and economic changes. That is the reason the suitability of land-use and tourism-use should be determined and implemented appropriately in the study area. Increased population pressure on limited recreation resources around the Mtubatuba Municipality and the Town of St Lucia, have potential for sustainable uses, and it is indeed a fact that the area

would need appropriate environmental management policies, not only for land resources but also for cultural resources too. Aaronson (2000), argues that perhaps we shall have to change our whole lifestyle and consume less resources in order to achieve what might really be termed a more sustainable development. The behaviour of individuals in communities that over-consume or exploit resources should be regulated by a resource management policy to enhance what he called an “eco-friendly” lifestyle. The understanding of these processes would among local communities would contribute positively to the development of tourism and coastal resources in the study area.

Aaronson (2000) has further argued that the positive aspects of tourism from a social and cultural perspective is that, whereas it should be managed in a sustainable manner, it has potential to create economic conditions for establishing new activities and providing new tourism facilities. It is therefore vital to promote ecotourism in the coastal areas of the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings. In the context of this study, this research investigation seeks to make a comparative analysis as to how stakeholders comprehend perceive conservation versus commercialisation of tourism activities in the study area.

2.2.1 Tourism Facilities

In studying and understanding the tourism facilities it is important to know the kind of features that are involved. For general purposes these outdoor recreation facilities include: mountains, rivers, wilderness, lakes, estuaries, seas, beaches, game parks and the like. One of the objectives of this study was to make a comparative analysis between the conservation of facilities versus their commercialisation or commodification. It is worth noting that the Town of St Lucia and its surroundings, have many of the facilities listed above, including

wild animals, which are a primary resource. Some of the people of the villages around St Lucia Town and Surrounding area, have to travel some distances before reaching some of these facilities. This therefore suggests that the communities of Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village, also known as Dukuduku Settlement, which are relatively near the Town of St Lucia, need to be invited in decision-making regarding the supply and location of the outdoor recreation facilities for their usage (UIDP, 2008).

The natural environment as a point of focus, creates both opportunities and constraints for tourism and recreation in an area where the people have to utilise the resource (Tribe *et al*, 2000). From researcher's observation, it seems the people of St Lucia Town and Surroundings need to be educated more about the facilities before actually visiting the outdoor facilities, so as to reduce the destruction of the environment. According to Butler & Boyd (2000) the concept of sustainable development results from the observation that the current generations are imposing too great a demand upon natural environment.

2.2.2 Tourism Activities

Similar to the situation about facilities, the increased demand for outdoor recreation activities, mainly for enjoyment, stems from the fact that human beings are living, active organisms, and derive satisfaction when using their innate abilities. Thus according to Bucher *et al*, (2001), the community of St Lucia Town and Surroundings needs to take part in all activities available in their area. Bucher *et al*, (2001) have further argued that instead of regarding leisure as an opportunity for enjoyment through active participation, we may have to view it as a source of passive pressure. In this form, the individual watches others participate and seeks diversion through entertainment.

The list of outdoor recreation activities is long and varied. It includes picnicking, hunting, fishing, nature study, horseback riding, boating, photography and so on [http://www.kaipara.govt.nz/pdf/taharoa_domain/impacts-of-powerboating-and-skiing. (2008); McCall and McCall, (2008)]. Among the above mentioned activities, there are those which are said to be inexpensive and unstructured where unemployed people participate more. Typical examples are playing games, sight-seeing, picnicking and swimming. The majority of unemployed citizens of the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, including the Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village, also known as Dukuduku Settlement, are expected to select participate in swimming, because such facilities are abundant in the coastal environment the study area is located, as well as that there are no fees charged for entrance.

2.3 SUPPLY OF COASTAL TOURISM RESOURCES

The process of supplying or providing the coastal tourism resources is important for any village, town or municipality. The concept of supply of tourism and recreation resources, as seen by Stein (1996) means to provide, furnish or equip a good or service for purposes of engaging in leisure activities or programmes. The supply of tourism resources also relates to the planning and management of such facilities. On the other hand, Torkildsen (2005) addressing the question of who must supply resources, argues that suppliers or providers of tourism or recreation facilities ought to come from three sectors: the public sector, the community and voluntary sector and the business sector. These different sectors are made of the government and municipal authorities, tourism and leisure agencies and business companies. For all of these sectors, supply seems to

mean the provision of and making available of tourism facilities within the study area. The greatest difficulty in the realm of tourism, particularly in South Africa, is the scarcity of the current and relevant research information. Furthermore, the supply of coastal facilities coupled with the usage of the existing facilities, has been one sector that has been overlooked by local authorities in KwaZulu-Natal and more specifically in the study area.

Accordingly, for the purpose of this study, the term ‘supply’ as defined by Torkildsen (2005), is adopted and used as the operational meaning of providing and making available tourism facilities for purposes of getting the community to participating in such tourism activities. Accordingly a related term such as ‘supplier’ is seen by Goeldener & Ritchie (2009) as referring to any component of tourism in the form of transportation, accommodation and other travel services used by the travel agency or industry or tour operators to fulfil the needs of the travellers.

2.3.1 Supplying of Tourism Infrastructure

A number of tourism authors (Tribe, 2001; Lubbe, 2003) have stressed that the key contribution that municipalities make to tourism is the provision of infrastructure that promote tourism and make areas accessible to tourism. Examples of important infrastructure include: ablution facilities; safe parking; information kiosks and good roads that allow easy access to an area. It is a fact that in South Africa the legacy of apartheid has played a key role in ensuring that even to this day, predominantly Black areas do not have the required levels of infrastructure to support certain forms of tourism (Magi, 2006). An example is Umgababa area, south of Durban. This area is a Traditional Authority area that includes some attractive beaches. Residents in the area have started a

home-stay association that aims to attract tourists interested in a reasonably priced beach holiday. One of the obstacles to the success of the home-stay association is the lack of ablution facilities.

2.3.2 Supplying Support to Emerging Tourism Businesses

In the Province of KwaZulu-Natal many of the Municipalities play a prominent role in supplying tourism facilities. It has been argued that municipalities, in addition to their regulatory and support role in tourism, some of them provide direct financial support to emerging tourism enterprises in their areas of jurisdiction (McKenzie, *et al*, 2005). This can vary from providing finances and the identification and establishment of a community based tourism enterprise, to support for specific activities, that is, paying for community members to receive accredited tour guide training. It is true that no development can take place without the provision of funds. For tourism to develop within the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, the municipality would have to be willing to fund local communities in whatever tourism project they engage themselves in.

The involvement of local communities in tourism activities not only benefits the community and but also improves the quality of the tourism industry as a whole. Local communities can become involved in tourism operations, and in the provision of knowledge, services, facilities and products. The benefits should outweigh the cost of tourism to the host community and the authorities. Tourism can also generate income for resource management and improvement in addition to social and cultural benefits (Page and Dowling, 2002). It is true that some of these local people have tourism related business ideas, but the problem is unavailability of the capital to start their businesses. Even the perceptions of communities towards tourism and tourism opportunities might be

in a position to change if they are provided with finance and community based tourism enterprises are identified and established.

The supply of tourism facilities to any municipality is usually a good thing. However, if the place is without adequate accessibility of the stakeholders to the facilities, then this approach is a serious drawback (Goeldner & Ritchie). One accessibility factor that is frequently ignored in considering the linkage of demand for and supply of tourism resources and outdoor recreation facilities and activities is community awareness. If people do not know that something exists they are obviously not go to visit that particular facility or see it. Because individual leisure facilities are not sought in the same way as shopping centre or place of work, knowledge about them, particularly in small urban centres derive indirectly from, seeing them, hearing about them, or reading about them Torkildsen, (2005). The latter described situation is the case at the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. A substantial number of tourism facilities are not known to the local people.

2.4 TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Tourism management and development can be regarded as operational processes of facilitating the planning, organising and directing the production of goods, services and programmes in a tourism agency (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009). In these operational processes, it is always a good thing when the community is among the main beneficiaries from the tourism and leisure process. As such, the notion of respecting the culture of a host community, begins to become important and essential for the authorities, so as to have a well planned management system that highlights good management practices. According to

Cooper, *et al* (2000) as well as Nzama, *et al.* (2005) there are several elements of tourism that form the foundation of what can be called tourism management practices. These include the following:

(a) Management Practices in Tourist Destinations

Tourism destinations are made or broken by the management of various tourism elements or practices, such as accommodation, attractions and entertainment, transportation, food service (gastronomy), quality service, education and training, and safety and security. It is argued by Cooper *et al.* (2008) that tourists in search of a superior tourism experience will go for the richness and variety of destinations around the world. They further state that “the new tourist is no longer satisfied with a passive experience, but is seeking instead authenticity at destinations with a view to understanding the indigenous culture, history and environment and, how local people live and work (Cooper *et al.* 2000).

(b) Tourist Accommodation as a Management Practice

Accommodation is one of the oldest industries in the history of tourism and still remains one of the pillars of the tourism industry. Its management, therefore, has to be professionally executed. The modern practice is to offer good, inexpensive, yet comfortable accommodation. Modern practices of managing accommodation are aimed at improving the role of accommodation in the tourism industry (Cooper, *at al*, 2000; McIntosh, *at al*, 2002). The emerging practices in the management of accommodation in the tourism industry are found in the various hospitality sectors such as in the hotel, lodges and resorts, small motels, inns and bread and breakfast (B&B) facilities.

(c) Tourist Transportation as a Management Practice

Without doubt tourism has been understood as the outcome of the travel and stay of people away from their usual environment. The development of transport, both private and public, has become a major determinant of the success of the tourism industry. Therefore its efficient practice is the cornerstone of success in terms of tourism development. Recent transport management practices have extensively embraced computer technology as a development technique. The varieties of transportation include: air transportation; road transport; water transport and rail transport.

(d) Tourism Safety and Security as a Management Practice

One of the leading and important practices in tourism, throughout the world, is the assurance of safety and security to tourists visiting any country. This is particularly relevant for South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal. Some of the prominent and reoccurring viewpoints and statements characterising the importance of crime, safety and security in tourism include the following:

- Tourists are “the goose that lays the golden egg”, and must be protected.
- In section of South Africa there are still deficiencies of safety and security of tourists.
- Community education about the evils of tourism crime, need to be heightened.
- Police awareness and toughness towards tourism crime needs to be improved.
- Rural based tourism safety and security centres need to be establishes and integrated into existing community police forums.

(e) Service Excellence as a Management Practice

The most dominating practice about service excellence is that because of the immaturity of the industry in South Africa, the service delivery industry has tended to be rough and discourteous to many a visitor. It is important that visiting tourists have to be handled with care because these customers do often change their mind about a particular product. By any means imaginable, “quality service” is a value-laden concept. What is “quality” to one ethnic group may not be quality to another. It is therefore important that this practice in South Africa as whole has to be standardised (Halloway, 1999; Cooper *et al*, 2000; McIntosh, *et al*, 2002)..

2.5 ECOTOURISM: ITS NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT

The concept of ‘ecotourism’ fits well when it relates to the development of nature. In fact, a variety of concepts have been used in describing and marketing ecotourism, mainly to capture the attention of the targeted group to express similar environmental 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, *et.al* (2006: 123).

According to Page & Dowling (2002), five core principles are fundamental to ecotourism. They are, ecotourism is nature based, ecologically sustainable, environmentally educative, and locally beneficial and generates tourists' satisfaction. Ecotourism is a creative, entrepreneur-driven in its first generation

of development. There are no publicly owned ecotourism companies to date. Even the largest ecotourism lodge developments are still launched (Page & Dowling 2002).

The National Ecotourism Accreditation Programme (NEAP, 1999 cited Nzama, 2005) considers eight basic principles about ecotourism development, these are:

- Ecotourism focuses on personally experiencing natural areas in ways that lead to a greater understanding and appreciation.
- Ecotourism integrates into experience opportunities to understand natural areas.
- Ecotourism represent best practice for ecologically sustainable tourism.
- Ecotourism productively contributes to the conservation of natural areas.
- Ecotourism provides constructive, ongoing contributions to local communities.
- Ecotourism interprets, involves and is sensitive to different cultures, particularly, indigenous culture (Page and Dowling, 2002).

Considering the basic principles about ecotourism development, it has been found necessary to protect or conserve natural resources for sustainability of tourism. Ecotourism is the most effective strategy for development in areas with rich plant and animal communities.

2.6 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND AUTHORITIES

Without doubt the authorities and official of tourism agencies play an important role in the planning, management and implementation of tourism programmes and activities. Any development, be it tourism development, needs to be well

planned so as to be effective. Aaronson (2000) defines development as meaning different things, and that it is associated with positive social change, which means moving forward to something that is better than at present. Authorities have the national mandate to promote tourism development within their areas with an aim of bringing a positive social change, for example, job creation. This notion of development is also advocated by the White Paper on Environmental Management (DEAT 1997), which sees development as the process of improving human well-being through a reallocation of resources that involves some modification of environment. The application is particularly relevant to the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. Also included in this thinking are addressing the basic needs, equity and redistribution of tourism wealth for the local community.

When one looks at tourism development around the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, which are part of the Ezenvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, very little has been done regarding local tourism development that promotes local community participation. This nature reserve has great potential for tourism development, what may be a possible challenge is that centralised planning and management from Pietermaritzburg where the headquarters of Ezenvelo Wildlife is located. For example, the transportation needs of the Ezenvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife may be outsourced to the local communities.

2.7 TOURISM AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The notion of community development has already been indicated as one of the important criterion and need for promoting the tourism industry in any modern country. This community development is achieved through improving tourism

attractions and related activities. As such, without these attractions, the tourism industry would not flourish. The tourism industry has to benefit the local communities, these benefits are derived from the tourism industry and enhance community development. (Aaronson, 2000; Lubbe, 2003).

According to Vivian & Smit (2002) there are various ways in which communities can benefit from the tourism industry, mainly as receivers of tourists which means an inflow of foreign exchange or domestic currency. Communities can benefit from employment opportunities that a local community or country generates as a result of tourism demand. An individual can benefit from tourism by being employed in the tourism, or by providing auxiliary services to the tourism industry or by being tourists themselves. The White Paper on Tourism (DEAT, 1996) highlights some of the local community benefits from the tourism industry:

- Continued and exclusive access to biophysical resources of the protected areas for subsistence purpose;
- Provision of technical and professional training opportunities relating to positions in tourism and conservation agencies;
- Priority status in hiring programmes undertaken by tourism interests and conservation agencies;
- Priority status in licensing businesses to be operated in the parks or protected areas; and
- giving to its visitors a heightened appreciation of the traditional society (DEAT, 1996).

In the same context of community benefits, Saayman (2002) argues that if tourism is to benefit community, it is essential for developers and planners to

make a just and proper analysis, of the economic, socio-economic, political and environmental impact of such development and also to understand the impact thereof. Lack of planning can have a negative impact on the socio-cultural and economic environment. The strengthening of local communities thus plays an important role in reaching sustainable community development. Fennel (1999) highlights the principles which must be followed in order to help the co-operative efforts of the stakeholders. The co-operative efforts should focus on the following:

- Consider returning of at least some of the protected areas to indigenous people;
- Link government development programmes with protected areas;
- Give priority to small scale local development;
- Involve local people in preparing management plans;
- Build conservation into the new national culture; and
- Build on the foundation of local culture;
- Give responsibility to local people;
- Support diversity as a value (Fennel, 1999: 216).

The goals and objectives of any investigation, policy or strategy, with all the good intentions in the world, cannot translate themselves into action if there is no one to spearhead, guide and monitor the process of community involvement in tourism development to the ultimate end. The government and all related tourism authorities must play an active role in ecotourism promotion and development with the special emphasis on rural areas. It is in this context that this research investigation seeks to assess the extent to which coastal tourism development strategies in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings are used to sustain conservation versus commercialisation initiatives.

Community development initiatives have a better chance of being accepted by local people if developers begin to acknowledge that different groups within the community want different things from the tourism industry. Indigenous people are also owners and managers of natural resources, cultural artefacts and other facilities. This fact should be acknowledged by project planners in any community-based tourism.

2.8 CONSERVATION VERSUS COMMERCIALISATION

The debate between tourism conservation and tourism commercialisation or commodification, are issues on the different sides of the same coin. In an ideal environment the issues should interrelated. The debate is on whether commercialisation can protect the biodiversity in the natural environment, considering that this natural environment is a non-renewable resource (Holden, 2000; Page & Dowling, 2002). In most cases this conflict indicates existence of inequality in the ownership, management and the flow of benefits from use and conservation of resources.

In KwaZulu-Natal, around the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and more specifically around the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, tourism conservation is considered positively as a regional driver of economic development (Zalomous, 2007 cited in Nzama, 2009). This pronouncement implies that the St Lucia Town and Surroundings should align itself with the shift in national priorities from a strong focus on conservation to a new approach that integrates biodiversity conservation with regional development.

In line with the democratic changes in the country, the tourism and conservation policy framework has brought positive changes to the South African tourism landscape. Rogerson & Visser (2004) argue that these changes necessitated the integration of all activities by government, the private sector and the individual members of the local communities that are aimed at promoting sustainable tourism development. While the government is mainly responsible for developing policies that support tourism development, local communities are expected to participate actively in conservation as well as in tourism development and also to take advantage of the entrepreneurial opportunities created by the private sector (Rogerson & Visser, 2004).

2.8.1 Conservation Policy

Internationally, the legislation that is known to have established the first national park, Yellowstone Park, is important in that it provided the basis for the policy that federal land in USA would be dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure group for the benefit and enjoyment of the people (Ibrahim & Cordes, 1993). In 1916 the Congress of the USA established the National Park Service, thus the act creating this agency specified its purpose as follows:

To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects
and the wildlife there in and to provide for the enjoyment of
the same in such manner and by such means would leave
them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations
(Ibrahim & Cordes, 1993: 44).

The people of St Lucia Town and Surroundings, are engaged in some tourism activities which would require the policies of ensuring conservation of natural areas. The cases of environmental destruction have been reported in various

places in KwaZulu-Natal. To name but a few, the estuary of Lucia St Lucia Lake was heavily guarded, because people were practising fishing with no permit, whereas others were hunting some endangered species in St Lucia Game Reserve. Under these circumstances, the St Lucia Town and Surroundings has got a number of tourism facilities, which would require policies to be established and practised, so as to conserve the natural beauty of the natural environment.

2.8.2 Ecotourism and the Natural Environment

Ecotourism and the natural environment are closely related concepts and cannot be dealt with independent of one another. They influences the other. According to Faulkner, *et al.* (2000), the primary attraction base in ecotourism is focused on the natural environment though some associated cultural attributes are cited as secondary basis of attraction. They further stated that protected areas and relatively undisturbed natural environments offer high quality venue and other natural attractions. Ecotourism does not only relate ecological or environmental sustainability, but also to cultural, social and economic dimensions of a destination.

2.8.3 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. The term sustainable development emerged in the 1970s as various organizations, governments, and individuals attempted to introduce and implement development that could avert

the environmental crisis that was being engendered by the uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources.

Over-exploitation and degradation of natural resources 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 & 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 & Lew (1998) emphasize that the 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 tourist access.

2.9 APPLICATION ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

In order to discuss policy in the context of tourism development, it is essential to understand what each of these concepts mean. Accordingly, Lubbe (2003) defines policy as a set of guidelines generally accepted by all and used to improve and facilitate decision making and appropriate action under certain circumstances. In South Africa policies usually trickle down from national level to the local level. One can differentiate three levels of policy and legislative framework. In South Africa, policy exists at the national, provincial and local

levels and to some extent South African policy is influenced by international policy. The policies which are highlighted in this study are mainly provincial and local policies as they apply to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and more specifically to the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings.

2.9.1 Tourism Policy, Laws and Regulations

Policy serves as an action plan in the management of affairs. Policy is an overall high level plan that includes goals and procedures (WTO, 1997). Laws, rules and regulations, assist every individual and organizations to perform and act in a socially acceptable way, policy serves as a set of accepted principles and plans constituting a programme of action in the management of affairs. Laws, rules and regulations can thus be regarded as the parameters or the playing field within which the game must be played, and policy as the way in which the game is played (Lubbe, 2003).

2.9.2 Policy and the Government Structure

Tourism policy is generally considered to be an area within a nation's economic policy. The formulations of tourism policy are the crucial responsibility of the government that wishes to develop tourism as an integral part of its economy. The WTO (1997) highlights some of the issues that policy makers, legislators and administrators need to consider. Tourism policy has to state the role of tourism in the economy. This involves the costs involved in the implementation for public authority, and the costs for tourism firms, tourists and host communities in changing their behaviour. Administration of tourism has to be considered in tourism policy formulation. This involves the simplicity and cost in time required to set up, administer, monitor and police specific policy instruments. Tourism policy also has to take into consideration the government

support for tourism which involves government encouragement through information, education and general permission directed at tourism operators, tourists or communities in tourist areas.

2.9.3 Tourism and Variety of Policies

In South Africa, policies exist at national, provincial and local levels. At national level, the White Paper on Development of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT, 1996) provides a policy framework and guidelines for tourism development in the country. In South Africa the Interim Tourism Task Team (ITTT), which was appointed by the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in 1994, produced a Green Paper in 1995, which graduated into the White Paper on Tourism Development and Promotion in 1996. From the analysis it became clear that South Africa has not reached its potential as a tourist destination with well-structured policies and strategies.

At the provincial level, the policy is spelled out in a number of provincial White Papers (DEAT, 1991; DEAT, 1996; DEAT, 1997; DEAT, 1999). Up to 2001, only three provinces had published comprehensive policy documents (Lubbe, 2003). The Gauteng Tourism White Paper addresses matters such as tourism infrastructure; tourism training and education; tourism financing and investments; tourism and economic empowerment; tourism marketing and promotion; and safety and security. Policies also exist within organizations. The nature and type of policies developed and implemented vary according to size and nature of the enterprise. A small tourism agency is managed according to a number of basic rules and guidelines. A large local or international enterprise has a well-developed policy or set of policies and strategic plans. Large enterprises also have separate financial, human resources, marketing,

trade, local and international trade policies that guide its decision-making and operations in each of these areas.

2.9.4 Implementation of Tourism Policies

One of the objectives of policy and legislation is to regulate implementation and action. Tourism should contribute to the country's economy through generating income, attracting foreign investments and creating job opportunities. The White Paper on Tourism (DEAT 1996), describes the vision of tourism development in South Africa. There has been several policy documents which have followed the Tourism White Paper, and are discussed in brief in the next section.

2.8.5 Tourism Planning and Policies

It has been argued that tourism is an agent of change and development, which, if properly planned, will yield different benefits attributable to variations in the economic structure of destination regions and their geographical locations. If not properly planned, tourism can lead to more costs than benefits in terms of environmental and cultural degradation. It should be noted that the decade following the democratic elections saw the development of various policies and programs designed to bring about more investment in tourism (Spenceley, 2004; Viljoen, 2007). One of the key priorities of the South African government was to improve the quality of life of the previously disadvantaged individuals (PDI). To achieve this goal the government introduces policies and strategies which sought to create opportunities of economic development, poverty alleviation and community participation.

According to Rogerson & Visser (2004); Spenceley, Goodwin & Maynard (2004), some of the most important policy documents include: the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT, 1996); Tourism in GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (DEAT, 1998); the Transformation Strategy for South African Tourism (DEAT, 2000); the Responsible Tourism Guidelines (DEAT, 2002); the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment [BBBEE] (DTI, 2004b; SAGG, 2004) and Tourism Growth Strategy [SA] 2008-2010, (SAT, 2004). These policy initiatives were the basis for tourism change in South Africa, and Pigram & Wahab (2000: 28) have argued that “change is a powerful and positive force which, when harnessed constructively, challenges individual, groups and organisations to perform to their optimum capability.”

2.10 TOURISM AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The notion of community development has already been indicated as one of the important criterion and need for promoting the tourism industry in any modern country. This community development is achieved through improving tourism attractions and related activities. As such, without these attractions, the tourism industry would not flourish. The tourism industry has to benefit the local communities. Alternatively, the survival of the tourism industry is in danger if the local communities do not benefit from it in a direct way. Local community benefits derived from the tourism industry enhance community development. (Aaronson, 2000: Lubbe, 2003).

According to Vivian & Smit (2002) there are various ways in which communities can benefit from the tourism industry, mainly as receivers of

tourists which means an inflow of foreign exchange or domestic currency. Communities can benefit from employment opportunities that a local community or country generates as a result of tourism demand. An individual can benefit from tourism by being employed in the tourism, or by providing auxiliary services to the tourism industry or by being tourists themselves. The benefits of tourism have lagged behind because of what the White Paper on Tourism (DEAT, 1996), has designated as “missed opportunities” (DEAT 1996).

The policy framework which identified weaknesses or “missed opportunities” in the industry include the following: (a) inadequate funding directed towards recreation and tourism; (b) deficient recreation and tourism education and training; (c) limited involvement of local communities; (d) ineffective safety and security measures and crime prevention; and (e) the lack of integrated national, provincial and local tourism development and management structures. New principles, policies and strategies aimed at achieving responsible tourism; community-driven tourism; integrated and sustainable tourism and tourism assessment and accountability have to be initiated and sustained. The goals and objectives of any investigation, policy or strategy, with all the good intentions in the world, cannot translate themselves into action if there is no one to spearhead, guide and monitor the process of community involvement in tourism development to the ultimate end.

2.11 THE LOCAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM ECOTOURISM

Tourism resources bring several benefits to the community around where the resources are found. The benefits could either be direct or indirect, for example

the community around get to be employed, and thus the level of unemployment is reduced and poverty is alleviated. Some of the indirect benefits could be the infrastructure that is caused by the use of the resources around a certain place. Infrastructure could include the building of the roads, electricity and the sewage system, on some specific area, especially if the area is in the rural areas.

2.11.1 Economic Empowerment and Industry Transformation

Ownership of the tourism industry in South Africa and many other developing destinations, particularly in rural areas remains in the hands of established businesses and not the local community. The transformation of the tourism industry and economic empowerment of disadvantaged individuals and communities to initiate tourism projects, and to establish and operate tourism businesses, is according to Keyser (2002) high on the agenda of leading tourism organisations, such as DEAT.

Keyser (2002) further asserts that economic empowerment is ‘an integrated and coherent socio-economic process located within the context of national transformation aimed at redressing the imbalances of the past by seeking to substantially and equitably transfer ownership, management and control of South Africa’s financial and economic resources to the majority; to ensure broader and meaningful participation in the economy by Black people. Jones *et al.* (2002) adds that empowerment processes includes: job creation, rural development, poverty alleviation, specific measures to empower Black women, skills transfer and management development, education, meaningful ownership and access to finance to conduct business. It is important to note that a well resourced community would be able to make a good choice between

conservation and commercialisation or commodification of ecotourism at the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings.

2.12 TOURISM BENEFITS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

It is a generally accepted fact 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 & Dowling, 2002). In addition, the benefits related expectations in the study area, will become possible through the implementation of development policies in comparison to the conservation of tourism resources.

The coastal and tourism development initiatives that are taking place around the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings are characterised by some individuals getting involved in selling of local artefacts to tourists at the open crafts market.

The **Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village, also known as Dukuduku Settlement**, have their communities being 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. These activities pursued by stakeholder would also contribute to the sustainable development of conservation. These ventures refer to individual who are selling crafts, performing cultural activities and other benefits they get through tourism.

2.12.1 Economic 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 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 & 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.

2.12.2 Non-economic benefits

According to Mahony & Van Zyl (2002) the non-economic as well as the non-financial developmental benefits are worth consideration on the basis of the following initiatives:

- (a) The extent of capacity building and training within the community;
- (b) The degree to which the local community is involved in decision-making,
- (c) The social and cultural impacts of the various programmes and 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.

2.12.3 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 (Pigram, & Wahab, 2000).

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 (Pigram, & Wahab, 2000).

2.12.4 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)].

2.13 CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this chapter, it was mentioned that its basic aim is to explore the theoretical underpinnings related to literature, models and principles associated with tourism supply, participation, provision and development in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. In this regard, literary sources connected with the principles and philosophies of ecotourism development and particularly demonstrated in the objectives of the study, were well described in this section.

In other words, the chapter attempted to set the scene for establishing the relationship between conservation and commercialisation as perceived or identified by the stakeholders.

Most of the relevant literary sources have expressed the need for community involvement and participation in various tourism activities, with a view of finding out if they are conservation or commercialisation inspired. 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.

Finally, the differing conceptual views expressed in this chapter need to be viewed seriously when decisions are taken, so as to prevent conflicts between the St Lucia authorities and the neighbouring communities around the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. The recent developments in the new democracy in South Africa have ushered in policies and strategies that would hopefully bring about a better understanding of the need to make informed choices about preservation, conservation in relation to development and commercialisation.

CHAPTER 3

PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In a research investigation, such as this, empiricism and physical analysis of phenomena is important. In science, the view associated with empirical evidence, is based on the belief that only that which can be experienced by the senses is reality. Furthermore, the evidence of what is observed in the physical environment stands to be more reliable than phenomena described in the theoretical realm (Magi, 2007). There are common characteristics identifiable about most tourism features which attract people to tourist destinations, such as the study area. It can therefore be argued that:

By observing reality through a conceptual framework, imperfections, peculiarities, and deviations from a general concept can be identified. Conversely, examination of factual reality is necessary, if for no other reason than to suggest needed improvement in theory Thus a careful blend of fact and theory is a prerequisite to sound geographical understanding. Theory without fact, or with only a few facts to verify the theory, often leads to blind acceptance of presumed spatial arrangements - arrangements that may exist only in the mind of the theoretician.

[Boyce, (1974: 2) cited in Magi, 2007]

For example, sound geographical understanding of recreation and tourism phenomena, thrives on the notion that for both inland dwellers and those who

live along the coast or 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 (Mwandla, 2002). 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 to tourists (Mwandla, 2002). Normally, the physical setting as well as tourism activities and facilities provided in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, as well assisted by the presence of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, would entice visitors.

The main aim of this chapter is to discuss the physical setting of the study area, with a view of painting the scene for the analysis and interpretation of data presented in the next chapter. In this chapter, emphasis is placed on the following topics: the historical and physical overview of the area, settlement patterns, physiography and climate, as well as socio-economic and cultural activities in the study area.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the Town of St Lucia and its Surroundings is basically wrapped around the history of St Lucia Lake which is part of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. 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 covers five ecosystems: Marine, Eastern Shores, St. Lucia Lake, Mkuze Swamps and Western Shores, which offers a variety of outdoor recreation and wildlife experiences.

Originally iSimangaliso Wetland Park was occupied and owned by the Sokhulu and Mbuyaze 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 as the Colony of Natal and designated a 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. (2008)].

Between 1935 to 2000 a variety of legislative acts were promulgated as an attempt to protect the park as well as secure the biodiversity and conservation of the natural qualities and attributes of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Some these include: the Sea-Shore Act No.21of 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/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica>. (2008)].

The history of the Town of St Lucia has always been overshadowed by the history of the conservation areas and nature reserves in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park area. St Lucia is a small town that is surrounded by an estuary. The town is isolated from the mainland by an Estuary Channel St Lucia, so one can almost describe it as an island with the Indian Ocean on one side and the estuary on the other. It is renowned as a fisherman's paradise. The St Lucia Estuary Nature Reserve has several animals: crocodiles, hippos, red duiker, bushbuck, impala, zebra, wildebeest, fish eagles and goliath herons are regularly seen without entering the park [<http://www.kznnorthhappenings.co.za/stlucia-homepage.htm>. (2008)]

Regarding the historical development of the villages of Ezwenelisha and Khula, also known as Dukuduku Settlement, which are relatively near the Town of St Lucia, it can be argued that they have been places of protest. These protests have come since promulgation of laws, between the years 1935 to 2000. After these promulgations communities have continued to live in some sections of 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 that were removed from their original places were transported to Mpukunyoni. They however, came back to their place of origin which is Dukuduku Area. Dukuduku forests was declared as a conservation area, therefore local people were given an alternative place which is Khula Village and Ezwen'elisha Village. Other people have stubbornly remained in Dukuduku when others moved to Khula Village. In 2008 the government has allowed those Dukuduku people to stay in the Ezwenelisha Village, which is also known as Dukuduku Settlement, on a permanent basis.

3.3 PHYSICAL LAYOUT OF THE STUDY AREA

The physical layout of the study area, the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, consisting of Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village [all together known as Dukuduku Settlement], are all under the influence of iSimangaliso Wetland Park, the World Heritage Site. All these environmental and natural centres are described in this section in some detail. It is anticipated that the location maps [Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3] will give the reader an idea of the relative position of the study area.

3.3.1 Location of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

As mentioned above the location of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park has a strong influence on the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, which include Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village, as well as the Dukuduku Settlement Area [Refer to Figure 3.1 & 3.2]. Geographically, the whole natural environment is in the country of South Africa and situated at the north-eastern coast of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The Simangaliso Wetland Park starts 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. The main study area is around the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings and all use and regard the Mtubatuba Local Municipality as their centre for administrative operations. It is important to note, from Figure 3.1, that the town of Mtubatuba is often regarded as the gateway to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. It is characterised by unique environmental and location features, which are later described in some detail in this section [See Figure 31 and 3.2].

FIGURE 3.1: RELATIVE LOCATION OF ST. LUCIA TOWN IN THE ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK



[<http://www.zulu.org.za>. (2005)]

FIGURE 3.2 LOCATION OF ST LUCIA TOWN AND SURROUNDINGS

3.3.2 Location of Ezwenelisha Village

The Ezwenelisha Village (Figure 3.3) is a relatively new settlement area or village of the villages forming part of the study area. It is important to note that Ezwenelisha Village [E] is an outlying rural area that is located approximately some 10 to 15 kilometres southwest of St Lucia Town [C]. Ezwenelisha Village has acquired its inhabitants from the Dukuduku Settlement Area [Refer to Figure 3.2]. Essentially, as a new settlement area, Ezwenelisha does not have an adequate infrastructure, such as water reticulation, electricity, tarred roads and socio-cultural facilities. Some of residential structures built are rudimentary and are in the process of being built on strict planning and building principles. Many of the residents are mainly employed through carving, craft-making and sculpturing. The products are sold along the main road to St Lucia Town.

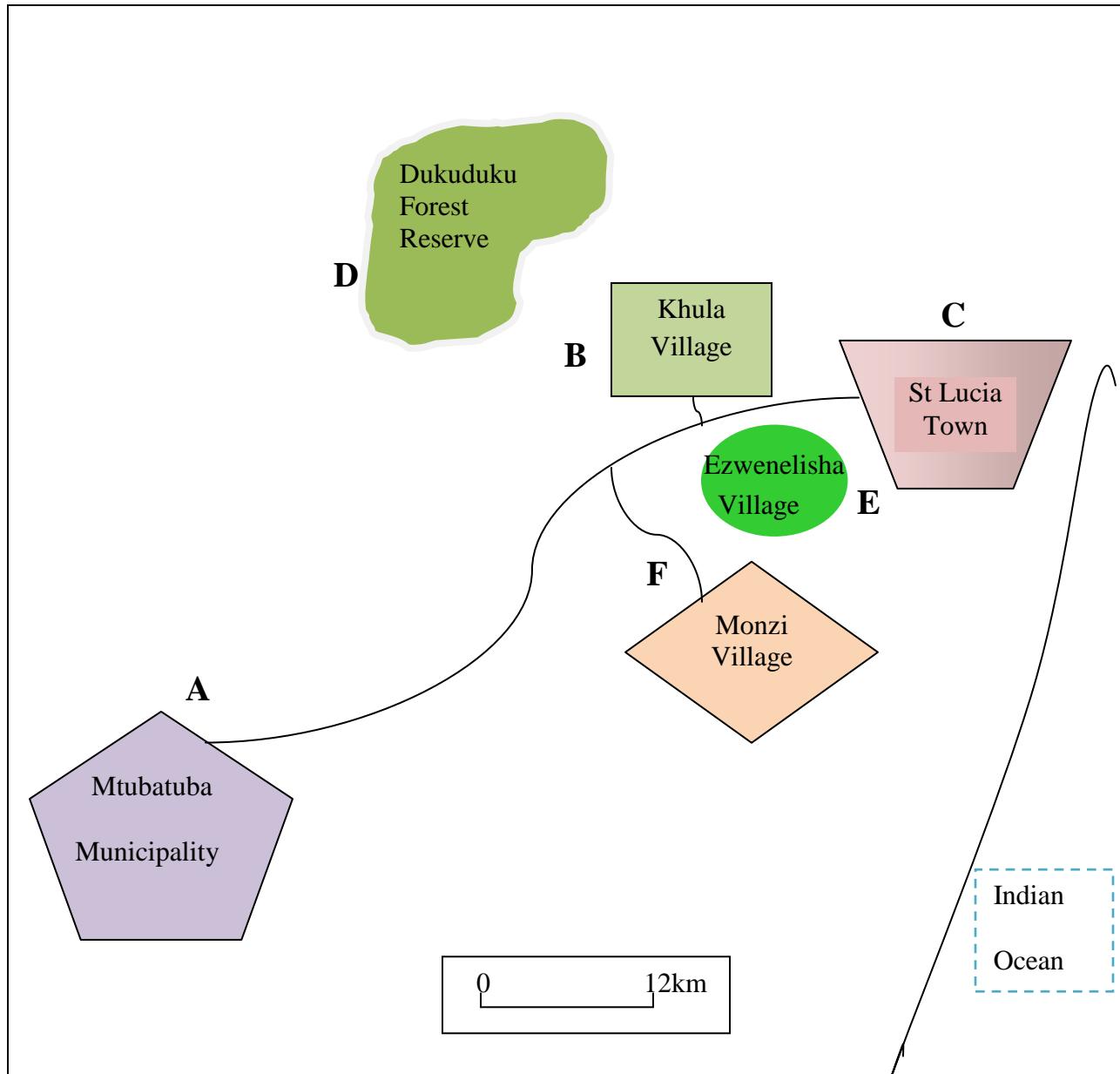
During the formative stage of this research investigation, it was discovered that several of the respondents were seriously affected by ill-health due to the prevalence of common and contagious diseases. The residents of Ezwenelisha Village have small subsistence gardens for their food requirements as well as for selling in the street market or street-vending. The Ezwenelisha 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.

3.3.3 Location of Khula Village

The Khula Village (Figure 3.3) is a township located towards the west of the Town of St Lucia, falling within the jurisdiction of the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. The main village [B] is, therefore, located approximately 12 kilometres from the Town of St Lucia and the St Lucia Estuary. The residents

of Khula Village are part and parcel of the physical environment and tourism facilities and activities to be found in the study area [Refer to Figure 3.3].

FIGURE 3.3 RELATIVE LOCATION OF ST LUCIA TOWN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS



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. The 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, is the Town of Mtubatuba [A] which is the main administrative centre of Khula Village [B], Ezwen'elisha [E] and St Lucia Town [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.

3.3.4 Eviction and Resettlements

The surrounding areas of the Town of St Lucia and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park have been eclipsed by the negative history of evictions and resettlements. To a certain extent this history has impacted on the running of the park. Some of the people living in the surrounding area: Ezwenelisha Village, Khula Village and Monzi Village, hope that their problems about evictions and re-settlements would revisited and be offered some compensation.

By 1932 and 1955 evictions were from traditionally settled areas 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 the Dukuduku Forest Reserve was to establish a plantation. Finally, in 1994 the army forcefully moved people from the Dukuduku Forest to the Dukuduku Settlement Area, Khula Village and Ezwenelisha Village. The reason behind the eviction was to establish a conservation area since government had realised that the area had potential for such a scheme.

With the coming of democracy in South Africa, the evictions and settlement problems are being gradually and successfully addressed. As such, there are prospects that the people of Khula Village and Ezwenelisha Village, hope that the problems about evictions and re-settlements would be revisited and settled. If this were to happen then the people of Khula and Ezwenelisha, would be willing to support the tourism programmes offered by the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

3.3.5 iSimangaliso Park Authority

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.

The park authority is an important organization in promoting tourism development in and around the Town of St Lucia as it collaborates with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The Park Authority also has conservation programmes which area aimed at persuading the people of Khula and Ezwenelisha Villages to co-operate in the sustainable management of the park. However, it has been observed that 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 and Ezwenelisha Villages to prosper through this initiative.

3.4 TOPOGRAPHY, HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE

The environment of the study area, the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, is characterised by a variety of physical and climatic attributes which give the park a unique character. These unique physiographic characteristics enabled the St Lucia natural environment to attract tourists and achieve world popularity. The attributes of the physical environment around the study area are discussed under the following headings: topography, hydrology and general climate.

3.4.1 Topography

The topography of the Town of St Lucia and Estuary 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. Typically, the area 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. The 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 a tourist resource being badly damaged [<http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.SouthAfrica>. (2008)].

3.4.2 Hydrology

The hydrologic system around the Town of St Lucia and Estuary is dominated by three types of coastal water systems, which have formed behind the coastal dunes, these are the estuarine (Lake St. Lucia), the freshwater system and the St Lucia river system. The St Lucia Town and Estuary are washed and influenced by the Mfolozi and Msunduze rivers, which 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/GreaterStLucia WetlandPark.South Africa> (2008)].

3.4.3 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 study area, the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, 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 Town of St Lucia and Surroundings 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. 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, 1995; [http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.South Africa](http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.South%20Africa), 2008].

Because of the subtropical zone of the study area, the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, have warm, moist summers and mild dry winters. The warm temperatures are responsible for the perennial rains that wash the study area. The mean annual rainfall in this 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. Hence, the vegetation in the area is always green because of the abundant water. Evaporation rates are high and large-scale flooding common [<http://www.eoearth.org/article/GreaterStLuciaWetlandPark.RSA> (2008)].

3.5 ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES

The nature reserves, game parks and marine environments in coastal KwaZulu-Natal and St Lucia area in particular, have been regarded as ideal resource areas suitable for enhancing the development of local communities, creation of jobs and alleviation of poverty. In this context, when the Director of Water Affairs and Forestry was asked about how the community would benefit from environment projects in the area, he responded as follows, [<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%.
- 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 Forest area, Dr Mjwara, the then Director in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry said the issue of Dukuduku Forest Reserve was attracting a lot of attention in the international arena and once settled, Dukuduku would become a major tourist destination. It is also anticipated that the Forest Reserve would be sustainably managed so as to maintain its ecological integrity and biodiversity. The integrity and sustainability of the natural and related environments were expected to make a significant contribution to the growth of the cultural artefacts, such as carvings and crafts of local communities.

3.5.1 Agriculture

It was indicated earlier in this chapter that the soils in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, are relatively fertile and could maintain planting a commercial crop as well as a vegetable garden. Notwithstanding this benefit, the people of Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village, also known as Dukuduku Settlement, 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 in some of the villages. All these projects are facilitated by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture, SiyaQhubeka Forests (Pty) Ltd.

3.5.2 Infrastructure

On the whole, existing infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, health facilities, transportation and water reticulation, in the Surrounding areas: Ezwenelisha, Village and Khula Village are found in the developed municipal areas. There is only the main road which is tarred from Mtubatuba to St. Lucia Town that goes between Khula Village and Ezwen'elisha Village. There are also access gravel roads that lead to the three villages. There are no health clinics at these villages; instead there are mobile clinics that comes on certain days of the week from Mtubatuba. The mobile clinic uses an old buildings in the areas.

The three villages in the study area do not have adequate recreation and tourism facilities for their 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. [AFRA, 2008; <http://www.southafrica.info/stlucia.htm>. (2007)]

3.5.3 Accommodation

The provision of accommodation for tourists is one of the leading activities that brings most of the revenue for the people of the Town of St Lucia. 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 and Ezwenelisha Villages have very little tourist accommodation in the study area. There are also Zulu cultural huts that accommodate tourists as well as some modern houses that can accommodate visiting people. Accommodation is becoming one of the ways in which Khula and Ezwenelisha Villagers can get money into the area.

3.5.4 Cultural Activities

The Town of St Lucia and the Estuary [in the context of 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. Small scattered settlements of the Sokhulu people existed between Sodwana and the St. Lucia estuary, evidenced by several traditional burial sites. These people can be linked to the present day villagers of Khula and Ezwenelisha, and may have smelted bog iron, felling trees to produce charcoal for their smelters.

It is noteworthy that a number of tourism activities are located in and around the tribal areas as well as in Khula and Ezwenelisha Villages. 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 and Ezwenelisha Villages 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 areas of Khula and Ezwenelisha Villages that are 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.

3.5.5 Craft work

The people of Khula and Ezwenelisha Villages 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 Park Authorities, has helped empower the people of Khula and Ezwenelisha Villages 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.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the physical setting of the area was presented. The chapter has attempted to give a global view of the physical features, facilities and activities related to tourism, that play a role in showcasing the study area. In the presentation, the location of the study area relative to KwaZulu-Natal, Mkhanyakude District, Mtubatuba Municipality, Town of St Lucia and the three villages of Khula and Ezwenelisha, were given. In addition, the history, physiographic, socio-economic and cultural attributes were given attention.

The information given in this chapter has laid the foundation for the next activity of this research study, that is, to embark on data analysis and interpretation. It is also worth mentioning that the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, as the study area, has the potential to reveal how tourism development is geared to favour either nature conservation or alternatively commercialisation [commodification].

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is a tool for change and an essential instrument for matching theory with spatial reality for the improvement of the society's spatial and non spatial situations and environments (Magi 2007). This tool for change can achieve its goals through analysis and interpretation of data. In other words:

The primary thrust of research in spatial behaviour has this objective: to discover those shared characteristics which might provide clues in developing methodological and theoretical insights through analysis of perception, evaluation, learning and response of individuals to their environment.

[English & Mayfield (1972: 214) cited in Magi, 2007]

It has been argued that the analysis of data can be achieved through the process of description, explanation and prediction, all these depending on the statistical measure used (Magi, 2007). "Essentially, interpretation converts the results of analysis and makes inferences about the various sections of research design" (Magi, 2007: 125). As such, this chapter contains the ordering and summarising of data so as to get answers to the research questions.

As such, one of the fundamental aims of this study was not only to establish the level of community participation in the management of coastal tourism

development around the Town of St Lucia Town and Surroundings, but also to reveal how stakeholders perceive the application of conservation measures as compared to commercial undertakings in the study area. Thus for purposes of this study conservation relates to the wise utilisation of natural resources, which promotes enlightened usage resulting in low visitor impact, and provides for the socio-economic benefits and involvement of the local communities (*Nzama et al*, 2005).

The results obtained from analysis and interpretation of data, provide feedback on the tenability or amenability of the original research hypotheses. It should be noted, however, that even if the results obtained from the analysis and interpretation are in agreement with the hypotheses, this does not necessarily mean that the theory is finally and irrefutably proven to be correct, but is only provisionally supported as there is no other theory which may explain the results obtained (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000).

4.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

It should be recognised that the objectives and hypotheses of this research study sought to serve as guidelines to what is to be analysed and interpreted in addressing the research question. In essence, the research objectives refer to what the researcher wants to achieve at the end of the research study, and hypotheses provide some estimated outcomes (Magi, 2007). As presented below each objective is made to match each hypothesis. Therefore, objectives and hypotheses are restated in this chapter in order to refresh the reader and have a guided data analysis, these are stated as follows:

- (a) **Objective 1:** To reveal the extent to which stakeholders understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.
- Hypothesis 1:* That the stakeholders have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.
- (b) **Objective 2:** To find out if the coastal tourism resources in the study area are adequately supplied.
- Hypothesis 2:* That the coastal tourism resources in the study area are not adequately supplied.
- (c) **Objective 3:** To determine the level to which tourism management and development strategies are employed or utilised in the study area.
- Hypothesis 3:* That the level of tourism management and development strategies that is employed or utilised in the study area, is not up to the required standard.
- (d) **Objective 4:** To find out which ecotourism policy approach the stakeholders favour for the study area, between conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification].
- (a) *Hypothesis 4:* That the stakeholders in the study area favour the implementation of the ecotourism policy of conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification].

(e) **Objective 5:** To establish how stakeholders perceive the existence and application on tourism development policies in the study area

Hypothesis 5: That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented.

(f) **Objective 6:** To establish the extent to which the local community benefits from ecotourism related activities or practices.

Hypothesis 6: That the local community benefits significantly from ecotourism related activities or practices.

In an attempt to achieve the abovementioned objectives and related hypotheses a questionnaire was distributed to various stakeholders as described in chapter one: (a) local community members constituting a sample of 82 respondents; (b) the service providers, 20 respondents; (c) the tourists about 18, and (d) the St Lucia Town officials or employees making up a sample of 15 respondents. What followed was the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from 135 respondents in the study area. The information gathered is, therefore, presented in tables and graphs as it emerged from the responses of subjects. The interpretation process has tried to give justification for the analytic findings of data. 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, seek to facilitate the making of judgements and drawing of conclusion and recommendations from these research techniques.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The stakeholders from whom data was collected consisted of various categories and emerged from various areas of the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings which include: Ezwenelisha Village and Khula Village which also known as Dukuduku Settlement area. The respondents varied in terms of, gender, age and marital status [see Table 4.1]. In addition, socio-demographic variables such as education qualifications, occupation and income status are dealt with in Table 4.2 respectively.

The demographic characteristics of the data collected reflect the personal attributes of the respondents within the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. The 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 attributes would offer better understanding and awareness of the role they play in influencing the various research statements and questions. Some of these include perceptions, community participation, supply of facilities, grasp of tourism management practices and derived community benefits from tourism activities.

The demographic characteristics of respondents were used in creating frequency tables and cross tabulations, which enabled understanding about each variable. It is anticipated that the emerging attributes of the demographic variables will make the findings of the study to be better understood, when considering the research problem or research objectives. These variables and the corresponding sub-variables, as shown in Table 4.1, were analysed in terms of absolute frequency and their frequency percentage.

TABLE 4.1: DISTRIBUTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

VARIABLE	SUB-VARIABLE	TOURISTS n=18		OFFICIALS n=15		SERVICE PROVIDERS n=20		LOCAL COMMUNITY n=82	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Gender	Females	11	61%	08	53%	12	60%	47	57%
	Males	07	39%	07	47%	08	40%	35	43%
Age	15-25	01	06%	01	07%	02	10%	21	25%
	26-35	04	22%	06	40%	04	20%	17	21%
	36-55	07	39%	07	47%	10	50%	29	36%
	56-80	06	33%	01	06%	04	20%	15	18%
Marital Status	Married	11	61%	07	46%	10	50%	39	48%
	Single	04	22%	04	27%	06	30%	26	32%
	Widowed	02	11%	04	27%	03	15%	10	12%
	Divorced	01	06%	00	00%	01	05%	07	08%

[n = 135. Some of values of the sub-variables were rounded-off to nearest decimal]

The variables of gender, age and marital status were analysed and cross-tabulated in terms of the corresponding (a) local community members constituting a sample of 82 respondents; (b) the service providers, 20 respondents; (c) the tourists about 18, and (d) the St Lucia Town officials or employees making up a sample of 15 respondents. It should be noted that not all variables were responded to. For example, tourists were reluctant to respond to local issues and policies. On the other hand, local residents, communities, service providers and officials were keen to participate and were featured and participated in all questions.

4.3.1 The Gender Variable

The question of gender has become important in the South African democracy, particularly as relating to female participation in tourism activities. As such, the analysis of the gender variable was aimed at revealing the dominant gender that visits, participates and provides services within the study area. On analysing the

gender variable for the tourist category, it was found that about 61 percent were females and 39 percent were males. Not surprisingly, females were in the majority, since there are more females in rural areas than men and females take care of extended family commitments. The World Travel Organisation (UNWTO, 2004), however, has identified changes in gender tourism with more women being motivated to travel in order to escape from routine or domestic environment.

The category of nature reserve and municipal officials revealed responses that show that 53 percent of the respondents were females and 47 percent male officials. It should be remembered nonetheless, that tourism officials in such conservation organisations were always 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. The female-biased gender split was also evident among the service providers, dominated by 60 percent of females, can attributed to more females participating in small and micro enterprises (SMEs).

The distribution of gender among the local communities revealed that about 57 percent of respondents were females and 43 percents being males. This distribution suggests that there were more females who were prepared to participate in the survey. It should be noted that rural and semi-rural populations in KwaZulu-Natal are generally dominated by females, who tend to take the household leadership positions, since many males work in big towns away from home. Not only were the males fewer who were ready to respond to questionnaires at the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, they were also less eager to respond to the questionnaire than females.

4.3.2 The Age Variable

The age distribution shown in Table 4.1 revealed that the outcomes were bias towards the more mature age groups. The middle aged group (36-55) were in the majority in all instances in terms of responding to the questionnaire. The young adult (26-35) respondents were the second largest in responses (average 26%), whereas an average of 19 percent of the senior adults (56-80) responded to the questionnaire.

Age has an important influence on tourism and leisure participation. Torkildsen (2005) argues that the effect of age vary depending on the person and the type of activity. An investigation into the age structure of the population sectors is aimed at revealing the type of tourists that frequently patronise the destination as well as the experiences of officials and private sector individuals and groups. Clearly the officials with long service and service providers who have owned businesses for a long time have better knowledge of the nature reserve than their counterparts who have been in the tourism industry for a short period of time.

The age variable also indicated a concentration of respondents among the young adult officials (40%) and mature adult officials (47%) of 36-55 years. The period of service of officials also suggests that officials are not likely to adapt to new situations. It should be pointed out, however, that the experiences of the officials with long service standing could turn out to be valuable if their ideas are considered in the development and promotion of transformed tourism management practices.

The age variable of private sector groups indicated that a substantial majority of the service provider respondents (50%) falls within the middle age group (36-55 years), with the small segment of service provider respondents (20%) in the young adult age group (26-35 years). The age structure of the service may have an influence on the type of tourists who visit this destination. As already indicated, this destination is frequently patronised by the mature age tourists, and it is likely that the service provision largely caters for the elderly tourist population since the private sector group themselves do not include many young people.

With regard to the age structure of the local community, a large majority of the community members (36%) fall within the mature adult age-group (36-56 years) and the youth (15-25 years) age group were the second largest group. A relatively small sector of the local community members (18%) were in the old-age group (56-80 years). The age distribution suggests that the local community is relatively poor as it is made up of more less-educated and less high-income groups, as shall later be seen in the discussion of socio-economic variables.

4.3.3 Marital Status

As shown in Table 4.1 the marital status of respondents indicated that an average of 51 percent of the respondents in this study area was married. The second largest number (26% average) were those that indicated they were single. Only about one percent [4%] of the respondents indicated that they were divorced or widowed. In the light of the above discussion, it would be interesting to establish whether the tourism and conservation practices would be influenced by the respondents' marital status. It would further be interesting to note whether gender has a role to play in the determination of the level to which

tourism management and development strategies are employed or utilised in the study area

4.3.5 Education Qualifications

The role of education in understanding conservation and ecotourism development cannot be underestimated. In fact, the education variable tends to influence the socio-economic status of the respondents very significantly. The education variable reflected in Table 4.2 would equally influence the levels of understanding, supply, utilisation, conservation, commercialisation or commodification, policies, and community benefit associated with ecotourism in the study area. It should further be accepted that the level of education has a significant influence on perceptions (Magi, 1986).

TABLE 4.2: DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

VARIA-BLE	SUB-VARIABLE	TOURISTS n=18		OFFICIALS n=15		SERVICE PROVIDERS n=20		LOCAL COMMUNITY n=82	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Education	Primary Sch.	01	06%	01	07%	01	05%	03	04%
	Secondary Sch.	03	16%	02	13%	03	15%	15	18%
	Matric +Diploma.	09	50%	08	53%	11	55%	41	50%
	Tertiary Degree	05	28%	04	27%	05	25%	23	28%
Occupation	Unskilled	01	06%	01	07%	01	05%	05	06%
	Semi-skilled	04	22%	03	20%	03	15%	20	24%
	Skilled	05	28%	04	27%	06	30%	21	26%
	Professional	06	33%	05	33%	08	40%	24	29%
	Unemployed	02	11%	02	13%	02	10%	12	15%
Income	R1000 – R3000	01	06%	05	33%	05	25%	24	29%
	R3001 – R5000	03	17%	02	13%	04	20%	18	22%
	R5001 – R8000	05	28%	06	40%	08	40%	27	33%
	R8001 – R10000	08	44%	01	07%	02	10%	09	12%
	≥ to R10001	01	06%	01	07%	01	05%	04	04%

[n = 135. Some of values of the sub-variables were rounded-off to nearest decimal]

The analysis of responses shown in Table 4.2, indicate that the majority of tourists (50%), matriculation plus a diploma. Lubbe (2003) argues that tourism education and training has to be responsive to the changing needs in the tourism sector. It was unfortunate that the tourists interviewed in the study area were from outside the St Lucia Area and could not effectively influence policy formulation.

It is worth noting that the majority of conservation and municipal officials [53%] and service providers [55%] are in possession of tertiary diplomas. The respondents who possessed tertiary qualification (+25%) were the second largest respondents. The bias towards the well-educated was a matter of chance because those educated happened to be there and selected for a response. A minority of 4 percent of the respondents indicated that they have had primary school education. It may be argued that this apparent level of education would auger well for making judgements about the selection or comparison between conservation and commercialisation of resources in the study area.

4.3.6 The Occupation Variable

As intimated in the theoretical background section of this dissertation, demographic variables such as education, occupation and income levels were regarded as having a substantial influence on tourism and leisure involvement, utilisation and experience (Bennett, 2002; Torkildsen, 2005; Nzama *et al.* 2005). Similarly, education influences levels of quality of lifestyle, and other related factors.

The data analysis in Table 4.2 revealed that the majority of tourist respondents [33%] were in the professional occupation category. Similarly, the majority of

conservation and municipality officials [33%] and service providers [40%] were employed as professionals. A further significant number of respondents (mean of 28%) in the various categories indicated they skilled individuals. The reason for these finding are that the tourists interviewed were well-off, educated and high income earners. The occupation structure revealed that a good number of officials [27%] are skilled or specialists in their fields, namely, game rangers, municipal manager and conservation manager. Similarly, the private sector operators [40%] were skilled in the occupation of service provision, such as in accommodation, transportation, gastronomy, and curio shops.

The local community category was found to have relatively wide spread of respondents in the categories of semi-skilled (24%), skilled (26%) and professional (29%). A significant number of community respondents (15%) indicated that they were unemployed. These unemployment values suggest that there is a dire need for the local communities to benefit from the tourism industry. What was observed in the study area is that there were many Black people who were engaged in small and micro enterprises as well as unemployed, as compared to the other populations groups.

4.3.7 Level of Income

Income, similar to education and occupation levels, depicts the levels of lifestyle that may be acquired by the respondents in any study area (Bennett, 2002; Nzama *et al.* 2005). In this regard respondents in the study area were asked to reveal their level of income. What is shown in Table 4.2 is that the majority of the respondents [35% average] were earning between R5001–R8000 per month among the tourists, officials and service providers. The categories are composed of 28%, 40%, and 40% of respondents respectively. It

is important to observe that the majority of tourists (44%) are on a higher income level of R8001-R10000. The local community was interestingly, found to have a cluster of fairly lower income categories ranging from R1000 to R8000, with a significant number in the lowest category (R1000-R3000).

Since most these respondents interviewed were relatively earning well, it may be inferred that their perception of the comparison between conservation and commercialisation would be a balanced one. It would therefore seem that the three categories of respondents, tourists, officials and service providers are all relatively high income earners. A huge contrast is observable among the local communities, where income earnings are relatively low. It may be inferred that the local community members would exert lesser influence on tourism and conservation than the other three categories of respondents.

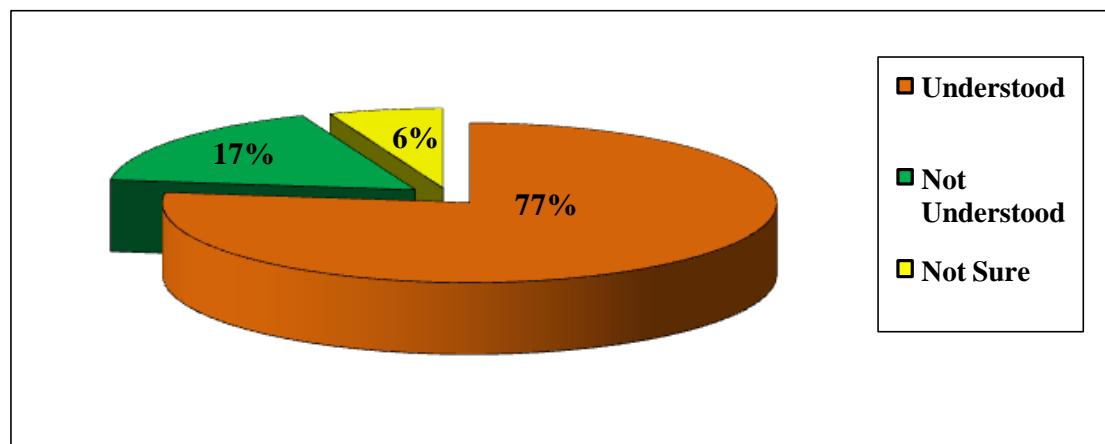
4.4 UNDERSTANDING OF THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism as an industry, if well understood and appreciated, would bring both economic and non-economic benefits to host communities. These benefits include, provision of employment opportunities as it is a labour-intensive industry; generating a supply of needed foreign exchange; increases incomes; develops an infrastructure that would also help stimulate local commerce and industry, helps to diversify the economy; spreads development; improves the quality of life related to a higher level of income and improved standard of living (Wahab & Pigram, 2000; Rogerson & Visser; Magi & Nzama, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). What is important is that even the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings communities must understand the working of tourism and its

benefits. As such the St Lucia Town and Surroundings officials and service providers must understand that no amount posturing would help find the correct balance between conservation development and commercial enterprising in the area.

One of the main objectives of the study was to investigate the extent to which respondents, such as tourists, officials, service providers and local communities understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia. In this regard, the respondents were subdivided into these four categories so as to assess each group's understanding and preference of ecotourism in relation to conservation and commercialisation. As shown in Figure 4.1 the majority of respondents [77%] indicated that they understood and saw ecotourism as important for the development of their area. On the other hand, only 17 percent and 6 percent of the respondents indicated that they disagreed and were not sure respectively.

FIGURE 4.1 UNDERSATANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF ECOTOURISM



A significantly large percentage of the positive response [77%] may be accounted for in that the majority of the respondents were fully aware and understood the importance of ecotourism. In view of these outcomes it may be concluded that Hypothesis 1, which states: *That the stakeholders have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia*, should be supported.

When the respondents were asked to define or explain what they thought ecotourism meant to them, about 58 percent of the respondents were correct. On the other hand, 23 percent of the respondents were incorrect and 19 percent were not sure. To verify the understanding of the meaning and importance of ecotourism, the respondents were asked to rank preselected correct and incorrect definitions or statement describing ecotourism. For example, that ecotourism:

- (a) “*Has to do with the improvement of nature-based resources and conserving them for visitors and the benefit of the host community*”.
[Correct].
- (b) “*It is the development of cities and urban area for the purpose of creating jobs and places local can visit.*” [Incorrect].

The outcomes of the responses were that a significant number of respondents [89%] selected the correct statement. On the other hand, about 11 percent of the respondents selected an incorrect statement. The possible reason for the correct statements, reflecting good understanding of the concept of ecotourism, is that the levels of education, income and occupation, had some positive influence on the selection of statements.

On the basis of the outcomes achieved and recorded above, it would be reasonable to conclude that Hypothesis 1, which states: *That the stakeholders*

have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia, should be supported.

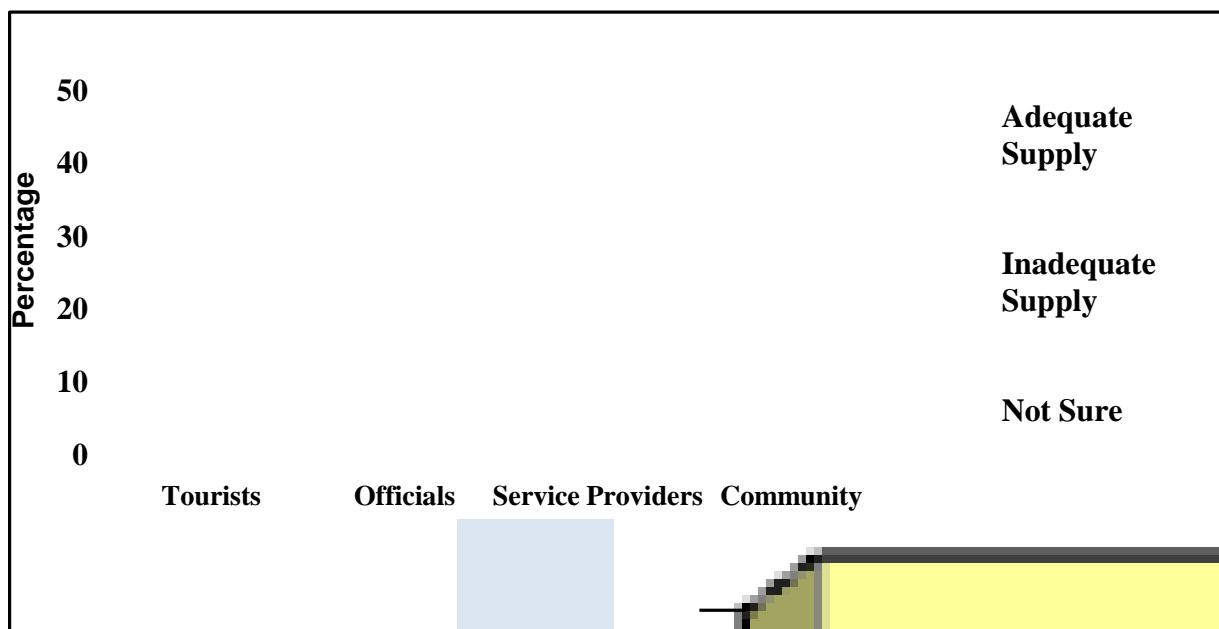
4.5 THE SUPPLY OF COASTAL TOURISM RESOURCES

One of the basic meaning or understanding of the concept of coastal and tourism development is that it relate to the improvement and continual supply of natural resources as well as their re-allocation involving the modification of the environment (DEAT, 1997) for the benefits of local communities. In this regard, the one of the objectives of this research study was to find out if the coastal tourism resources in the study area are adequately supplied. In other words, it sought to establish whether these resources; facilities and services were of good quality in terms of the tourists, reserve or municipal officials, service providers and the local communities. The term ‘local community’, as defined by Lubbe (2003), refers to the people living in relative proximity to the tourist destination, product or activity. People who have the rights to an area have to be identified so that those who live closer benefit more than those further afield. If tourism is wisely planned and conserved, then the community could enjoy the advantages while experiencing ownership of and control over the development.

With an intention of assessing the supply and quality of tourism facilities and services, respondents were asked to reveal their views about these resources. What is therefore shown in Figure 4.2 is that on the whole the tourism facilities provided in the study area are viewed as either adequately supplied, inadequately supplied and ‘not sure’ about the supply, according to all stakeholders. Interestingly, the tourists [38%] and service providers [47%] felt that the resources were inadequately supplied. The officials [43%] were alone

in expressing a view that the tourism resources were adequately supplied. The majority of the local communities [41%] indicated that they were ‘not sure’ about the supply of resources. It is apparent that the responses of all these stakeholders were strongly influenced by their jobs, business opportunities and activities. For example, the officials thought that the resources were adequate, mainly because the officials were largely expressing the policy of the organisations they were working for. On the other hand, the tourist were split into two positive and negative responses, mainly because they were from outside the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and were not familiar with the local situation.

FIGURE 4.2 PERCEIVED SUPPLY OF ECOTOURISM RESOURCES



On the other hand, the majority of service providers [47%] and the local community [41%] expressed a view that the supply of tourism facilities and activities in the study area was inadequate and ‘not sure’, respectively. The

reason for this finding is that both service providers and community work and experience the supply of facilities and services on a day-to-day basis, and seem not to be happy with the delivery thereof.

With regard to these findings it may therefore be concluded that hypothesis 2, which states: “*That the coastal tourism resources in the study area are not adequately supplied*”, should be supported and therefore accepted. The basis for this conclusion is that on the whole the majority of respondents, tourists, service providers and community, felt that supply of resources was inadequately supplied.

Notwithstanding the above-discussed outcomes, when the stakeholders were asked whether do they think it was important for the local community to develop and conserve tourism related facilities? The result was very positive, 78 percent said yes and only 21 percent said no and 1 percent was not sure. Some of the reasons advanced for the response were the following: the need to increase tourist visitors; creation of jobs and employment; overall economic development and nature appreciation. Hoping these would be achieved without breaking down the constraining factors associated with growth and saturation of growth (Cooper, *et al.*, 2008).

Besides the supply of ecotourism resources, facilities and services, respondents were asked to list and rank the ecotourism facilities that they thought are in existence in the study area. These resources were considered in the context of coastal resource development and tourism development, which may be seen as the spatial and real estate development, as well as nature conservation. The latter concept being defined as the wise use of natural resources for the benefit

of both present and future generation (Hackett, 1995), whilst seeking to improve current human well-being in the study area. What is shown in Table 4.3 is the outcome of responses relating to the perceived supply ecotourism resources, facilities and services in the study area.

TABLE 4.3 RANKED SUPPLIED ECOTOURISM FACILITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

RANK	FACILTIES	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY	FREQUENCY PERCENTAGE
01.	Wildlife [fauna and flora]	82	63%
02.	Lakes and Rivers	78	58%
03.	Estuary Fishing	75	56%
04.	Beach Swimming	74	55%
05.	Forest area/ Dune forests	72	53%
06.	Bird watching	70	52%
07.	Camp sites & Picnic area	69	51%
08.	Crocodile and Hippo watching	68	50%
09.	Whale and Crocodile watching	66	49%
10.	Water Tours / Boat Rides	65	48%
11.	Arts and Craft stalls	58	43%
12.	Cultural Village	56	42%
13.	Accommodation	54	40%
14.	Other facilities	52	39%

[n = 135. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for facilities]

The majority of respondents [63%] perceived wildlife covering fauna and flora as the highly ranked and supplied ecotourism facilities or resources in the study area. Within the percentage range of 50% to 58% the respondents, ranked the following ecotourism resources as supplied in the study area: lakes and rivers; estuary fishing sites; beach swimming sites; forest area/ dune forests; bird watching area; camp sites and picnic areas; crocodile and hippo watching spots.

The least resources which were also identified by the respondents [39% to 49%] as supplied in the study area included: whale and crocodile watching spots; water tours / boat riding facilities; arts and craft stalls; cultural village; accommodation and eating facilities.

The main reasons for perceiving these facilities as supplied were that they were highly visible and preferred facilities by most stakeholders. Most of the facilities identified also catered for families at the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. On the basis of the discussion above, relating to the supply of facilities and activities in the study area, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 2, which states: *That the coastal tourism resources in the study area are not adequately supplied*, should be supported, because the majority of stakeholders have indicated that they perceived a substantial number of ecotourism resources or facilities in the study area.

4.6 ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

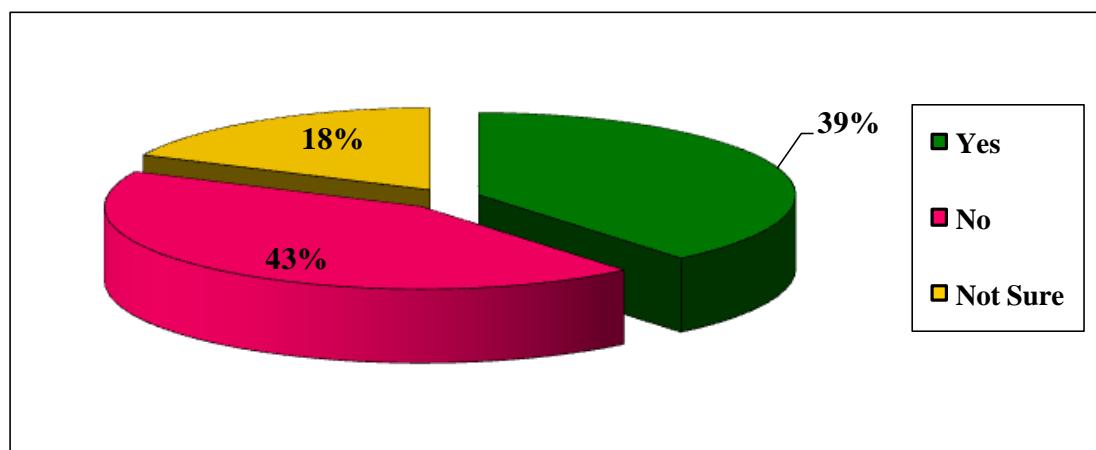
It is generally accepted that ecotourism management and development practices and strategies have the main intention of improving the tourism delivery as well as enhancing or benefiting the local communities and their natural and cultural environments (Page & Downing, 2002). In an attempt to activate the management practices in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, the reserve and municipal officials have put up strategies for successful implementation of tourism development (Njobe & Botha, 2003), which include: stakeholder partnerships and co-operation, fulfilment of community aspirations; improved understanding stewardship; equitable access to travel opportunities and tourism

attractions (DEAT, 2006b); as well as job creation, and poverty alleviation (Yawitch, *et al*, 2003; Ashley & Roe, 2002).

4.6.1 Awareness of Existing Ecotourism Management Practices

In order to establish of existing ecotourism management practices or strategies in the study area, respondents were asked to respond to the question: “Are you aware of any existing ecotourism management or development strategies that are in place in the St Lucia area?” As shown in Figure 4.3 the majority of stakeholders [43%] responded in the negative, indicating that they were not aware of existing ecotourism management strategies. About 39 percent responded in the positive, with 18 percent showing that they are not sure.

FIGURE 4.3 EXISTING ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE STUDY AREA



Ecotourism management or development strategies are important in the development and promotion of the tourism industry and related benefits. Some of the reasons put forward for the lack of awareness of management practices included the following: lack of information about ecotourism in general; lack of transparency about local tourism programmes; dominance of White people in

the tourism industry; as well as that tourist respondents argued that they were outsiders and were not aware of decisions taken about the ecotourism resources in the study area.

From the analysis described above, it may be concluded that **Hypothesis 3** which states: *That the level of tourism management and development strategies that is employed or utilised in the study area, is not up to the required standard,* is not supported and therefore should be rejected. The basis for this finding is that approximately 61 percent of the respondents either responded with a ‘no’ [43%] and were ‘not sure’ [18%].

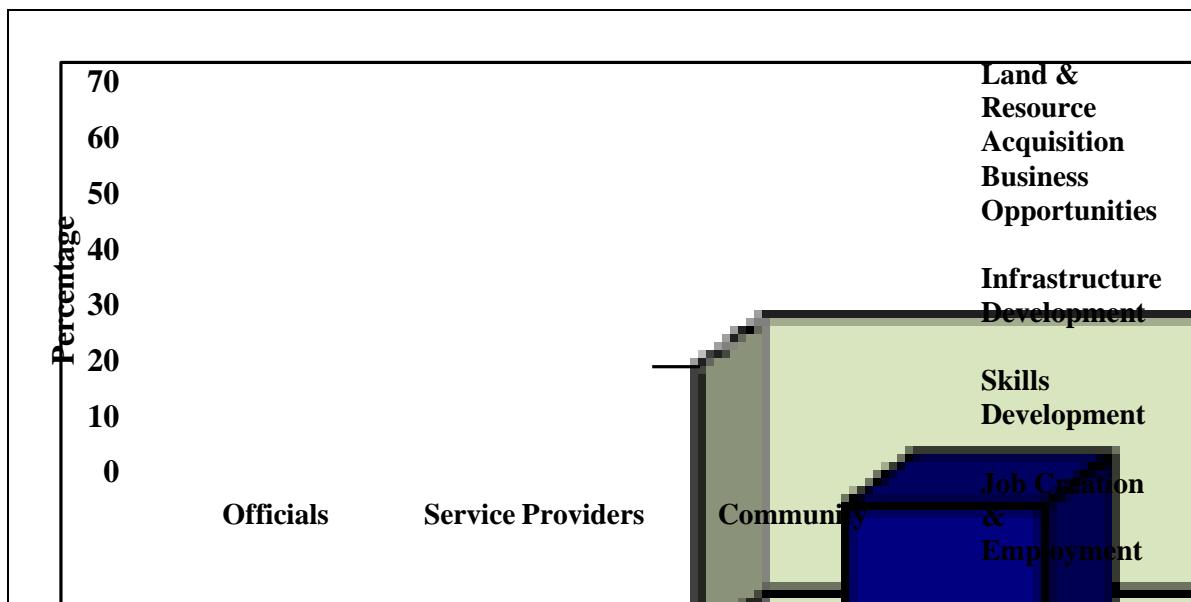
4.6.2 Strategies Operating to Enhance Ecotourism Management

Notwithstanding the existence of the ecotourism management strategies, some of these practices are either not known or understood by some tourism stakeholders. These ecotourism management practices remain obscure if they are not used to respond to local community needs. It is for these reasons therefore, that the respondents (tourists, officials, service providers and the community) were requested to furnish their perceived views on ecotourism management practices and development needs which they consider appropriate for the St Lucia Town and Surroundings.

In this regard, Figure 4.4 depicts the responses obtained from various stakeholders attempting to reveal the ecotourism management or development strategies, which are important in the development and promotion of the tourism industry. The stakeholders perceptions were based on preselected practices or strategies such as the following: small business opportunities; development of game facilities; infrastructural development; skills development; job creation;

building of schools; conservation of nature; community levies; protection of wildlife; land restitution; land and resource acquisition, visitor management, establishment of accommodation facilities, safety and security of tourists, and arts and craft making. The responses of the subjects, comprising the tourists, officials, service providers and communities are reflected in Figure 4.4. For the analysis of these practices only those most preferred and popular with the stakeholders were selected. These are: land and resource acquisition, small business opportunities, infrastructural development, skills development; job creation and employment. In addition, the tourists category was not included in the analysis, since tourist had previously indicated that they were outsiders and unfamiliar with making of policies and their implementation in the study area.

FIGURE 4.4: PERCEIVED BENEFICIAL STATE OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



[n = 135. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each statement]

As indicated in Figure 4.4, the majority of officials [70%] felt that infrastructural development was a priority ecotourism management practice or

strategy followed. Next to that, the officials [65%] preferred land and resource acquisition as important. Relating to the service providers, the majority of them [65%] saw business opportunities as a priority area of development, whereas about 58 percent considered skills development as a priority developmental strategy. Possible reasons for this outcome are that officials seem to be supporting government policy in their responses. The service providers think there is room for improvement because the state is directing the Black economic empowerment policies and some skills development initiatives.

What was interesting is that the majority of the local community saw job creation and employment initiatives [64%] and the skills development initiative [53%] as priority ecotourism management practice or strategy followed. Conversely, the local communities [26%] were not happy with the strategy as it relates to infrastructural development in the study area, mainly because there are other matters of priority requiring ecotourism management strategies.

In view of these analyses and outcomes, the majority of stakeholders attested to the necessity of certain priority ecotourism management strategy in the study area. In this regard, it is reasonable to conclude that Hypothesis 3, which states: *That the level of tourism management and development strategies that is employed or utilised in the study area, is not up to the required standard*, should be supported. Apparently there are too many ecotourism management strategies in the study area that need to be attended to. The authorities, for example, are struggling with matters relating to: conservation of nature and community involvement; community levies; protection of wildlife; land restitution; building of schools; and upgrading safety and security of tourists. Finally, it should be stressed that ecotourism management practices emphasise the management of all

resources in such a way that natural, economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (WTO, 2004).

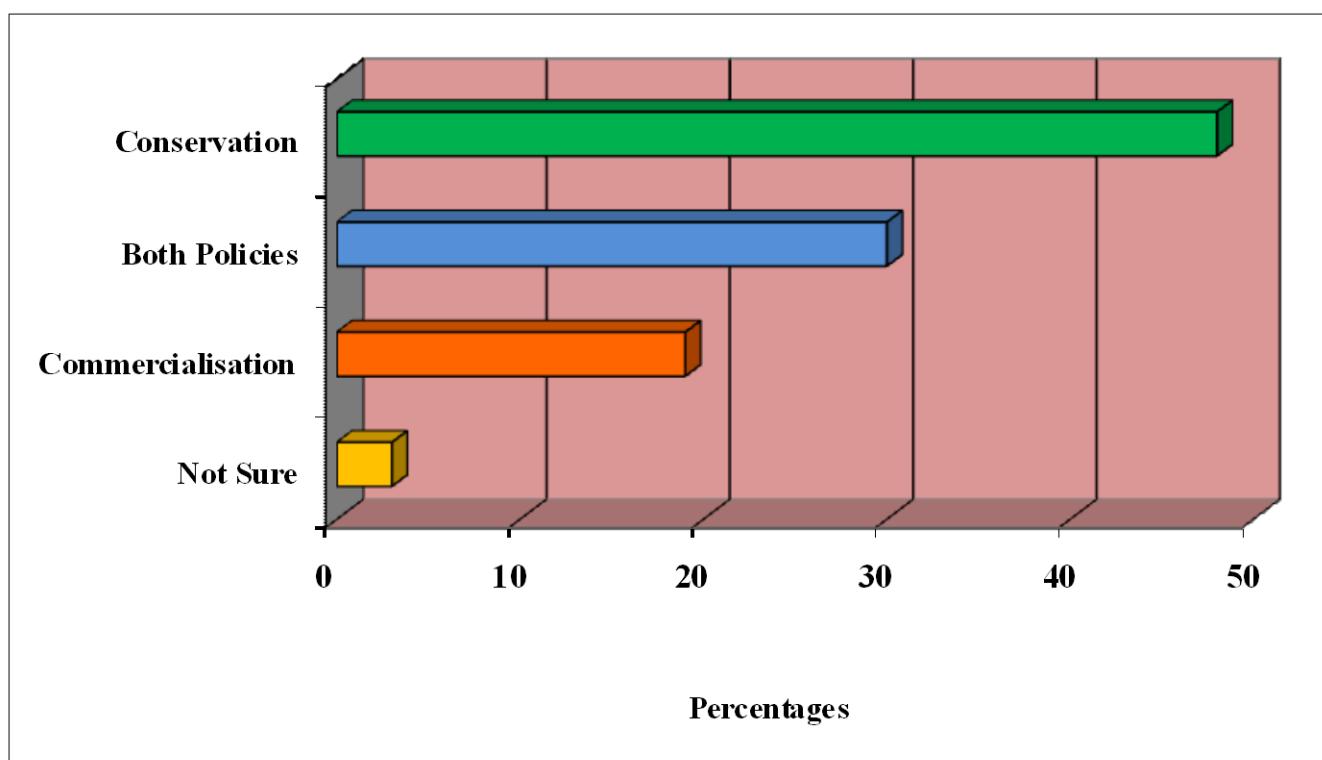
4.7 CONSERVATION VERSUS COMMERCIALISATION

It is important to restate that nature conservation is defined as the wise use of natural resources for the benefit of both present and future generation, as well as relates to the efficiency of utilisation of the natural resources (Hackett, 1995). On the one hand, commercialisation relates to the process of introducing a new product into the market, with a view of achieving improved product development. Essentially, commodification is the commercialisation of a ecotourism product or activity, that is not inherently commercial in make-up. One of the fundamental objectives of this study was to find out which ecotourism policy approach the stakeholders favoured for the study area, between conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification]. The investigation is seeking to contribute to the on-going debate about what would be the best practice between supporting conservation approaches versus the commercialisation or commodification of ecotourism, in general.

Pursuant to the above-mentioned objective, the stakeholders were asked to reveal if they were aware of any policy that either supported conservation and commercialisation is the study area. The majority of respondents [71%] indicated that they were, in total, not aware and not sure about existence or support of conservation approaches versus commercialisation is the study area. Only 29 percent thought there were some such approaches of supporting conservation or commercialisation.

In order to further clarify the respondents' stance in the debate, they were asked to reveal the kind of policy they favoured for tourism, between conservation and commercialisation of resources. The results of the probe are indicated in Figure 4.5, where the majority of the respondents [48%] indicated that they were in favour of upholding the policy of conservation of ecotourism resources.

FIGURE 4.5 PREFERRED POLICY ON CONSERVATION VERSUS COMMERCIALISATION OF ECOTOURISM



On the other hand, approximately 30 percent of the respondents indicated that they favoured the utilisation of both policies: conservation and commercialisation of ecotourism resources. About 19 percent of the respondents thought that commercialisation was also necessary as a policy for developing the ecotourism environment.

The main reasons given for favouring conservation as the main policy were ranked as follows: for the benefit of future generations; preservation of their heritage; ecotourism development; general economic development; attracting international tourists; job creation and employment, etc. The main reasons for favouring both conservation and commercialisation were similar to the above reasons, as well as that the approach would introduce a balance between conservation and development.

On the basis of the analysis appearing above, relating to the comparison between conservation and commercialisation as favoured approaches for future development, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 4, which states: *That the stakeholders in the study area favour the implementation of the ecotourism policy of conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification]*, is out-rightly supported. The basis for the acceptance of the hypothesis is that, surprisingly, many people of St Lucia Town and Surroundings are becoming conservation conscious, as reflected in many of the reasons advanced for supporting the policy of conservation.

4.8 APPLICATION OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

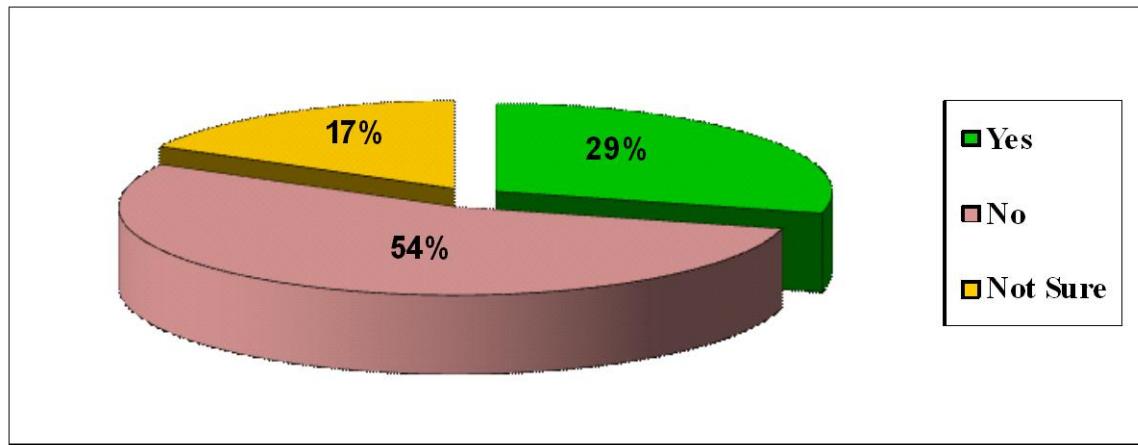
According to Magi & Nzama (2009a, 2009b) the formulation of ecotourism development policy and its execution are two sides of the same coin, but tend to be different in character, make-up and performance. Whereas it may seem easy to craft policy, it may be relatively difficult to implement the same policy. The application of policy should translate into efficient delivery of ecotourism products that would benefit the local communities in the long run. Today's policies are the basis for stimulating ecotourism resource development in any

country, and more specifically in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. In this regard, the respondents in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings were asked to reveal their perceptions towards the types of ecotourism development policies existing in the study area, as well as their level of implementation.

4.8.1 Awareness of Ecotourism Policies Promoting Development

What is shown in Figure 4.6, are the outcomes of analyses of ecotourism stakeholders in the study area. In this case, stakeholders were asked to indicate their awareness of any policies that promoted ecotourism development in the area. The majority of respondents [54%] indicated negatively, that they were unaware of ecotourism development policies existing in their area. In support, about 17 percent of the respondents also indicated that they were not sure about these policies.

FIGURE 4.6: AWARENESS OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



The main reasons given for the negative responses were that there appears to be: lack of information and communication about the ecotourism policies; poor

infrastructure provision; poor management liaison with the stakeholders and lack of supply of jobs and employment opportunities. On the contrary, approximately 29 percent of the respondents indicated that they were aware of ecotourism development policies existing in the study area. Respondents indicated policies relating to: protection of wildlife, conservation of resources; provision of accommodation, craft centre and small business opportunities.

From the analysis provided above, relating to awareness of the existence of ecotourism development policies, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 5, which states: *That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented*, should not be supported. The basis for not accepting the hypothesis is that the majority of respondents did not indicate their awareness of the existence of relevant ecotourism policies.

4.8.2 Existence of Ecotourism Policies in the Study Area

As a means of consolidating the objective of awareness of ecotourism development policies, respondents were asked to list those ecotourism policies and practices they thought they were aware of that they existed in the study area. What is shown in Table 4.4 are the ranked policies perceived as existing. What is worth noting is that each of the stakeholders; the tourists and recreators, conservation and municipal officials, the service providers and the local communities, tended to give those policy related items they were familiar with and needed most. For example the tourists and recreators could not elaborate on policy matters, save those that they used, observed and enjoyed. The tourists had previously indicated that they were outsiders and were unfamiliar with the making of policies and their implementation in the study area. The conservation

officers and municipal officials were happy in providing those items that were very much related to their work situation.

In Table 4.4 the ranked distribution of ecotourism policies and practices, which the respondents were aware of their existence, are displayed. The majority of respondents [71%] perceived the conservation of natural resources as the highest ranked ecotourism related policy in existence in the study area. The main reason for this selection is that the iSimangaliso authorities and the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife are in the business of nature conservation in the study area.

TABLE 4.4 PERCEPTION OF EXISTING ECOTOURISM RELATED POLICIES

RANK	FACILTIES & ACTIVITIES	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY	FREQUENCY PERCENTAGE
01.	Conservation of natural resources	96	71%
02.	Wildlife protection and upkeep	92	68%
03.	Local arts and craft making and support	88	65%
04.	Camping and caravanning activities	84	62%
05.	Accommodation provision practice	68	50%
06.	Small business development	60	44%
07.	Job creation and poverty reduction	56	42%
08.	Skills development activities	51	38%
09.	Conferencing & meetings activities	49	36%
10.	Traditional events and activities	46	34%
11.	Infrastructural development	43	31%
12.	Establishing facilities for the disabled	40	30%

[n = 135. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for facilities]

The next set of ecotourism related policies that were perceived, by a relatively large number of respondents, as existing in the study area, included the following: wildlife protection and upkeep [68%]; local arts and craft-making

[65%]; camping and caravanning activities [62%]; and accommodation provision practices [50%]. All these practices or policies were perceived as operational in the study area. The next set of ecotourism related policies that were perceived, by a relatively small number of respondents, as existing in the study area, included the following: small business development [44%]; job creation and poverty reduction [42%]; skills development activities [38%]; conferencing and meetings [36%]; traditional events and activities [34%]; and so on. It is to be stressed that some of these activities [skills development, job creation and poverty reduction] were the most needed among the communities in the study area.

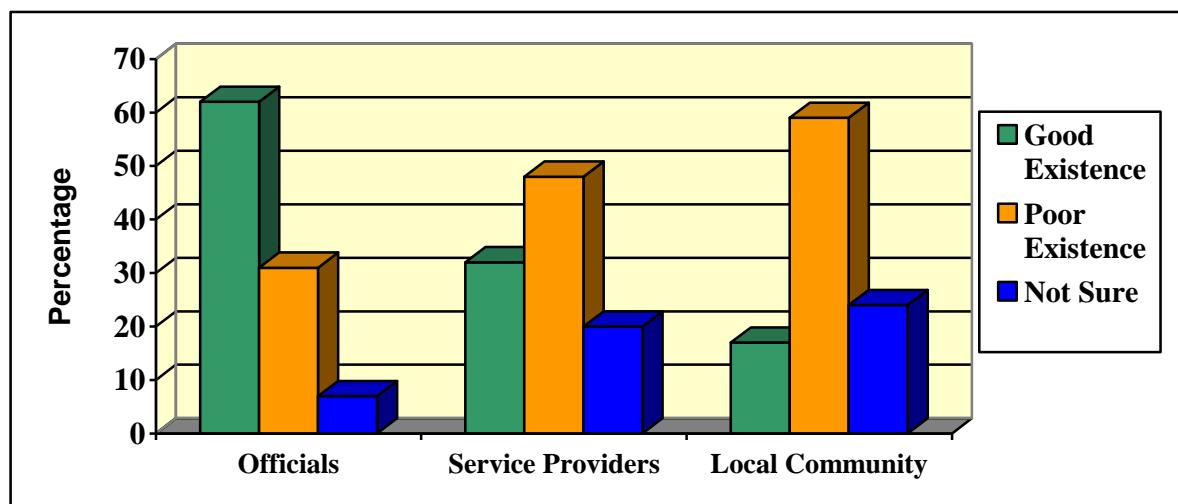
From the outcomes of these analyses, seeking to establish the existence of ecotourism policies in the study area, it may be reasonable to conclude that Hypothesis 5, which states: *That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented*, should not be supported. The basis for this conclusion is that the majority of the respondents, mainly the community, were not indicating the policies that mattered most to them as existing in the study area.

4.8.3 Perceived Existence of Policies by Stakeholder Categories

Pursuant to the notion of the existence of ecotourism policies and practices in the study area, stakeholders were asked to indicate which ecotourism policies and practices they were aware of as existing in the area. Applying the cross-tabulation approach, as shown in Figure 4.7, it is evident that majority of the tourism officials [62%] perceived the existence of policies and their implementation to be good, whereas about 31 percent of the officials perceived the existence of ecotourism policies to be poor. The possible reason for this

response was that the officials were intimately involved in policy matters, acknowledged their existence and also understood the difficulty of implementing existing policy.

FIGURE 4.7 PERCEIVED EXISTENCE OF POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION



[n = 135. Some of the subjects gave more than one response for each statement]

On the other hand, a majority of the service providers [48%] thought that the ecotourism existence of policies and their implementation was poor. About 32 percent of the service provider thought they were good. It should be understood that the service providers were in business and wanted more business opportunities to be offered to them.

Pertaining to the local communities, it became evident that the majority [59%] of them suggested that the existence of policy formulation and implementation was poor. Interestingly, an aggregated response of 83 percent of the community suggested that, on the notion of policy formulation and implementation, it was ranging from poor to ‘not sure’. Only a meagre number [17%] of the

community felt that the policy situation was good. The main reasons for these responses were that most community members had either experienced some difficulties in trying to access ecotourism opportunities, such as job creation, employment and poverty alleviation, or that their poverty status and poor educational qualifications influenced their negative responses. These negative responses seem also to be stimulated by inadequate small business opportunities, poor skills development and unemployment (Spykes, 2002; Sikhakhane, 2006).

When viewing the outcomes of these analyses it stands to reason that **Hypothesis 5**, which states: “*That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented*”, should not be accepted. The basis for not supporting this hypothesis is that, as earlier stated, the respondents were consistently revealing that there is lack of a coherent link between policy formulation and what the respondents actually need in the study area.

4.9 COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM ECOTOURISM

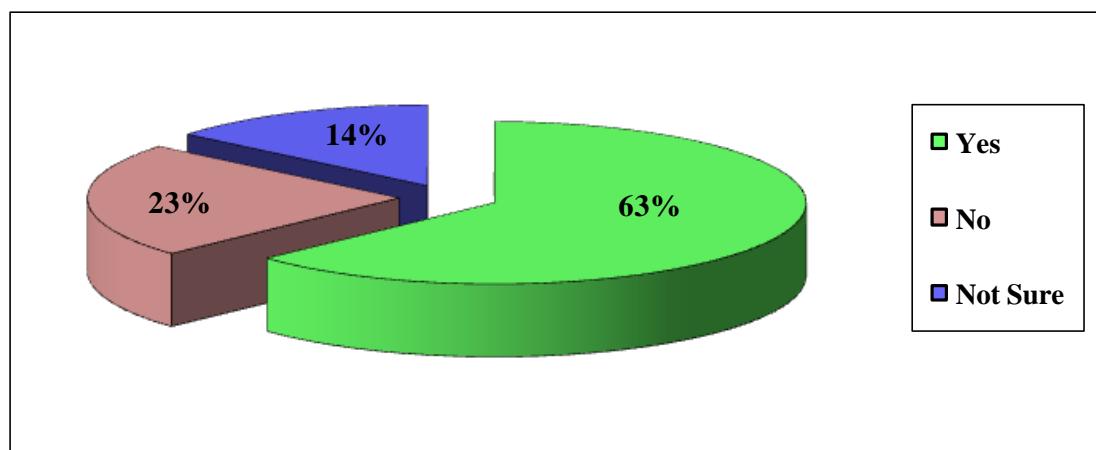
One of the fundamental objectives of this research investigation was to examine the extent to which the local community is positioned to benefit from ecotourism related activities or practices. Even though the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings have attempted to pay attention to nature conservation and tourism resources development, there still seems to be unique problems about *benefiting the local communities*. Whilst the local community has looked at tourism and poverty from a livelihoods perspective, the KwaZulu-Natal local authorities have focused on tourism as having positive and negative social, economic and environmental impacts on local communities (Cowan, *et al*, 2003;

Binns & Nel, 2002). Notwithstanding that several case studies have been undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal and elsewhere in South Africa, there seems to be no conclusive evidence of the success of such an ecotourism strategy, nationally (Clarke, 2003; Magi, 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Magi & Nzama, 2008, 2009a).

4.9.1 Perceived existence of ecotourism benefits

With this notion of community benefits in mind, respondents were asked to indicate their thinking about the existence of any ecotourism benefits from the St Lucia Town for the local communities. As shown in Figure 4.8 the majority of respondents [63%] indicated on the positive that there were adequate ecotourism benefits existing in the study area. About 23 percent of the respondents were negative about these benefits, whereas about 14 percent indicated that they were not sure.

FIGURE 4.8 EXISTING ECOTOURISM BENEFITS IN THE AREA



Ecotourism benefits are important in achieving what can be called community buy-in, in ecotourism development initiatives. Some of the given reasons, which were positive, for the perceived existence of community benefits in the

study area include the following: tourists bringing money to the area, conservation of wildlife for posterity; establishment of arts and craft centre; creation of jobs and providing employment; small business opportunities. Some of the reasons given, which were negative, include the following: lack of adequate job creation and poverty reduction opportunities; lack of skills development; lack of information about ecotourism; scarcity of business opportunities; etc.

It may be concluded, from the analyses given above, that **Hypothesis 6** which states: *That the local community benefits significantly from ecotourism related activities or practices*, should be supported. The basis for this support is based on the finding that the majority of respondents perceived the ecotourism benefits to be available in the study area.

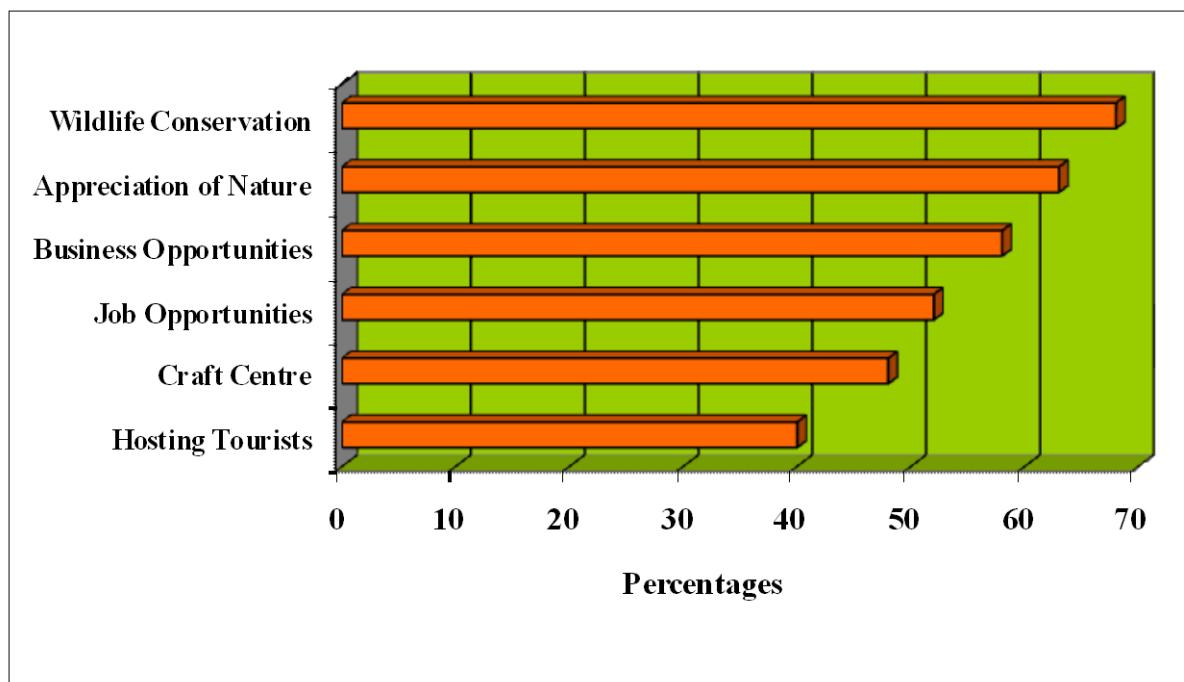
4.9.2 Types of Ecotourism Benefits Available in the Study Area

The notion of the availability of ecotourism benefits for the entire community in the study area is an important device for achieving community participation in the tourism industry in the study area. As such, the intention of this analysis was to establish the extent to which the available ecotourism benefits significantly reward the local community. In this regard, the methodology used to assess the types of ecotourism benefits available in the study area, was to ask the respondents to: “*Kindly list those Benefits you think are available in the St Lucia Area*”.

What is shown in Figure 4.9 are the ranked ecotourism benefits perceived as available in the study area. What is worth noting is that each of the stakeholders: the tourists and recreators, conservation and municipal officials,

the service providers and the local communities, tended to give those ecotourism benefits they have experienced and benefitted from. It should be mentioned that the responses from tourists did not feature much in this analysis.

FIGURE 4.9 PERCEIVED TYPES OF ECOTOURISM BENEFITS AVAILABLE IN THE STUDY AREA



The results shown in Figure 4.9 indicate that the majority of respondents identified conservation of wildlife [68%] and the appreciation of nature [63%] afforded the communities to be the most available ecotourism benefits. The second best identified ecotourism benefits were the business opportunities [58%] and job opportunities [52%]. These were some of the most desired benefits by the local communities, but were not necessarily abundantly available. Finally, the establishment of the craft centre [48%] and hosting of tourists [40%] were seen as least available ecotourism benefits.

On the basis of the findings it could be deduced that **Hypothesis 6**, which states: *That the local community benefits significantly from ecotourism related activities or practices*, should be supported. The basis for this support is that the majority of respondents perceived the ecotourism benefits to be available in the study area, even perhaps that not all the stakeholders are benefitting from them as much as they would have liked. For example, the job opportunities variable was perceived by the number of respondents [52%] as an available tourism benefit, yet many of the local communities are unemployed. The justification for this finding is that 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.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to deal with the analysis of the main objectives of this research study. The analysis and interpretation of data was achieved by utilising the analysis of hypothesis-based approach, wherein the hypotheses were either accepted or rejected. The chapter dealt with the analysis of demographic characteristics of the respondents (tourists, officials, service providers and local communities), which revealed varying and at times similar responses. Then the chapter dealt with the different objectives relating to: the understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development; the supply of coastal tourism resources; the utilisation of ecotourism management and development strategies; the comparative analysis of the principle of conservation versus commercialisation [commodification]; the existence of ecotourism development policies; and the availability of ecotourism benefits to

the local community. The emerging outcomes of these analyses have laid a foundation for making conclusions about the research question relating ecotourism development and beneficiation. The latter being based on whether the local community could benefit substantially either using the conservation approach or commercialisation strategy in ecotourism development.

Finally, it is important that when the conservation approach or commercialisation strategy is or are pursued in trying to achieve ecotourism development, a balanced approach must be considered. In other words, a meaningful link must be established between preserving the tourism resources for future generation and the commodification of these resources for quick gains which are not sustainable. The Town of St Lucia and Surroundings, in the context of Mtubatuba Municipality, must pursue the national tourism planning strategy and mandate so as to ensure that local objective are formulated in the line with national tourism policy

The next chapter, Chapter 5, summarises and deals with the findings of this research study, in the context of the objectives and hypotheses postulated. The next chapter also seeks to indicate out-rightly whether the tourism coastal development strategy, is best pursued following either the conservation or commercialisation [commodification] strategy.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In any ecotourism development initiative, the planning and management of tourism resources is best carried out, if existing tourism policies are followed to the later (Magi & Nzama, 2009a). The planning of any nature-based resource is one of the means through which the provincial and national governments can fulfil their reconstruction and development programme, as well as the tourism policy framework (ANC, 1994; DEAT, 1996).

Natural resources provide the focus for the eco-tourism industry, which extends beyond the municipal area into adjoining municipalities, formal game and nature reserves and private game lodges. Various accommodation establishments are located in the greater Mtubatuba area along with restaurants and sporting facilities [<http://www.kzntopbusiness.co.za/site/mtubatuba.htm>. (2009)].

Pursuant to the objectives of this study, which have to do with some planning, development and management of natural resources, this chapter therefore, gives a summary of the findings and related recommendations pertaining to this research study. The summary of the findings are now presented and lead to some suggestions and recommendations emanating from the analysis and

interpretation of data. The recommendations are presented as a contribution towards suggesting the better approach between conservation as compared to commercialisation of ecotourism resources.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The summary of this research study is fundamentally based on its objectives and hypotheses. The study had sought to examine the process of coastal ecotourism development around the Town of St Lucia Town and Surroundings, in relation to community participation in the management of coastal tourism development. It also sought to reveal how stakeholders perceive the application of conservation measures as compared to commercialisation or commodification of ecotourism resources.

Some of the general conclusions established in the study, are reflected in Chapter One, and are based on how the respondents or stakeholders: (a) understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia; (b) are aware of the adequacy of supply relating to coastal tourism resources; (c) view the level tourism management and development strategies are utilised in the study area; (d) favour what policy approach in addressing ecotourism development, between conservation approach as compared to the commercialisation strategy; (e) perceive the existence and application on tourism development policies in the study area; and (f) appreciate the extent to which the local community benefits from ecotourism related activities or practices.

The theoretical framework for the study was highlighted in Chapter Two. The conceptual framework of the study was structured on the basis of the statements associated with the study objectives. The key concepts and principles on ecotourism involved the following: the definition and importance of tourism development; tourism supply and demand; coastal tourism resources; tourism management and development; characteristics of ecotourism; tourism policy and implementation; tourism and conservation; tourism and community involvement; and the benefits of ecotourism.

Chapter Three highlights the physical setting of the study. It addresses the historical, geographical and environmental elements of the study area, the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings. The general physical environment is explained paying attention topography, general climate and the hydrology, soils and geology is described. In addition, the biological environment covering the flora and fauna, typifying what gives the area its unique character. A brief exposition of the economic and cultural attributes is also given. These include agriculture, infrastructure, accommodation, cultural activities, and so on. These touristic natural features add to the attractiveness and importance of the study area.

The nucleus of the study is Chapter Four, which focussed on the analysis and interpretation of collected data. This process of analysis was achieved through relating to the various objectives and hypotheses, which were mentioned earlier in this section. A variety of findings and conclusions were attained from this analysis and interpretation. These are presented in greater detail in the next section.

Finally, Chapter Five gives the summary and conclusions of the study based on the objectives and hypotheses. The emerging findings give conclusive statements or outcomes about the research question. It was conclusively established that, there are evidently negative perceptions of awareness, provision, participation, utilisation, management practice and community related tourism benefits in the study area. These findings lend themselves to the needs for the coastal ecotourism development and promotion of tourism delivery to the community in the study area.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON OBJECTIVES

- (a) The first objective of the study sought:

To reveal the extent to which stakeholders understand the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia.

In the analysis of this objective, the respondents were subdivided into these four categories so as to assess each group's understanding and preference of ecotourism in relation to conservation and commercialisation. The majority of the respondents gave a positive response to indicate their understanding the meaning and importance of tourism development. In this regard it was concluded that Hypothesis 1, which states: *That the stakeholders have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia,* was supported.

When the respondents were asked to define or explain what they thought ecotourism meant to them, the majority of respondents were able to select the correct definition of the concept of ecotourism. It stated that ecotourism:

“Has to do with the improvement of nature-based resources and conserving them for visitors and the benefit of the host community”. [Correct].

On the basis of the outcomes achieved, it was concluded that Hypothesis 1, which states: *That the stakeholders have a good understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development in the Town of St Lucia*, was supported.

(b) The second objective of the study sought:

To find out if the coastal tourism resources in the study area are adequately supplied.

With an intention of assessing the supply and quality of tourism facilities and services, respondents were asked to reveal their views about these resources. What was analysed revealed that, on the whole, the tourism facilities provided in the study area were viewed as inadequately supplied. It is apparent that the responses of all these stakeholders were strongly influenced by their jobs, business opportunities and activities. The reason for this finding is that both service providers and community work and experience the supply of facilities on a day-to-day basis, and seem not to be happy with the delivery thereof.

Regarding the explored findings, it was concluded that hypothesis 2, which states: *“That the coastal tourism resources in the study area are not adequately supplied,”* should be supported or accepted. The basis for this conclusion was that on the whole the majority of respondents, tourists, service providers and community, felt that supply of resources was inadequately supplied. Interestingly, the tourism, conservation and municipal officials were the only group that felt the supply of resources was adequately. The main reason being that they are responsible for providing, and do not want to found failing to supply the resources.

- (c) The third objective of the study sought:

To determine the level to which tourism management and development strategies are employed or utilised in the study area.

It is generally accepted that ecotourism management and development practices and strategies have the main intention of improving the tourism delivery as well as enhancing or benefiting the local communities and their natural and cultural environments (Page & Downing, 2002). In order to establish of existing ecotourism management practices or strategies in the study area, respondents were asked to respond to the question: “Are you aware of any existing ecotourism management or development strategies that are in place in the St Lucia area?” The findings of the analysis were that the majority of stakeholders indicating that they were not aware of existing ecotourism management strategies in the study area.

In view of these analyses and outcomes, the majority of stakeholders attested to the necessity of certain priority ecotourism management strategy in the study area. In that regard, it was concluded that Hypothesis 3, which states: *That the level of tourism management and development strategies that is employed or utilised in the study area, is not up to the required standard*, should be supported. Apparently there were too many ecotourism management strategies in the study area that needed to be attended to.

- (d) The forth objective of the study sought:

To find out which ecotourism policy approach the stakeholders favour for the study area, between conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification].

Essentially, it accepted that commodification is the commercialisation of a ecotourism product or activity, that is not inherently commercial in make-up. The investigation sought to contribute to the on-going debate about what would be the best practice between supporting conservation approaches versus the commercialisation or commodification of ecotourism, in general. In this regard, the analysis showed that the majority of respondents were not aware and not sure about existence or support of conservation approaches versus commercialisation is the study area.

On the basis of further analysis, relating to the comparison between conservation and commercialisation as a favoured approaches for future development, it may be concluded that Hypothesis 4, which states: *That the stakeholders in the study area favour the implementation of the ecotourism policy of conservation as compared to the commercialisation [commodification], was out-rightly supported.* The basis for the acceptance of the hypothesis is that, surprisingly, many people of St Lucia Town and Surroundings are becoming conservation conscious, as reflected in many of the reasons advanced for supporting the policy of conservation.

(e) The fifth objective of the study sought:

To establish how stakeholders perceive the existence and application on tourism development policies in the study area.

Today's policies are the basis for stimulating ecotourism resource development in any country, and more specifically in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. In this regard, the respondents in the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings were asked to address the above-named objective. The outcomes of the analysis were that the

majority of respondents were negative, and that they were unaware of ecotourism development policies existing in their area.

From this finding, relating to awareness of the existence of ecotourism development policies, it was concluded that Hypothesis 5, which states: *That the stakeholders perceive the existence and application of tourism development policies in the study area, to be adequately implemented*, should not be supported. The basis for not accepting the hypothesis was that the majority of respondents did not indicate their awareness of the existence of relevant ecotourism policies.

(f) The sixth objective of the study sought:

To establish the extent to which the local community benefits from ecotourism related activities or practices.

Even though the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings has attempted to pay attention to nature conservation and tourism resources development, there still seems to be unique problems about *benefiting the local communities*. Whilst the local community has looked at tourism and poverty from a livelihoods perspective, the KwaZulu-Natal local authorities have focused on tourism as having positive and negative social, economic and environmental impacts on local communities (Cowan, *et al*, 2003; Binns & Nel, 2002).

In addressing the above-mentioned objective, the respondents were asked to indicate their thinking about the existence of any ecotourism benefits from the St Lucia Town for the local communities. The findings were that the majority of respondents indicated on the positive that there were adequate ecotourism benefits existing in the study area. Some of the reasons given, which were

negative, include the following: lack of adequate job creation and poverty reduction opportunities; lack of skills development; lack of information about ecotourism; scarcity of business opportunities; etc.

It may be concluded, from the analyses arrived at given, that **Hypothesis 6** which states: *That the local community benefits significantly from ecotourism related activities or practices*, should be supported. The basis for this support was based on the finding that the majority of respondents perceived the ecotourism benefits to be available in the study area.

The entire section on the conclusions based on objectives, has dealt with: the understanding of the meaning and importance of tourism development; the supply of coastal tourism resources; the utilisation of ecotourism management and development strategies; the comparative analysis of the principle of conservation versus commercialisation [commodification]; the existence of ecotourism development policies; and the availability of ecotourism benefits to the local community. The emerging outcomes of these analyses have laid a foundation for making conclusions about the research question relating ecotourism development and beneficiation. The latter being based on whether the local community could benefit substantially either using the conservation approach or commercialisation strategy in ecotourism development.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It should be understood within the context of all unresolved problems and challenges existing in the study area, that some solutions need to be drawn from the already existing literary sources, theoretical framework and findings of theis

research study. The recommendations made in this section are aimed at clarifying some aspects of this study as well as to generalise on some of the findings in order to avoid some of the issues which are found to exist in the study area. On the basis of the interpreted data in the preceding chapter, the recommendations are made. The recommendations are presented as a contribution to the formulation of policies and strategies that seek to introduce the understanding of a conservation-based ecotourism.

The authorities of the Town of St Lucia and Surroundings should attempt to improve the ecotourism situation in the area by pursuing some of the following recommendations:

- Inculcate the respect and love of conservation as an established strategy for ecotourism development, considering that the research outcomes show that the stakeholders favoured the policy of conservation compared to the principle of commercialisation or commodification of ecotourism products.
- Encourage more community participation that is based on achieving local community ecotourism benefits emerging from ecotourism related activities or practices.
- Improve the accessibility of various stakeholders, especially the local community, to the natural areas or conservation areas adjacent to the study area.
- Establishment of ecotourism programmes associated with the creation of jobs, which would expose the local communities to the travel and tourism industry.

- Establish a range of skills development and training in ecotourism activities and practices, which would facilitate the participation of community members in ecotourism business opportunities.

Finally, the establishment of ecotourism policies and strategy in the study area, which seek to empower the local communities, is fundamental to a viable and all-inclusive tourism industry. It should be recognised that the aim of the South African government is to achieve a tourism industry that is able to create job opportunities and achieve poverty alleviation for all. As such a paradigm shift in utilising the tourism facilities at the St Lucia Town and Surroundings, is an objective worthy of achieving.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to map out the understanding, the participation, the importance of tourism development, the supply of ecotourism resources, and the utilisation of ecotourism management and development strategies, which seek to benefit the local communities. The chapter has also highlighted the comparative analysis of the principle of conservation versus commercialisation [commodification], with a view of providing an ecotourism development policy which would be sustainable for the benefit of future generations. The emerging outcomes of analyses associated with the objectives listed above, seem to have laid a foundation for making conclusions about the research question relating ecotourism development and beneficiation in the study area.

In conclusion, many ecotourism facilities and activities are increasingly being criticised for being too commercialised or commodified, thus failing to convey

principles of conservation, which should be found in nature reserves that are striving to retain their authenticity. It is for this reason that many critics of the tourism industry are urging it to get back to its roots by working with the indigenous communities. A substantial number of tourists are in search of what is known as authentic and natural tourism, which should be offered at many tourist destinations. The Town of St Lucia and the St Lucia Estuary, as a thriving nature-based tourist attraction is very much advantaged in this regard.

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APPENDIX- A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Coastal Ecotourism Development Strategies in the Town of St Lucia, Kwazulu-Natal: Conservation Versus Commercialisation

This Questionnaire is to be answered by the (a) Tourism & Conservation Officials, (b) Tourists /Recreators, (c) Business Operators and (d) Local Community. Please mark an (X) in appropriate places.

St Lucia & Surroundings	01			In KwaZulu-Natal	03	
UMkhanyakude	02			Outside KwaZulu-Natal	04	

A. DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

1. Gender

Female	01		
Male	02		

2. Age

18-25	01		
26-35		02	
36-55		03	
56-80		04	

3. Marital Status

Married	01		
Single		02	
Widowed		03	
Divorced		04	

4. Level of Education

Primary Level	01			
Secondary Level		02		
Matric plus Diploma		03		
University Degree		04		

5. Occupation

Unskilled	01			
Skilled		02		
Semi-Skilled		03		
Professional		04		

6. Income

R1001 – R3000	01 02 03 04 05		
R3001 – R5000			
R5001 – R8000			
R8001 – R10000			
≥ to R10001			

B. UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING & IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

7. What do you understand to be the meaning of ecotourism?.....

.....

.....

8. Do you think ecotourism development is important for your local area?

Yes	01 02 03		
No			
Not Sure			

9. Please give reasons for your response

.....

.....

.....

10. Rank the statements describing ecotourism development in order of their correctness as you see them.

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| (a) It is when you go university and study economic development so as to improve the employment opportunities for your area. | 01
02
03
04
05 | | |
| (b) It is when tourists visit natural areas such as game reserve, beaches and God created resources with a view enjoying nature and benefitting the community. | | | |
| (c) This is the enhancement of rural areas by improving the infrastructure such electricity, roads, sewage system and schools. | | | |
| (d) It is the development of cities and urban area for the purpose of creating jobs and places local can visit | | | |
| (e) It has to do with the improvement of nature-based resources and conserving them for visitors and the benefit of the host community. | | | |

- 11 Do you think it is important for the local community to develop and conserve tourism related facilities?

Yes	01		
No		02	
Not Sure		03	

12. Please give a reason for your response.

.....
.....
.....

C. **THE SUPPLY OF COASTAL ECOTOURISM RESOURCES**

13. Do you think the ecotourism resources in the St Lucia area are adequately provided for the local people?

Yes	01		
No		02	
Not Sure		03	

14. Do you think it is important for the local community to develop and conserve tourism related facilities?

Yes	01		
No		02	
Not Sure		03	

15. Please give a reason for your response.

.....
.....
.....

16. Kindly list those facilities you think are existing in St Lucia Area:

(a)	01	
(b)	02	
(c)	03	
(d)	04	

(f)	6	
(g)	7	
(h)	8	
(i)	9	

17. Of the ecotourism tourism attractions listed below, tick those you are familiar with in the area.

Nature-made Attractions			Man-made Attractions		
(e) Wildlife	01		(f) Community Schools	6	
(f) Mountains	02		(g) Cultural Village	7	
(g) Forest (Indigenous)	03		(h) Vending Structures	8	
(h) Caves	04		(i) Archaeological Sites	9	
(j) Lakes & Rivers	05		(j) Traditional Events	10	

D. ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

18. Are you aware of any existing ecotourism management or development strategies that are in place in the St Lucia area?

Yes		01		
No		02		
Not Sure		03		

19. Please give reasons for your response
-
.....
.....

20. Kindly list the types of strategies that have been successfully applied in the St Lucia Area:

(a)	01		(e)	05	
(b)	02		(f)	06	
(c)	03		(g)	07	
(d)	04		(h)	08	

21. Please tick the strategies which you think are in existence in St Lucia:

(a) Small Business Opportunities	01		Building of Schools	06	
(b) Development of facilities	02		Conservation of nature	07	
(c) Infrastructural Development	03		Community Levies	08	
(d) Skills Development	04		Protection of Wildlife	09	
(e) Job Creation	05		Land Restitution	10	

E. CONSERVATION COMPARED TO COMMERCIALISATION

22. What policy do you favour for tourism, between conservation and commercialisation of resources?

Conservation of resources	01 02 03 04		
Commercialisation of resources			
Both Conservation & Commercialisation			
Not sure			

23. Give reasons for the answer you have selected:

.....

F. ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN AREA.

24. Are you aware of any policies and practices that promote and develop ecotourism development in your area?

Yes	01 02 03		
No			
Not Sure			

25. Please give a reason for your response.

.....

26. Tick the ecotourism policies and practices that you are aware exist in the area for development and conservation?

Conservation of resources	01	Camping and Caravanning	07	
Traditional community practice	02	Local craft making practice	08	
Infrastructural Development	03	Conferencing practice	09	
Skills Development practice	04	Wildlife protection practice	10	
Job Creation & Poverty Reduction	05	Small business development	11	
Accommodation provision practice	06	Facilities for the disabled	12	

27. Who do you think should be responsible for establishing policy in the St Lucia area?

Government officials	01	
Community organisations	02	
Business Sector	03	
Conservation authorities	04	
Municipal officials	05	
Other [Specify]	06	

G. **COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM ECOTOURISM**

28. Do you think there are any ecotourism benefits from the St Lucia Town for the local communities?

Yes		01		
No		02		
Not Sure		03		

29. Please give a reason for your response.

.....

30. Kindly list those Benefits you think are available in the St Lucia Area.

(a)	01		(e)	05	
(b)	02		(f)	06	
(c)	03		(g)	07	
(d)	04		(h)	08	

Any Additional Comments:

.....

APPENDIX- B

**University of
Zululand:**

**DEPT. OF RECREATION
& TOURISM**

20 March 2008



**Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
South Africa
Tel: 035 902 6719
Fax: 035-902 6073**

Ref:

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir /Madam

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The students Mr S.R. Ntuli [Reg: 200011852] is a part-time postgraduate student in the Department of Recreation and Tourism at the University of Zululand. He is busy doing the Masters of Recreation and Tourism [MRT] degree. The MRT students are required to undertake a research study as part of their degree work. The attached questionnaire is part of his research project seeking to establish how stakeholders view ecotourism development in the context of conservation and commercialisation in the study area. The title of the research project is:

*Coastal Tourism Development Strategies in the Town of St Lucia,
Kwazulu-Natal: Conservation Versus Commercialisation*

This research is undertaken mainly for academic purposes in the study area. It is hoped that the findings will make a meaningful contribution to the field of tourism as well as the understanding of tourism among people of St Lucia Town and Surroundings, and KwaZulu-Natal as a whole.

All information collected from you through the interviews or questionnaire will be kept in strict confidence.

Your assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Prof. L.M Magi

Professor: MRT-PDRT Programme
Department of Recreation and Tourism
University of Zululand

APPENDIX - C

Plate-1: Natural Forest on Dunes



Plate- 2: Cultural Village at Khula



Plate- 3: Estuary - Boating and Fishing



Plate -4: Craft Market & Wares



Plate- 5: Hippos at the Estuary



Plate 6: One of the Fancy Lodges

