

**PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
IN WILDLIFE AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT: PHINDA
PRIVATE GAME RESERVE, UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT,
KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

JONES MUDIMU MUZIRAMBI

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SUPERVISOR: PROF. K.F. MEARNS

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DECLARATION

I, **Jones Mudimu Muzirambi**, herewith declare that the thesis entitled “*Perceptions of local community participation in wildlife and tourism management: Phinda Private Game Reserve, Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*” is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated in the relevant areas and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature of student

Date

DEDICATION

To my beloved wife, Kerina,
who is my pillar of strength, motivator and partner,
my children, Tariro Evelyn and Tinashe Jones, my jewels,
and most of all,
to the Almighty and my ever-loving and caring Father.

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ABSTRACT

In South Africa, conservation and tourism planning that incorporate local communities, has a greater significance today than before given the historical Apartheid legacy, which marginalised the majority of the population from democratic processes and economic opportunities. Community participation in the critical facets of conservation and tourism, that is planning, decision-making and management has been an object of research discourse for a long time. Issues around sustainability, governance, employment opportunity and equity, cost and benefit-sharing, land rights, capacity-building, active participation and conflicts have received great attention from scholars throughout the world. Externally-generated (observer) views on the nature and extent of local community participation in conservation and tourism management, more often than not, fail to depict the perceptions of the local residents. Explanations tend to be more prescriptive and are forced onto the stakeholders, who are directly affected by the circumstances around them.

The voice of the local residents clearly articulates their views and attitudes much more than any other external views. The goal of this research study is to investigate the perceptions of local community on their participation in wildlife conservation, ecotourism and social development and the information gathered will be used to develop a new model for enhanced private sector-community collaboration and communication for sustainability. The study interrogates factors constraining collaboration, which include organisational culture, power differentials and communication, from the perspectives of stakeholders, especially the grassroots community. It engages with the community for its views and opinions and as a result, delivers valuable criticisms of and suggestions for the improvement of the process followed.

A qualitative approach was adopted. Data collection and analysis methods were identified, explained, justified and implemented. This project is a Case Study, carried out in Umkhanyakude District of KZN, in which Phinda Game Reserve and the surrounding local communities are located. Makhaza and Mnqobokazi are situated about 30-40 kilometres north-east of Hluhluwe, on the R22 Road that links the town with Sodwana Bay. Semi-structured individual and group interviews allow the study participants to identify and describe concerns or concepts that may not have been expected or considered by the researcher. Interviews are of particular importance to ensure honesty and impartiality. Documentary analysis allowed to generate inferences through objective and systematic identification of core elements of a written communication. Observation was used to capture situations of interest not readily volunteered by the participants due to notable different views among members of the particular community. The Adapted Nominal Group Technique workshop was prepared and conducted, to augment the other methods. A multi-method approach ensured the reliability of the findings and the validity of both the approaches and the data collected.

The historical background of &Beyond, its philosophy and journey towards sustainable wildlife conservation, tourism and social development was discussed. It was evident that due

to the proximity of Makhasa and Mnqobokazi, activities of Phinda directly affected the communities and the same applies to those of the communities in Phinda. There was an apparent need to carefully and properly manage the cultural, socio-economic, political and spatial relationships to build a common understanding about roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in a mutually beneficial manner.

The findings of the study illustrates that the perceptions and attitudes of the local residents on their participation in decision-making and management of conservation, tourism and social development are important for sustainability. The understanding of land rights issues was restricted to a few. While there was general appreciation for the activities of Phinda and Africa Foundation, the participants expressed their unfulfilled expectations, concerns and also made suggestions for a way forward to prevent conflict and ensure sustainable conservation and tourism. Skewed power relations, lack of participation in decision-making, poor governance, employment opportunities and equity, lack of transparency and poor communication strategies were among the main issues raised by the participants.

Constructive criticism and recommendations, together with the Bending the Curve Model could serve as a valuable community engagement framework for private sector tourism companies and private game reserves to involve and work with surrounding communities to ensure more sustainable private game reserves in the future. The study recommends the model with some concrete, practical measures adapted from ideas of collaborative theory, for sustainable development.

Key words: &Beyond management; Active community participation; Benefit-sharing Capacity development; Community voice; Governance; Restitution of land rights; Sustainability; Sustainable ecotourism.

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ACRONYMS

ANC:	African National Congress
ANGT:	Adapted Nominal Group Technique
AFRA:	Association For Rural Advancement
AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANGT:	Adapted Nominal Group Technique
ARV:	Anti-Retro Virus
CAMPFIRE:	Communal Areas Management Programme For Indigenous Resources
CBC:	Community-based Conservation
CBC&E	Community Based Conservation and Ecotourism
CBC-PA	Community Based Conservation in Protected Areas
CCA:	Conservation Corporation Africa
CDD:	Community-Driven Development model
DEAT:	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
HIV:	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
IDP:	Integrated Development Programme
IUCN:	International Union for Conservation of Nature
ICDP:	Integrated Conservation and Development Projects
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
LRM:	Local Resources Management
NGO:	Non-governmental Organisation
NGT:	Nominal Group Technique
PA:	Protected Areas
PGR:	Private Game Reserve
RDC:	Rural District Council
SA:	South Africa
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
TB:	Tuberculosis
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
USA:	United States of America
WHO:	World Health Organisation
WWF:	World Wildlife Foundation

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

“The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human. To damage this community is to diminish our own existence.”

(Thomas Berry)

1.1 BACKGROUND

Before the 19th century, the indigenous and local people of Southern Africa had enough land to sustain them for all their needs (Kamphorst, Koopmanschap & Oudwater, 1997). The traditional methods of resource utilisation were well adapted to conservation (Moyo, Robinson, Katarere, Stevenson & Gumbo, 1991). Since the colonial era, Africans were deprived of their most needed natural resource, the land which included wildlife, due to the protectionist and exclusivist modes of conservation (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Currie, 2001). These policies have had a negative impact on the resident communities, the governments and protected area administrators. Local communities lost access to their traditional resources, their autonomy was tampered with and they were often threatened by wild animals. On the other hand, responsible authorities need to deal with trespassing, unauthorised use of resources, erosion and habitat fragmentation caused by local communities (Balint, 2006). Conflicts arise with the local community members disobeying laws in order to meet their needs (Jacobsohn, 1991; Wells, 1996; Ngubane & Diab, 2005) and protected area (PA) operators becoming more oppressive against the local community.

At the end of the Apartheid era in 1994, 5% of the 67000 km² of South Africa's land area was under state-run wildlife protection with more than 100 provincial or homeland nature conservation areas (Honey, 1999). These areas were established through forced relocations, were under military protection and financed by means of government subsidies (Govender, Jury, Mthembu, Hatesse & Bulfoni, 2005). The new democratic government of South Africa was and is still faced with a challenge of addressing the past imbalances resulting from the establishment of PAs. Therefore, there is a commitment by the State to re-organise these operations through land redistribution and the institution of development programmes that benefit and involve local communities around the parks and ecotourism centres (Govender *et al.*, 2005; Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Dudley, Mansourian, Stolton & Suksuwan, 2010).

The publication of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Strategy in 1980 ushered in the concept of sustainable utilisation of wildlife resources as opposed to the protectionist policies (Infield, 1988). According to the IUCN, the first aim of sustainable conservation requires community involvement within co-operative management structures (Infield, 1988; Guyot, 2002). One of the widely accepted definitions of sustainable development is from the Brundtland Commission and it states that sustainable development is "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (Brundtland, 1987:43).

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) together with IUCN and partners recommended a regional initiative to address the challenges of governance, participation, equity and benefit-sharing in protected areas (IUCN, 2010). Governance refers to the effectiveness of decision-making processes and institutions (Kauffmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi, 2005; Balint, 2006). United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2002) defines capacity as the levels of competence, ability and skills necessary to set and achieve relevant goals. IUCN (2010) further states that SADC identified the major challenges, which included the lack of full participation and self-representation of local communities in the management of PAs, lack of sufficient local benefit generation, inequitable sharing of benefits and costs, institutional and legal framework to support community rights and restrictive policies and legislation. Where governance is weak at local level, community participation might be limited and traditional leaders or private firms might deny the community benefits (Balint, 2006). Capacity-building is therefore essential for the improvement of natural resources management, which in turn, is central to improving governance and empowering rural people (IUCN, 2010).

Edgell Sr (2016) describes sustainable tourism management of the natural and physical environment, as more critical than ever before and must coexist with economic, socio-cultural, health, safety and security objectives of localities and nations. In practice, according to Edgell Sr. (2016), sustainable tourism links the planning functions of tourism development with the social goals of tourism into a concrete set of guidelines for directions to move ahead into the future. Songorwa, Buhrs & Hughey (2000) question whether tourist operators will exert too much influence on, not only ecological decisions, but also the ability of rural communities to be genuinely represented. Infield (1988) stressed the importance of understanding the attitudes of rural communities and to take into account their perceived needs and aspirations for successful wildlife and ecotourism management.

With the new socio-political dispensation, there was need for a shift of roles. The land rights issues have to be addressed, with the intervention of the Government. The re-acquisition of land by the State and returning of land rights to the local communities necessitated a change of roles by both the local residents and tourist operators. The local community changed from being a dependent charity recipient, to being partners and owners of the land. The tourist operators had to enter into new negotiations with the local leaders.

The Strategic Framework for Sustainable Tourism Development in South Africa of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT, 2005 cited in Hottola, 2009) define some of its strategic goals of sustainable tourism development in the following manner:

- Tourism that encourages community participation in the planning, development, implementation and management of tourism projects;
- Tourism that empowers community structures through, for example involvement in the marketing of cultural experiences and practices to tourists;
- Tourism that involves education, training, awareness and capacity-building programmes, especially aimed at previously neglected groups.

(DEAT, 2005 cited in Hottola, 2009)

In order to achieve sustainable conservation and tourism, stakeholders need to collaborate for the benefit of nature, tourism and social development. This study is based on Collaborative Theory. There is little argument that collaborative governance theory is attracting considerable attention as a new paradigm in both research and practice (Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh, 2012). Collaborative governance brings public and private stakeholders together in collective forums with public agencies to engage in consensus-oriented decision-making (Ansell and Gash, 2008). Adair (2014) defines collaboration as any on-going interpersonal interaction not characterised by a significant power imbalance, with express purpose of achieving common goals. In collaboration, a joint- decision-approach is applied to problem resolution where power is shared and stakeholders have collective responsibility for their actions and the subsequent outcomes of these (Selin & Chavez, 1995). Emphasis is on sustained dialogue between stakeholders to resolve differences and advance a shared vision of the future (Selin & Chavez, 1995).

In South Africa, tourism planning that engages local communities, has a greater significance than before, as in the past large sections of the population were marginalised from formal democratic processes (Ngubane & Diab, 2005). Community-based conservation (CBC) initiatives have the basic principles of addressing the needs of the local communities around the

protected areas and at the same time pushing both the conservation and economic agenda of government and private ecotourism operators. The CBC initiatives involve sharing revenue with local residents, increasing their opportunities to earn income from tourism or offering other social and economic improvements linked to conservation (Balint, 2006). The PA operator has an incentive to develop and strengthen such projects in order to reduce encroachment and conflict. The local residents have the incentives to support rather than undermine PA management regimes to maintain the flow of benefits (Balint, 2006; Gorner & Cihar, 2013).

Researchers, for example, Kamphorst *et al.* (1997), Balint (2006) and Mutandwa and Gadzrayi (2007) confirmed that many of community-based conservation and ecotourism (CBC&E) project initiatives, implemented with respect to PA management, have often struggled to meet expectations. Amongst others, the following reasons for this were raised, namely the refusal by authorities to devolve power to lower levels, restrictions on participation by local communities to project implementation instead of involvement at all stages and the inequitable sharing of benefits.

In support of the above, some authors like Murphy and Roe (2004), Mbaiwa (2005) and Ngubane and Diab (2005) considered widespread lack of entrepreneurial skills as one of the major contributors to the poor performance of the CBC&E sector. However, according to Mbaiwa (2005), contrary to many critical voices, community-based ecotourism enterprises may succeed in a partnership with government conservation bodies and private businesses, if guided by strict but fair resource management practices. Other authors have also concluded that it is more realistic to advocate an active co-operation instead of a win-win situation between local residents; government and tourism operators (Dudley *et al.*, 2010). The findings of Dudley *et al.* (2010) show that, PAs have a role to contribute to poverty reduction, especially in developing countries.

Review of available literature and surveys by Dudley *et al.* (2010) also suggest that these PAs can clearly provide important benefit to address poverty especially in rural communities, considering five basic dimensions of well-being that include subsistence, economic, cultural-spiritual, environmental services and political. There are no simple formulae for success as context is critical (Imran, Alam & Beaumont, 2014). Some communities recognise the benefits of PAs and tourism, while others remain opposed to the whole western concept of protection. For example, there are success stories in Integrated Conservation and Development Projects

(ICDP) at Purros in Namibia (Cock & Koch, 1991), Okavango Delta of Botswana, Midland Meander of KZN in South Africa (Hottola, 2009) and community-based conservation around protected areas of El Naranjito in El Salvador (Balint, 2006), which appear to be close to what can realistically be called ideal.

Rogerson (2009) has criticised South African tourism enterprises for their limited linkages with disadvantaged black communities and the lack of pro-poor focus. Research literature has also shown that some private tourism operators have limited tolerance for experimenting with their customers due to the lack of business skills and tourism knowledge by the local communities. Hence, Hottola (2009) noted that some of these tourism initiatives have missed one of the main strategic goals by maintaining the marginalisation of black South Africans from the tourism economy. Balint (2006) suggests that the outcomes of the CBC&E will only improve the sustainable economic gains if community-based conservation and tourism project leaders pay close attention to the four developmental indicators, which are, rights, capacity, governance and revenue. However, United Nations Development Programme (2002) observes that those initiating and supporting projects are likely to focus on environmental and economic implications and negating the importance of developmental variables, such as those mentioned above. There is consensus among practitioners that human development projects cannot succeed without focusing on rights, capacity and governance (Balint, 2006).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM, QUESTION AND AIM

A key challenge in sustainable tourism is to develop economically viable enterprises that provide livelihood benefits to local communities, while protecting indigenous cultures and environments (Simpson, 2009). Umkhanyakude is one of the world's richest ecological regions with rich biodiversity in seven distinct ecosystems (&Beyond website, 2015). However, this part of the KwaZulu-Natal Province is poor when measured by socio-economic standards (Guyot, 2002). Local communities in Umkhanyakude consist largely of rural black people of the Zulu tribe, who live in traditional homesteads in dispersed settlements. The policies of the Apartheid Government of South Africa resulted in marginalisation of this part of the population from the mainstream economy. The local Zulu people of Umkhanyakude were dispossessed of their natural resources they depended on, due to the setting up of protected areas (Currie, 2001). The establishment of protected areas amidst poor rural black communities, largely benefiting a white minority, intensified a climate of distrust and conflict (Naguran, 2002).

Ngubane and Diab (2005) observed that the drive towards wildlife conservation, and hence tourism development, was hampered by the conflict between local communities and nature conservation authorities. To date, there has been little involvement of local communities in tourism planning, their participation in general being limited to endorsement and implementation of plans drafted by planning experts (Koch, 1997). For sustainable tourism planning, it is necessary to seriously consider the needs and aspirations of local communities, as well as those of other stakeholders, such as conservationists, local authorities and private developers. Literature of Hottola (2009), Balint (2006), Mutandwa and Gadzirayi (2007) for example, also express disappointment by local communities due to lack of consultation in past tourism development initiatives. According to local communities, there is also evidence of the loss of agricultural land and access rights that could not be replaced by employment opportunities offered by tourism developers (Ngubane & Diab, 2005).

One school of thought warns that helping the people in need is a noble idea, but should be treated with caution (Spierenberg, Wels, van der Waal & Robins, 2009). For tourist operators, dealing with a local community that is weakened by poverty is an advantage as they will give hand-outs in exchange for unquestioned allegiance. The question that is raised when considering all developmental projects is how to avoid the assistance becoming an instrument of both dependency and exploitation (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Spierenberg *et al.*, 2009). This unbalanced power relations favour people and organisations at both ends, at the expense of human rights, socio-economic development and conservation (Balint, 2006; Mutandwa & Gadzirayi, 2007).

It is critical for the voice of the community itself to express the opinions, views, perceptions and even concerns of the local people with respect to the level of engagement in the management of wildlife, tourism, social development and benefit-sharing. The voice of the local residents clearly articulates their views and attitudes much more than any other external views. This study explores the entire community facilitation and communication process, with the community itself being centre stage. It engages with the community for its views and opinions and as a result, delivers valuable criticisms of and suggestions for the improvement of the process followed. This method of engagement has significant implications for future conservation and ecotourism development.

The strong feeling about land ownership in South Africa is evidenced by several land claims that have been lodged with the Commission on the Land Rights Act (No. 22 of 1994). Guyot

(2002) emphasised that the poor levels of consultation and trust could be a source of future conflict between local residents and the authorities, as new developments will not be accepted or properly used if the community is not part of the decision-making process. This situation is exacerbated by members of the community, who are either in leadership or are influential, that act as both instruments of exploitation and gate-keepers and hence discourage ordinary people from expressing their views and feelings. Shared ownership of tourism development processes, both in terms of planning and benefits, would reduce the conflict and lay the foundation for improved management of natural resources (Hottola, 2009).

Based on the above discussion, the following research question and research aim emerged.

Research question:

What are the perceptions of the local community at Phinda Private Game Reserve regarding its participation in wildlife conservation, ecotourism and social development and how may these views contribute to achieving sustainability?

Research aim:

The aim of this study is to investigate the perceptions of local community participation in wildlife and ecotourism management and social development. The local communities, protected area members of management, as well as Africa Foundation management will respond on wildlife, conservation ecotourism and social development at Phinda and the information gathered will be used for developing a new model for enhanced private sector-community collaboration and communication for sustainability.

For effective response to the research question and achievements of the aim of the study, the following objectives were addressed during the course of this study.

Research objectives:

- (1) To investigate the perceptions of the local communities on restitution of land rights.
- (2) To assess the extent to which Phinda Private Game Reserve is involving the local communities in planning, decision-making and management in conservation, tourism and social development.
- (3) To investigate the perceptions and attitudes of local residents relating to their participation in:
 - a. Wildlife management;
 - b. Tourism planning and management;
 - c. Socio-economic development; and

- d. Cost- and benefit-sharing.
- (4) To determine the perceptions and attitudes of local communities towards Phinda in terms of its impact on their socio-economic lives.
 - (5) To develop a new model for perceptions of participation in community-based conservation and ecotourism to enhance collaboration and communication.
 - (6) To identify gaps, grey areas and opportunities for further research and development in community participation in wildlife and ecotourism management in the context of private game reserves.

The first objective addresses issues with reference to the knowledge and understanding of the historical background of the study area and the restitution of land rights process. The second objective addresses the participation of the local community in management and decision-making processes in conservation and tourism at Phinda Private Game Reserve. The third objective focuses on perceptions and attitudes of the local community on their participation in conservation, tourism, socio-economic development and cost- and benefit-sharing processes. The fourth objective investigates the views and attitudes of local residents on the impact of the activities of Phinda on their socio-economic status and general livelihoods. Finally, the study explores gaps and opportunities for further research and development within the context of sustainable, community-based conservation and tourism.

1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A qualitative paradigm, with a critical indigenous qualitative flare, was considered the most appropriate for this study. The aim of this study was to investigate perceptions and attitudes of local communities on their participation in conservation, tourism and social development at a private game reserve. For that reason, the specific methodological approach used in this research was a case study approach.

According to Denzin (2009), a critical indigenous qualitative approach understands that all inquiry is both political and moral and it uses methods critically for explicit social justice and it values the transformative power of indigenous undermined knowledge. Bishop (2005) adds that it must be ethical and participatory. It must be committed to dialogue and must meet the perceived needs of people. This study, among others, was concerned with issues of representation, legitimacy, accountability and benefit management.

A case study approach enabled the researcher to gain deeper insight into the perception and attitudes of local communities of their participation in wildlife conservation and tourism, as

explained by Yin (2009). By nature, case studies focus on one or a limited number of settings and can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive or a combination of these (Pope & Mays, 1995).

Semi-structured interviews (individual and group) were conducted. In-depth interviews are flexible, interactive and empowering on the part of the interviewee (Curry, Nembhard & Bradley, 2009). Group interviews were used to augment individual (one-on-one) interviews and these created a platform for the otherwise shy people who could not fully express themselves in the individual interviews. Observation and documentary analysis were conducted throughout the study. An Adapted Nominal Group Technique (ANGT) session was utilised towards the end of data collection process to consolidate, verify and clarify issues from the interview results. An integrated analysis of the results of the study was done. Finally, the synthesis, recommendations and conclusion of the investigation were provided.

1.4 SEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS

Figure 1.1 (to follow) illustrates the research process and chapter breakdown.

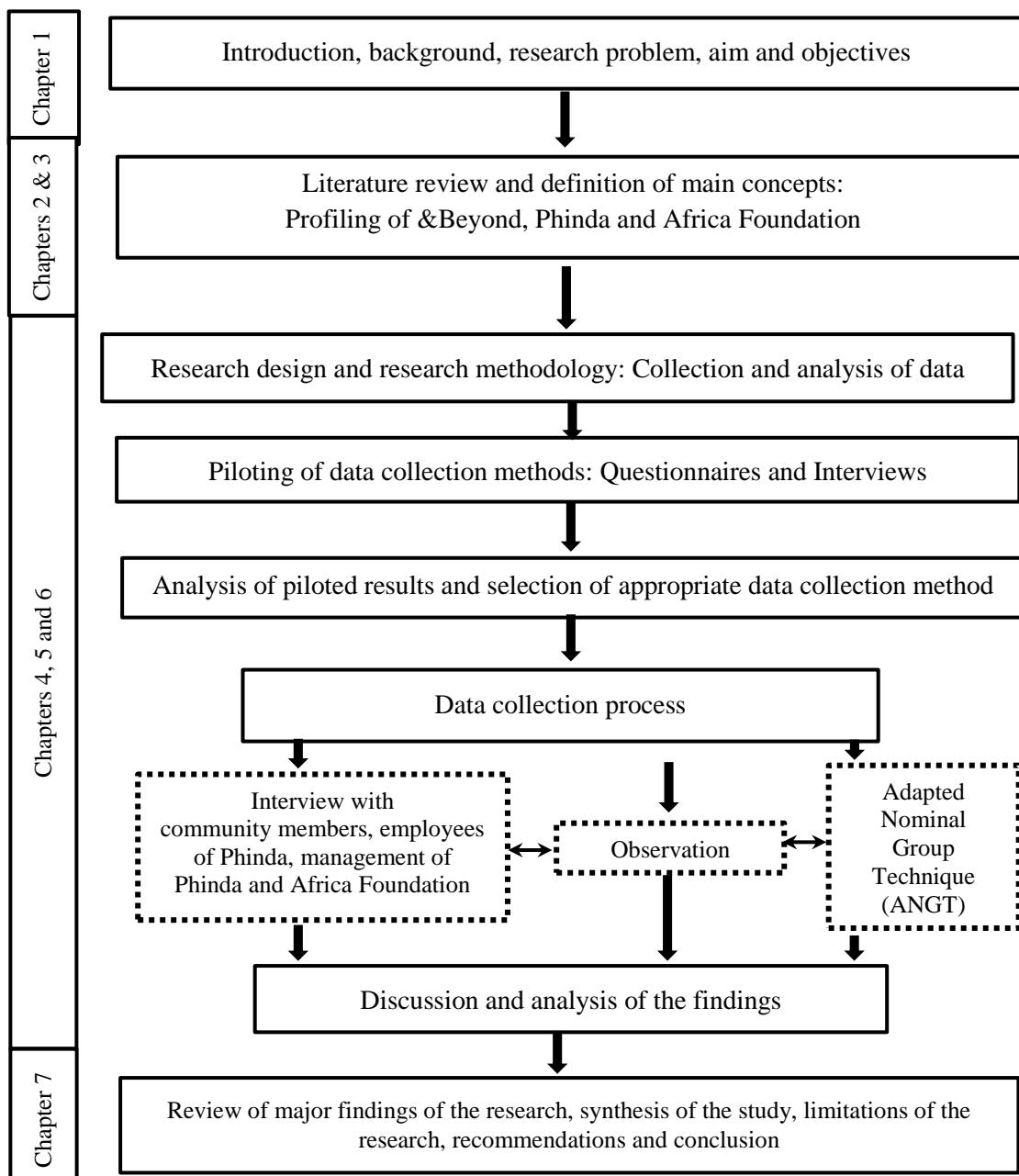


Figure 1.1 Research process and breakdown of chapters

Chapter 1 provides the historical context of community participation in conservation and tourism management, in order to locate properly the main concerns of this study. An analysis of community-based conservation and tourism interventions and their outcomes is done so as to inform this research. The problem of the research is then outlined, followed by the aim and objectives of the study. A brief description of the methodological approach was also done.

Chapter 2 provides a review of literature on community participation in conservation and tourism and explains the key concepts that are essential for the investigation of the aim of the study and associated objectives.

In **Chapter 3**, a detailed profiling of &Beyond, Phinda and the Africa Foundation is done so as to place the study in a relevant context.

Chapter 4 discusses both theoretical and empirical grounding of qualitative research in general and the case study approach, in particular. It provides details on the research design and describes the process of identification, selection and justification of data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the results of the semi-structured interviews of community members, employees and members of management of Phinda and the Africa Foundation. Also, a discussion of the findings emanating from observations and adapted nominal group technique was done.

Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the findings of the investigation into the perceptions, including attitudes, on community participation in wildlife conservation, tourism and social development.

Finally, **Chapter 7** summarises the major findings of the research, provides a synthesis and mentions the limitations of the study. Recommendations for further investigation are provided.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“We can never get a re-creation of community and heal our society without giving our citizens a sense of belonging.” (Patch Adams)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa has grown considerably in recent years, which has a marked impact on development; in fact, 7% of the region's gross domestic product (GDP) is derived from travel and tourism (DeVivo, 2012). By 2022, more than 50 million tourists throughout the region are expected to contribute over US\$44 billion to the region's economy (DeVivo, 2012). In South Africa alone, the tourism industry is expected to be responsible for the direct and indirect employment of nearly 10% of the country's labour force by 2022. The country's current 10 million international annual tourists are expected to grow to almost 14 million by 2022, generating over US\$15 billion and contributing to 8% of its overall export revenue (DeVivo, 2012).

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature related to the aim and objectives of this study, the perceptions of community participation in conservation, ecotourism and social development. As this research falls within the community-based conservation and ecotourism focus, there is need to conceptualise community participation and perceptions around it. Various determinants and influences of community engagement in protected area management are examined in this section.

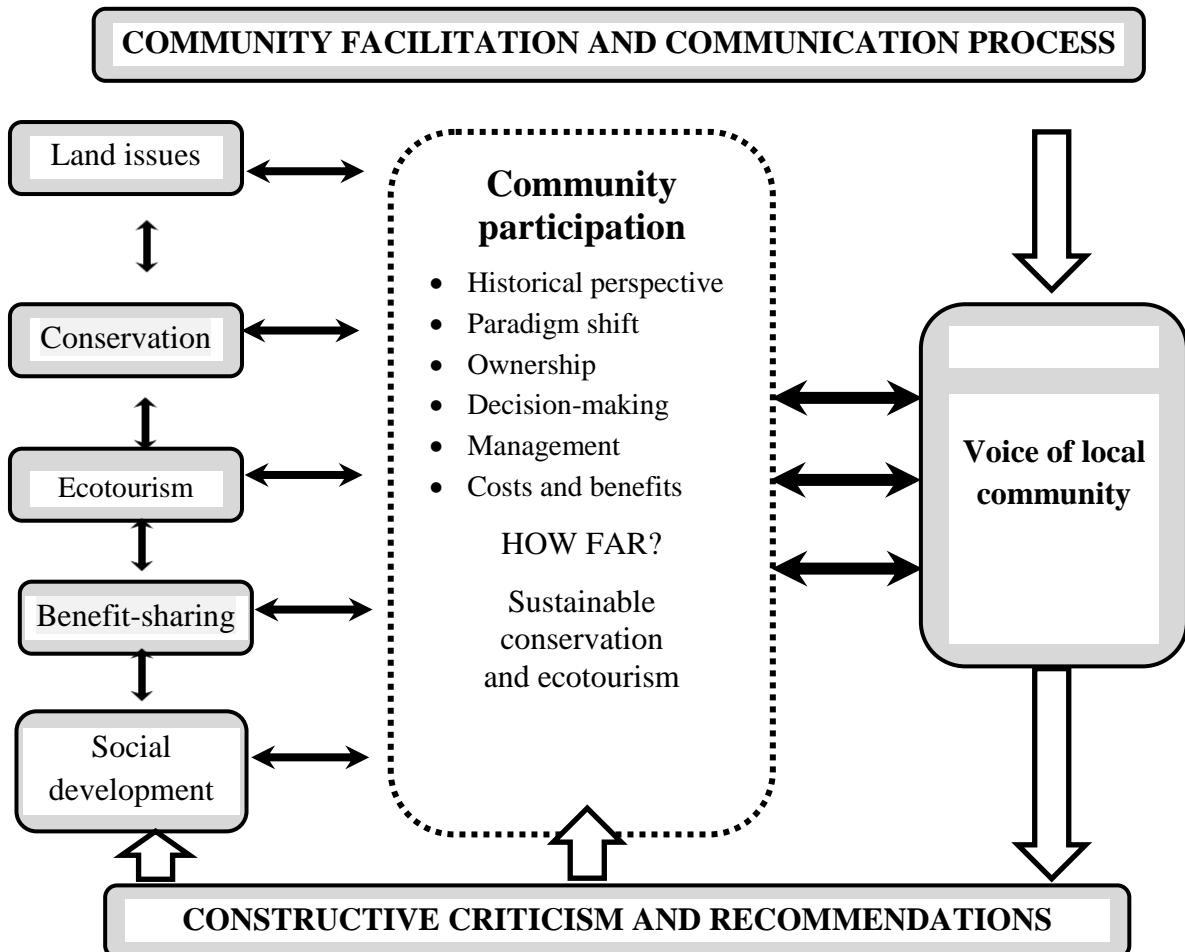


Figure 2.1: Theoretical framework of local community perceptions of participation in conservation and tourism (Author, 2017)

A theoretical framework of community-based conservation and ecotourism (CBC& E) places this study in its proper context, as shown in Figure 2.1. One of the most important issues in protected area management is the land rights issue, linked with the concept of property rights. A review of literature on the processes and outcomes of the restitution of land rights negotiations in South Africa is provided. This study focuses on community facilitation and communication processes within the framework of community-based conservation and ecotourism in private game reserves.

In essence, land rights of local communities in and around protected areas is the theme guiding this discussion. Much research has been conducted to elucidate the relationship of indigenous and/or local communities with the conservation agents (both state and private) responsible for the protected areas. Sustainability of conservation and ecotourism, as one of the major goals of community-based initiatives in protected areas, is also discussed.

A discussion of literature on diverse epistemological perspectives with regard to community participation in protected area management has relevance. Before focusing on the mentioned themes, attention is given to the historical perspective of protected areas and the ontology that guided their establishment, with special focus on Southern Africa. The principles around community participation in the management of protected areas, sustainable wildlife and ecotourism management are examined. Throughout the world, most of the conflict has been the result of disagreement on the spatial distribution and allocation of resources, land being one of the major concerns in the context of Southern Africa, as noted by Guyot (2002). Land has been a contentious issue for centuries. Land rights issues of the communities around protected areas are pursued to reveal what has been explored already and to establish possibilities of any inconsistencies or grey areas that may have remained. The concept of property rights is also explored to clarify the nature of interactions between the local people and conservation and tourism authorities, whether government or private agents.

The discussion of community-based conservation is done jointly with community-based ecotourism, due to the close relationship and interdependence between these two concepts. Community-based management is defined as a bottom-up approach of organisation, which can be facilitated by the upper government or non-governmental organisation (NGO) and it aims at the participation of local stakeholders in planning, research, development, management and policy-making for the community as a whole.

Of interest, are the diverse views reported in the literature on the possibility and nature of involvement of local communities in both wildlife and ecotourism management. A great deal of research has been done on the CBC&E programmes in state owned protected areas (Moyo *et al.*, 1991; Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Balint, 2006; Hottola, 2009; Simpson, 2009; Nielsen, 2011, Nelson, 2012). There is also a growing interest in the CBC&E programmes associated with private operators (Mbaiwa, 2003, 2005; Spierenberg *et al.*, 2009; Nelson, 2010; Massyn, 2010). It is also critical for this study to provide an insight into the current thinking among researchers, on the position of benefit-sharing and social development in the whole concept of community participation in conservation and tourism (Infield & Namara, 2001; Balint, 2006; Simpson, 2009; Dudley *et al.*, 2010; Nielsen, 2011; Snyman, 2016). Pegas and Castley (2014) deal with the contribution of private nature reserves to conservation and ecotourism.

Research literature also agrees that the work on community engagement, which has been done thus far, is not extensive. There are still some grey areas, (for example, listening to the voice of

grassroots communities and the exploration of effective communication strategies which benefit sustainable conservation and ecotourism), that need to be researched and clarified or confirmed. Poudel *et al.* (2014) contends that further studies are necessary to analyse in detail the differences between various groups, which include the local residents, tourism and conservation operators, tourist groups and secondary tourism stakeholders. Bello *et al.* (2016) concluded that there is a need to understand the challenges of different and context-specific limitations, when community participation in tourism management (and also conservation) is applied to developing countries. Bello *et al.* (2016) expressed the need for advocacy of community participation and the need to incorporate specific strategies that can facilitate community engagement and are tailored for developing countries.

Collaborative theory presents some of the practical strategies which could harmonise relationships and ensure sustainability. According to Ansell and Gash (2008), a virtuous cycle of collaboration tends to develop when collaborative forums focus on “small wins” that deepen trust, commitment and shared understanding. Through iterative process, collaborative partners develop a shared sense of purpose and a shared theory of action for achieving that purpose (Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh, 2012). Horisch, Edward, Freeman & Schalteggers (2014) identified three challenges of managing stakeholder relationships for sustainability, namely: strengthening the particular sustainability interests of stakeholders, creating and harmonising mutual sustainability interests based on these particular interests and empowering stakeholders to act as agents for nature conservation and sustainable development. To address these challenges, Horisch et al. (2014) suggested three interrelated mechanisms which are education, regulation and sustainability-based value creation for stakeholders. Ansell and Gash (2008) added face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, the development of commitment and shared understanding, as critical factors for collaboration process.

In the context of this study, Imran *et al.* (2014) emphasises the importance of perceptions, values and interests of stakeholders in shaping the nature of tourism development (and hence conservation). The main goal of this research is to explore community facilitation and communication processes, with respect to private game reserves. The findings of Poudel *et al.* (2014) also support the imperative to identify the stakeholders and examine their values, perceptions and interests, and develop a new model for perceptions to enhance collaboration and communication. This study, therefore, engages the community for its views and opinions on their participation in conservation, ecotourism and social development and, as a result of the

process, delivers valuable criticism of the engagement process and provides suggestions for the improvement of community participation in the interest of sustainable development.

This method of engaging with the community at Phinda Private Game Reserve, together with the resultant constructive criticisms and recommendations, can serve as a valuable community engagement framework for private game reserves to involve and work with the surrounding communities. Also, the study may also serve as a baseline for more detailed, broader or related research into community participation in protected area management. Ultimately, the framework may also ensure more sustainable management in private game reserves in the future. The discussion of findings from the literature is done concurrently to capture the main ideas. A relevant starting point of the discussion is establishing the historical background of protected areas.

2.2 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ESTABLISHING PROTECTED AREAS

The motivation for designating protected areas has differed over the years. The earliest national parks were preserved mainly for their scenic and cultural value, and later tourism and wildlife and, more recently, biodiversity have been the driving forces behind protection (Dudley *et al.*, 2010). Over centuries, nature protection efforts have focused on separating the pristine from the peopled by setting aside national parks and protected areas. Special attention has been given to conservation at the expense of local communities. As Naguran (2002) observed from the earliest days, local communities were evicted from areas designated as reserves (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Naguran, 2002; Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Rechlin & Taylor, 2008; Nustad & Sundnes, 2011). Historically, control over land has always been vital to the livelihoods of the world's poorest people; lack of access to land not only denies the rural people the ability to grow or to gather their own food, it also alienate them from a source of power (Laudati, 2007).

In the USA, the National Parks Services, as well as conservation advocates, initiated the complete separation of untouched nature from humans, originating from the “Yellowstone Model” of conservation (Nash, 2014). Settlement in parks was prohibited and using the resources in a park, either for subsistence or commercial purposes, was banned (Rechlin & Taylor, 2008).

Adams and Mulligan (2006) point out that the origins of nature conservation became grounded in the ‘colonial mind-set’. The American “Yellowstone Model” became the globally accepted model of conservation in the 20th Century and the exclusion of local residents from protected

areas and natural parks became common and accepted policy (Adams & Mulligan, 2006; Nash, 2014). For much of this century, conservation of nature often resulted in the forced removal, both physically and rhetorically, of local indigenous people who had lived on lands for generations were purported to be pristine (Rechlin & Taylor, 2008). Resident communities have been regarded as completely incompatible with protection of species, ecosystems and biodiversity (Bramwell & Lane, 2012). Implementation of conservation strategies was based on erroneous assumptions that local communities show no stewardship for protected areas and no restraint from expanding their agricultural production (Laudati, 2007)

Economic and legal instruments were used in the late nineteenth century and most of the twentieth century to exclude African farmers from increasingly lucrative markets like wildlife and tourism (Jacobsohn, 1991). At first the authorities started to make it difficult and then impossible for Africans to use land outside the nature reserves in the more remote areas that had been set aside for them. Conflict, mutual distrust and animosity characterised many relationships between local residents and protected areas in Africa and in other parts of the developing world (Jacobsohn, 1991; Cleaver, 2005; Jones, 2013).

In Zimbabwe, the Land Husbandry Act of 1951 (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997) was introduced to ‘improve’ conservation and agricultural productivity in communal areas. However, the conservation of natural resources was enforced with further restriction of access to these resources. For example, during the 1960s, the Rhodesian government expropriated a large section of land in the south-eastern corner of the country to create a game reserve that is currently known as Gonarezhou National Park (Balint, 2006).

Local communities perceived conservation methods as a tool of oppression because they were denied access to land, wildlife and other natural resources, and the movement of their cattle was also restricted (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). The relationship between the local populations and both the proponents of conservation and governing authorities deteriorated due to the American “Yellowstone model” adopted by most countries (Rechlin & Taylor, 2008). In South Africa, Kruger National Park was established in 1926 and was based on the exclusionist principles. The area was fenced off, local communities forcibly removed and benefits went primarily to whites. The brutality of the Apartheid regime is comparable to that of Renamo on the rural communities of southern Mozambique (Lunstrum, 2007), in which residents were essentially scared out of the villages through terror-induced fright including destruction of shelter, clothing, livestock, food, mutilations, rape and even death. In 1969, the Makuleke community

was evicted from their ancestral land, the northern part of Kruger National Park (Bosch, 2003). The Ndumo Game Reserve in Maputaland District of KZN was proclaimed a game reserve in 1924 with the primary goal being strict protection of its biodiversity (Naguran, 2002). As a result, the Mbangweni community, who were the original inhabitants of the land, were evicted from the areas and lost all their rights to their ancestral land, just like millions of other black people in different parts of Africa (Naguran, 2002).

According to Jusoh (2012), ignoring the interests of the local people and excluding them from decision-making, planning and management of the protected areas are the main sources of conflict between local communities and designated areas. Although programs are regarded as "community-based", accountability flows outwards towards international organisations and local communities and developing countries have little control over program priorities and outcomes (Levine, 2006). All indicators are pointing towards protected area governance. The description of governance of Ruhanen *et al.* (2010) emphasises the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens or other stakeholders have a say. The findings of Ruhanen *et al.* (2010) showed six most frequently included governance dimensions, namely accountability, transparency, involvement, structure, effectiveness and power.

Fundamentally, it is about power, relationships and accountability. Wolmer (2003) discusses power imbalances and concludes that the private sector enjoyed more power at the expense of national governments and local communities and also private operators prioritised their business interest and not conservation or community development. Levine (2006) argues that the degree to which local residents actually "participating" in conservation and development programs, or having real influence over program priorities, goals and implementation, is questionable. Community members have little real ability to affect program direction, strategies, or outcomes. Potential benefits derived from conservation and tourism by the local community depends on and also have an impact on the management approach employed by the authorities (Gorner & Cihar, 2013). Apartheid legislation and policies caused an extremely unequal distribution of land and forced the removal of the people epitomising the brutality of the system (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011).

From the beginning of this century, there was a growing awareness that protection also requires the involvement of local people to ensure the attainment of the conservation goals. Since the publication of the IUCN World Conservation Strategy in 1980, there was a paradigm shift from

the protectionist conservation epistemology to the sustainable utilisation of natural resources (Rechlin & Tailor, 2008). There were significant attempts to include local communities in the management and planning of protected areas (Infield, 1988). The results from the study by Bodin *et al.* (2014) show that different actors contributed in very different ways to achieve a certain fit and revealed some underlying differences between the actors, for example in terms of access to and use of different ecological resources, the rights of the actors varied.

Recommendations of the World National Parks Congress (1982) held in Bali, Indonesia, in October 1982, challenged the accepted conservation practices of that day, often referred to as the “Yellowstone Model” (Rechlin & Tailor, 2008). It was also argued that traditional societies were to be part of the solution, instead of being part of the problem. The congress also recommended that voluntary and also participatory conservation action was to be promoted in partnership with government action (Rechlin & Tailor, 2008).

2.3 PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

Community-based conservation consists of a wide range of approaches that share the dual beliefs that involvement of communities living in and around protected areas is more ethical and also more effective. There has been an evolution of approaches that seek to involve local communities around protected areas. The selection of conservation areas is based on their high existence value in terms of wildlife and biodiversity, but these areas have been inhabited by human populations for thousands of years. The top-down approaches, characteristic of the “Yellowstone Model”, have appeared to be unsympathetic to the needs of local residents (Bramwell & Lane, 2012; Nash, 2014; Pegas & Castley, 2014). As Kamphorst *et al.* (1997) observed, control and management from above are liable to generate social conflict or technical errors.

Balint (2006) discusses the significant costs associated with living in or around protected areas for the local communities (such as, loss of access to traditional resources, reduced social, political and economic and environmental autonomy and threats from wild animals). For the government conservation agents and tourism operators, unauthorised use of resources; habitat fragmentation and land degradation are some of the losses (Balint, 2006). Literature has also focused on diverse conflict situations between local communities and conservation authorities and their impact on conservation, ecotourism and social development (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Songorwa *et al.*, 2000; Naguran, 2002; Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Hottola, 2009; Janis, 2009; Nelson, 2010). Those that bear the greatest cost, those living farthest from the tourist area

(figuratively and literally), especially women and the poorest segment of the population, are embittered with the park and thus represent the greatest threat to the future of conservation in the area (Laudati, 2007). It is argued that Africans had very little or no say at all in the delimitation and spatial segregation of the land during the establishment of game reserves, let alone, their management (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011).

Bodin *et al.* (2014) argue that conservation success is a function of good alignment of social and ecological structures. The findings of Bodin *et al.* (2014) illustrated that when actors who shared resources were linked also socially, conservation at the level of the whole socio-ecological system was influenced positively. The idea of community-based conservation grew in part out of attempts to address these conflicts by generating mutual benefits to reduce or offset costs incurred on both sides (Balint, 2006; Pearce *et al.*, 2006). As rightly pointed out by Pegas and Castley (2014), transition to socially-just approaches can be linked to the concept of sustainability. Policy-makers recognise the need for the involvement of local communities in management, in order to achieve sustainable wildlife management systems. The aim of participatory approaches has been to involve local people in the process of wildlife management and nature conservation.

The active participation approach seems to take into account the rights of local people to make decisions on the land they have inhabited for thousands of years (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). On the contrary, passive participation consists of people participating by being told what is going to happen, what to do and not do, and by carrying out orders. Empowerment (active participation) involves giving decision-making power at local level. Instead of accepting their predicament, locals can be pro-active and resistant, as they constantly negotiate and contest the direction of development in the pursuit of their rights and interests (Cheong & Miller, 2000).

Local institutions and individuals form part of the management of wildlife in a more active way. Balint (2006) emphasises that there should be a close link between conservation practices and development and not mere inclusion of local communities. Carr *et al.* (2016) contends that there is an underpinning notion that all communities (whether from developing tourism or other industries, and/or despite whether the community is located remotely or in densely urbanised areas) often share common challenges and/or aspirations pertaining to the development of opportunities (among others), the nurturing of healthy families or other groupings, facilitating employment, improving health and providing recreation and education opportunities for community members. Eagles (2013) argues that potential benefits of sustainable tourism (and

conservation) in protected areas should also include enhancement of economic opportunities, protection of natural and cultural heritage and improvement of the quality of life of the local communities. However, some authors in this area warn that it is not easy to harmonise wildlife protection, cultural preservation and true rural development for local communities. Incorporating local participation and building genuine local capacity are time consuming activities, which conservation and tourism organisations cannot accommodate, as this may interfere with the profitability of both the conservation and tourism business (Laudati, 2007; Levine, 2006).

Over the years, international conservation bodies have come up with and implemented a wide range of community participation projects, including the Community-driven Development Model (CDD), Integrated Conservation and Development Programme (ICDP) and Local Resource Management (LRM), among others. The CDD model was adopted as the main method for direct intervention by the World Bank, International Labour Organisation (ILO), World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; UNDP, 2002).

The three principles of the CDD (Zou *et al.*, 2014) are (1) localisation of supply chain, which ensures that most of the raw materials, products and services for tourism are supplied by local residents; (2) community-external-investor symbiosis, consisting of community capital participation in close interaction with outside investors and hence increasing private sector and local community partnerships in ecotourism development. The third principle is the democratisation of decision-making, in which community participation in decision-making processes affecting ecotourism, conservation and social development is emphasised. There is a need for the government to lend support to infrastructure and local entrepreneurship (Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012).

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED, 1994 cited in Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997) presents the principles of local resource management, which are as follows:

- Recognising the right to ownership of the local community of wildlife and other natural resources;
- Building on formal and informal structures that facilitate community participation in wildlife management; and
- Operating effective mechanisms for sharing the benefits of wildlife resources with communities.

According to the intervention approach of Local Resources Management (LRM), decision-making power and responsibilities should be entrusted to the local communities and they should have an important share in the benefit of their efforts (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). The appropriateness of tourism development and nature conservation efforts are hotly debated issues among planners, developers and local communities (Cheong & Miller, 2000). Each one of the principles of LRM will be discussed later, in appropriate sections.

Balint (2006) argues that the outcomes of CBC will improve only if project leaders pay closer attention to the four development indicators, namely rights, capacity, governance and revenue, that are often taken for granted or considered beyond the scope of local conservation projects. There is great potential for protected areas to contribute greatly to poverty reduction (Dudley *et al.*, 2010; Ruschkowski *et al.*, 2013; Zou *et al.*, 2014). Jusoh (2012) states that ecosystem sustainability must be appreciated by all stakeholders, who rely on the natural capitals in offering the ecotourism experiences and businesses. Natural capital is defined as the natural environment from which emanates the goods and services that sustain life (Jusoh, 2012).

2.3.1 Toward sustainable wildlife management and ecotourism

Plenty of work has been (and is still being) done on the relationship between CBC, tourism and sustainable development. A brief discussion of the principle of sustainable wildlife management and ecotourism, with special emphasis on the role of the local communities follows.

The UNDP and World Bank both agree that there is consensus among practitioners and academics that human development projects cannot succeed without a focus on rights, capacity and governance (UNDP, 2002; Kauffman *et al.*, 2005). The global influence of the sustainable development paradigm is not limited to the conservation movement, as the tourism industry too has undergone a major shift towards more responsible sustainable tourism.

In general, ecotourism and sustainable tourism can be described as tourism experiences that care for the integrity of the biophysical environment, providing for economic viability and social responsibility in the long-term (Hall, 2011; Singh, 2012). This is widely viewed as a type of tourism that facilitates sustainable development (Weaver, 1998), ensuring a balance between the economic focus of tourism and the needs of communities and the environment. For the purpose of this study, the definition of community-based ecotourism by Denman (2001:2) has been adopted, which states that community-based ecotourism (CBE) is:

[Ecotourism] where the local community has substantial control over and involvement in, its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community.

Local community engagement helps residents to become a more serious safeguard of the ecosystem and increase their sense of belonging to nature surrounding them, and also address poverty (Jusoh, 2012; Ruschkowski *et al.*, 2013). The more local communities know about and are involved in protected area management, the less likely the site will be perceived as an alien, threatening and unwanted presence (Lepp, 2007; Bodin *et al.*, 2014).

Sharpley (2003) notes that developing rural tourism should address the following concerns: (1) satisfying the needs of local communities; (2) establishing a supply chain of local products; (3) encouraging production of local crafts; (4) ensuring maximum retention of profits locally; and (5) ensuring that development is within the capacity of the local environment and society. Ideally, sustainable tourism consists of the following (Zou *et al.*, 2014): preservation of rurality with integrity, community sharing benefits from rural tourism development, outside investors profiting from rural tourism business and tourists enjoying memorable rural experiences of a high quality.

According to Nelson (2010), community-based tourism has been the main force behind rural communities voluntarily setting aside land for wildlife conservation in different parts of Tanzania. It has also had a significant economic impact in certain settings. The main challenge of sustainable tourism is to come up with economically viable initiatives that provide livelihood benefits to local communities, while protecting indigenous cultures and environments (Simpson, 2009). Enhancing livelihoods and maximising benefits to communities involve the expansion and use of local labour, local goods and services, and also developing appropriate and sustainable infrastructure, supportive policies and environmental strategies (Simpson, 2009; Eagles, 2013). The direct contribution of protected areas to wealth production and general well-being among poor communities is quite a new and challenging idea. Dudley *et al.* (2010) therefore note that there is a need for flexibility and review in order to adapt to and support the challenging needs of poor rural people.

Songorwa *et al.* (2000), among other authors, question whether tourism can truly accommodate both the need for ecological preservation and the need for infrastructure, facilities and expansion. Critics of community-based conservation approaches argue that many community approaches fail to meet conservation needs and that communities and conservation can never co-exist (Currie, 2001). The question whether tourism operators will exert too much influence

on not only ecological decisions, but also the ability of rural communities to be genuinely represented, has been debated in the research literature. It is the object of many studies, including the current one, to elucidate the perceptions and attitudes of the local communities in view of their role in wildlife and tourism management.

Infield (1988) emphasises that for the success of conservation management both inside and outside protected areas, the views and attitudes of rural communities towards (their role in) conservation and protected areas must be studied and their perceived needs and aspirations taken into account. However, there is a debate among researchers on the extent to which conservation and tourism benefits can ensure the support of local populations for these conservation and ecotourism initiatives (Nelson, 2010). Issues of local community participation in benefit-sharing will be dealt with in later sections.

Nielsen (2011) points out that there is need to clarify the role of local communities in conservation because the positive attitudes of people do not automatically translate into actual protected area support. In striving towards a sustainable tourism plan, it is argued that the needs and aspirations of the local communities, as well as those of other stakeholders, such as conservation and local governing authorities and private developers, need to be considered (Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Imran *et al.*, 2014). According to Hottola (2009), the experiences and perceptions of the people in the field are critical, as they are the very people who are supposed to concretise the projected development through tourism in post-colonial Southern Africa.

In agreement with research literature, the litmus test for a bona-fide ecotourism product is not the absence of any resulting negative impacts, but rather the on-going intent by managers to pursue sustainability outcomes in line with the best available knowledge. Also, there should be intent to quickly and effectively address any negative impacts that inadvertently arise from core activities, such as nature conservation or facilities operations. Burgoyne and Mearns (2017) discuss issues pertaining to management of conflicting land uses and community aspirations. Therefore, as Jusoh (2012) appropriately puts it, decentralisation of management tactics enable local people to deal with unique social, political and ecological problems their community might face and find solutions ideal to their context.

Cheong and Miller (2000) analyse the thinking of Michael Foucault (1988b) on how power is everywhere and central in institutions, such as tourism (and nature conservation). The following were their findings (Cheong & Miller, 2000):

- Foucauldian power is omnipresent in tourism as in virtually all other human affairs;

- The power relationships are conspicuous for inspection in the micro-interactions of tour operators, local residents and tourists in a tripartite tourism system;
- While acknowledging that power works in many directions, Cheong and Miller (2000) emphasise the potential for tourists to be Foucauldian targets and for brokers and local communities to be Foucauldian agents;
- Attention to be redirected to focus on agents, who are prominent in the control of tourism development and tourist conduct; and
- Success or failure of sustainable tourism (and nature conservation) programmes depends more substantially on the power of tourism operators and local communities, rather than the power of tourists and other stakeholders.

2.3.2 Land rights issues of local communities in and around protected areas

Management of power relationships determines the extent to which sustainable tourism meets its socio-economic, political and conservation goals, with special attention to the local, previously disadvantaged communities. The question of land ownership is the dominant, contentious issue and underpins many of the problems experienced in and around protected areas. This section deals with the land rights issues of local communities in and around protected areas.

In most of the rural areas of Southern Africa, the attachment to one's birthplace (or place of origin) remains strong and people are often literally dependent on their land. The conflict between local communities and conservation authorities, referred to in a wide range of research literature (Naguran, 2002; Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Balint, 2006; Rechlin & Taylor, 2008; Hottola, 2009; Nustad & Sundnes, 2011), were in one way or another associated with land rights issues.

Dispossession, forced displacement and eviction characterised the colonial period in most of the African countries in general and the Apartheid era in South Africa (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Bosch, 2003; Ngubane & Diab, 2005). It has been observed that the drive towards wildlife conservation and tourism development was hampered by the conflict between local communities and nature conservation authorities (Koch, 1997). According to the view of communities, the loss of agricultural land and access rights could not be replaced by employment opportunities offered by tourism development (Ngubane & Diab, 2005).

Kamphorst *et al.* (1997) conducted a comparative analysis of local people participation in nature conservation projects in which Local Resource Management (LRM) was compared with Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe. The first principle of the LRM is the recognition of local community rights to

ownership of wildlife resources. The community's rights to natural resources should be fully exercised and legally enforceable (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). One of the main objectives of the CAMPFIRE programme was to recognise the local communities as the "owners" of the wildlife resources by giving them the appropriate authority status and the right to utilise wildlife.

For the local government, this status meant that they had the authority to enter into contractual agreements with private operators for the exploitation of the wildlife, receive payments and utilise the money for the protection of the resources (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). Instead of entrusting the authority to the local communities, the rural district councils held onto it. The rural councils either did not have the capacity or were unwilling to set up and run democratic management structures (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). Therefore, the local communities did not gain experience and skills, as they were denied the opportunities by the Rural District Councils (RDC). The councils were taking advantage of the revenue generated to serve the local communities for its own programmes (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). Devolution of power did not reach the intended recipients, the local communities, but remained at RDC levels. The idea of proprietorship is to combine production, management, authority and benefit as one unit (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). The local community is restricted to its role as producer.

One of the criticisms of CAMPFIRE has been a failure to produce effective community participation because local committees have been used to implementing centrally designed plans and many district councils have been reluctant to devolve genuine authority for wildlife management. Empowerment consists of transferring ownership and access rights to local people, which enables them to have decision-making power (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). It is essential to recognise the local structures and to ensure that individuals participate on equal terms.

Guyot (2002) acknowledges the strong territorial implications of spatial competition. With reference to a study done in Mabibi (Maputaland District, KZN), Govender (2001) notes that spatial competition becomes a matter of who has access to the available natural resources and how they are used.

Conflict, therefore ensues between community-based extractions versus conservation in the arena of tourism development. Cheong and Miller (2000) emphasise that there is often a political agenda – wise or foolish, benign or selfish, compatible or incompatible – underlying the explicit tourism (and nature conservation) programmes. Place (1995) explores the perpetual problem of dependency even in this age of new tourism designed to remedy the unequal

balance of power between the rich and poor, and society and the environment. Reed (1997) explores the power relations among stakeholders as these are affected by community-based tourism activities in British Columbia and Canada. It is essential for this discourse to explore literature and gain a deeper insight into the concept of property rights in order to put the project into perspective.

2.3.3 Property rights

Libecap (1989) emphasised that property rights matter, because they provide the economic incentive system that shapes resource allocation. The author argues that property rights are formed and enforced by political entities and reflect the conflicting economic interests and bargaining strength of those affected. Property rights of individuals over resources consist of rights or powers to consume, obtain income from and alienate those resources. Libecap (1989) describes property rights as the social institutions that define or delimit the range of privileges granted to individuals (or groups) of specific resources, such as a piece of land.

Naguran (2002) deals with issues of property rights in protected areas. Property rights may be defined as a bundle of entitlements defining the rights, privileges and limitations of owners for the use of natural resources (Naguran, 2002). In other words, property rights are a structure of rights and accompanying responsibilities and these imply a set of legal entitlements enforced by a system of authority. Naguran (2002) accentuates that property rights specify the different types of claims one has to a resource by specifying what one can and cannot do and what one is entitled to do. There are four types of property rights usually identified by the literature:

- *State property*: Where the State has the right to determine use/access rules and individuals have a duty to observe the rules.
- *Private property*: Where individuals have the right to undertake socially acceptable uses and have a duty to refrain from socially unacceptable behaviour. Others (non-users) have a duty to refrain from preventing socially acceptable uses and have a right to expect socially acceptable ones will occur.
- *Common property*: Where the management group (the owners) has the right to exclude non-members while non-members have a responsibility to abide by the exclusion. Individual members of the management group have both rights and duties with respect to using the common resource.
- *Non-property*: Where there are no defined “owners” and so the benefit stream is available to anyone. The asset is regarded as an “open access resource”.

(Bromley, 1986 cited in Naguran, 2002)

Eggertsson (1990) classifies property rights into three categories: (1) the right to use a resource, including the right to physically transform a resource; (2) the right to earn income from a

resource and contract over the terms with other individuals; and (3) the right to transfer permanently ownership over a resource to another party, that is, to alienate or sell a resource. Eggertsson (1990) further explains that enforcement of property rights includes excluding others from the use of scarce resources. Exclusive ownership calls for costly measurement and delineation of resources and enforcement of ownership rights. Eggertsson (1990) and North (1990) both conclude that there is overwhelming historical evidence to support the proposition that the State typically does not supply structures of property rights that are appropriate for placing the economy close to the technical production frontier.

Common property is not “everybody’s property”. Under common property, the use rights of individuals can be delimited and regulated to prevent over-exploitation of the resources. Ostrom and Schlager (1996) distinguish between rights at an ‘operational’ level and rights at the ‘collective choice’ level. The operational level involves merely exercising a right, but the collective choice level involves participation in the definition of future rights. Operational level rights include “access” and “withdrawal” rights and collective choice rights relate to management, exclusion and alienation rights. According to Ostrom and Schlager (1996):

- **Access:** The right to enter an area and enjoy only non-consumption benefits (photography, hiking, bird-watching). Those who possess these rights are called “authorised entrants”.
- **Withdrawal:** The right to harvest resource units (fish, firewood, medicinal plants, game meat, thatching grass). Those having both access and withdrawal rights are known as “authorised users”. They, however, do not have the authority to determine their own harvesting rules or to exclude others from gaining access to the resource.
- **Management:** Those holding these rights have the authority to determine how, when and where consumptive use of resources may take place and whether and how the structure of a resource may be transformed. Those owning these rights are known as “claimants”.
- **Exclusion:** The right to determine who will have access rights and how that right may be transferred. Those who possess these rights are called “proprietors”.
- **Alienation:** The right to sell or lease, either or both of the above, collective choice rights. Those with these rights are referred to as “owners”.

In well-defined property rights, the resource users must have both operational level rights, as well as collective choice rights for the management of their common property resources.

In the case of the CAMPFIRE programme, the local communities theoretically had exclusion rights. However, in practice, they merely had operational level rights (access and withdrawal) while all the collective choice rights were withheld by the Rural District Councils (RDCs). Without properly defined rights, the local community and conservation agencies (state or private operators) partnership does not achieve the expected sustainable tourism goals.

It is of great importance to have a mutual understanding of the concept of private nature reserves in the context of this study. Pegas and Castley (2014) loosely define private reserves as private lands owned by free-hold or long-term leasehold funded or run by a private investor or syndicate and owned with the intent of preserving the land in a predominantly undeveloped state and managed for conservation with a possibility of nature-based tourism. A common private reserve model is one supported by the high-end wildlife viewing market that generates sufficient revenue to undertake reserve management and lodge operation (Pegas & Castley, 2014). Of particular interest to this project is the historical and current state of land rights issues of South Africa, although examples from elsewhere will also be analysed.

The question of land ownership is the dominant and contentious issue and underpins many of the problems experienced in rural South Africa, especially around protected areas. Land policy was one of the most hotly contested issues and the last to be settled in the negotiations between the African National Congress (ANC) and the National Party government prior to the first democratic elections in 1994 (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011). Literature identified many factors shaping the outcomes of the negotiations (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007; Nustad & Sundnes, 2011). The first priority of the new democratic South African government was to develop and implement a new land policy that was aimed at addressing, among others, the injustices of racially-based land dispossession of the past. Ultimately, a land reform programme with three components was adopted: (1) Restitution of land rights to those dispossessed after 1913; (2) Redistribution of land rectifying the racially skewed distribution of land that resulted from colonial and Apartheid policies; and (3) Tenure reform for those whose tenure was insecure because of the past discriminatory laws and practices (Naguran, 2002).

The Restitution of Land Rights Act, No. 22 of 1994 was proclaimed (Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Bosch, 2003; Hottola, 2009; Nustad & Sundnes, 2011). The Act provides for the restitution of rights in land with regard to individuals or communities who were dispossessed of their land or forcibly removed from their ancestral lands from 1913. A Land Claims Court and Commission were established to deal with these claims and all the claims are against the State, which is obliged to compensate current landholders (Naguran, 2002).

According to the Department of Land Affairs (Naguran, 2002), the legislation requires that all land that has been redistributed or restored to beneficiaries must be registered in one or other form of ownership. Where the land belongs to a group, they may, through a democratic process, choose the form of land holding that best suits the needs of the group.

Community Property Association Act, 28 of 1996 allows for the establishment of a new legal entity through which members of disadvantaged and poor communities may collectively acquire, hold and manage property in terms of the written constitution (Naguran, 2002). The group should develop its own management rules according to the needs of its members. The strong feeling about land ownership is evidenced by several land claims that have been lodged with the Commission on Restitution of Land Right Act (No. 22 of 1994) based on the past practices of the Apartheid Government. An analysis of some case studies will be presented. The main question to be addressed is whether the local communities have been capacitated to understand the implications of the agreements they are entering into and also if there is a supporting and monitoring mechanism put in place to protect the interests of most of these poor, local populations.

2.3.3.1 Mbangweni-Ndumo case study

Naguran (2002) investigated the restitution of land rights to the Mbangweni community who lodged a claim to more than 1000ha of land within the boundaries of Ndumo Game Reserve. After protracted negotiations, an agreement was reached and the Mbangweni community's rights to their land were restored (Naguran, 2002). The community, now legal owners of that portion of the reserve, demanded the right to grow their crops in the fertile soil along the banks of Pongola River, as well as fishing rights (Naguran, 2002). Conservation bodies, both locally and internationally, objected to any settlement in the game reserve. The government was caught in between. On one hand, it was accountable to the improvement of the livelihoods of the impoverished people and, on the other hand, it had a responsibility to protect the wetlands of international significance (Brown, 2002; Naguran, 2002).

An agreement was finally reached with the community that was based on both considerations for the upliftment needs of both the Mbangweni community, as well as protecting the integrity of Ndumo Game Reserve as a conservation area. The Mbangweni community was granted title to their land claim of the eastern 1262ha section of the Ndumo Game Reserve without actual physical occupation either now or any time in the future (Naguran, 2002).

Restitution of lost rights of land is made in the form of ownership in the claimant community by way of registration of a title deed in the office of the Registrar of Deeds. Conditions in the agreement stated that the community shall not acquire the right to dispose of its title to the land by selling or donating it (Bosch, 2003; Naguran, 2002). The community would be allowed "reasonable" access to the protected area for the purpose of harvesting natural resources and

also reap the benefits of ecotourism. The community agreed that they will not occupy the land inside the game reserve, but leave it to be managed in the interest of conservation and the development of ecotourism ventures (Naguran, 2002).

According to Naguran (2002), Ndumo land claim settlement falls short when measured against the conditions for well-defined property rights in common property regimes. The author noted that in effect the Ndumo settlement only granted operational level rights of access and withdrawal, but restricts their collective choice rights of management, exclusion and alienation. All management responsibilities were given to the Government through the KZN Wildlife. Without collective-choice rights, the community in effect became “authorised users” rather than proprietors or owners of their land (Naguran, 2002) (refer to Table 2.1).

The community has actually forfeited its collective-choice rights for some benefit stream from future ecotourism development projects, the details of which are unclear in the agreement (Naguran, 2002). The community is likely to become impatient with the slow rate of delivery and start reverting to their original demands for occupation before long.

Table 2.1: Bundle of rights associated with positions

Rights	Positions				
	Owner	Proprietor	Claimant	Authorised users	Authorised entrants
Access	X	X	X	X	X
Withdrawal	X	X	X	X	
Management	X	X	X		
Exclusion	X		X		
Alienation	X				

Source: Ostrom and Schlager, 1996:133.

Naguran (2002), Brown (2002) and Goldman (2003), all emphasised that without greater participation of the community in the management of their natural resources, the potential for further conflict is inevitable. A lot of literature has echoed the same view, for example, Mbaiwa (2003; 2005). The big question is whether there is a shared understanding among the local communities, who have launched land claims, the government and the private operators who, in some cases, are still making use of the claimed land.

2.3.3.2 *Makulele-Kruger case study*

Bosch (2003) explains the lessons that could be learnt from a land rights approach in the land conflict management process. The strong emphasis on land rights in South Africa meant that much time had to be spent on assessing and identifying the land rights of the people. The Commission recognised conflicting rights and provided for mediation of these conflicts.

Bosch (2003) investigated land claims of the Makuleke community in the northern part of Kruger National Park. In 1969, the Makuleke community was removed forcibly from their ancestral land in the Pafuri area (between the Limpopo, Mutale and Livuvhu rivers) and the surrounding state-owned land to the north of Kruger National Park. The community land claim was lodged in terms of the Restitution of Land Rights Act (No. 22 of 1994) in December, 1999.

The claimed Pafuri area is an environmental hotspot from a biodiversity perspective. After two years of intensive and complex negotiations, a settlement agreement was reached. The Land Claims Court ordered the restoration of the ancestral land of the Makuleke community subject to various conditions aimed at ensuring that both conservation and community's rights are protected (Bosch, 2003). The community agreed that they would not occupy their land but aim to benefit from restitution of their land through ecotourism development. Bosch (2003) concludes that in the mediation process there should at least be the possibility of an agreement between the disputing parties, and all the important parties must participate. When all stakeholders, especially the poor local communities, understand their rights and responsibilities, land mediation is more efficient and the chances for a settlement are greater. In most cases, there is an imbalance in the levels of understanding and negotiation skills between the local communities and the state or other stakeholders. It is also most likely that the advantaged will take whatever opportunities available to achieve their goals in the absence of strong monitoring mechanisms.

Bosch (2003) argues that more often than not, there is need for community training sessions addressing a number of issues, which include the Restitution Act provisions, mediation process, rights education, negotiation skills and all issues pertinent to the negotiations. People elected to represent a community need clear rules of conduct and understanding of their obligations as representatives. Communities, to whom land has been restored through land mediation, like the restitution of land rights processes, require effective mechanisms of allocating and consolidating these rights, preventing and managing existing and potential conflicts (Muzirambi & Mearns, 2015). Bosch (2003) also notes the need to negotiate a land reform community

contract that defines the relationship between government, private operators and the local communities regarding land reform, specifies their respective rights and responsibilities, and identifies other stakeholders with their responsibilities. It is also important for the Government to put in place intervention and monitoring strategies for the protection of the rights of the poor rural communities, in situations where they are negotiating with other parties, for example, private operators.

2.3.3.3 *St Lucia case study*

Nustad and Sundnes (2011) investigated land claims in St Lucia in northern KZN, South Africa. Referring to the claims of the Dukuduku Forest bordering the iSimangaliso Wetland, the authors contended that the legal claim is but one of many facets of this piece of land. It is a unique coastal forest with adjoining wetlands that must be protected for future generations. Furthermore, it has extremely productive land that can be developed for agriculture and is a tourism destination that can bring socio-economic upliftment to the district. During the last century, people were evicted from Dukuduku Forest at different times and for various reasons (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011). Forced removals took place between the 1930s to the 1970s as new areas were put under the forest plantation scheme.

The restoration of formerly dispossessed land played an important role in establishing the people's sense of justice. In 1998, a group of forest dwellers contracted the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA), a land rights non-governmental organisation based in Pietermaritzberg, to help them file a claim for the land (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011) which was filed with the Regional Land Claims Commissioner late that year. The land claim was initially turned down by the commission in 2002, but the claimant, with the help of AFRA, appealed to the Claims Court and won the case in 2003. The land claim was fully gazetted in 2007 (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011).

Some observers (Brown, 2002; Goldman, 2003) point out that a community-based project cannot succeed if the community does not have authority for project management and if the community decision-making processes are not participatory and also if their individual rights are ignored. This means, local community involvement enables the community to control the pace and direction of development, integrate tourism into the economy and produce a more personalised tourist product they identify with. That being said, responsible leadership is an important element for facilitating the relationship-building that is essential to fostering successful sustainable conservation tourism (DeVivo, 2012).

Some authors argue that the community should substantially control and participate in tourism development and retain most of the benefits within the community (WWF, 2001). Factions and hierarchies that undermine the rights of marginalised subgroups, operate even in small ethnically homogenous communities (Balint & Mashinya, 2006). The success of rural tourism is determined by the leadership and participation of local residents in the development process.

2.3.4 Community-based conservation and tourism

The successful implementation of community-based conservation initiatives depend on a wide range of factors, for example, socio-economic, geographical, political, extent of community participation and the particular context of the area. Published research has focused on themes concerning the community. To begin with, a common yet comprehensive understanding of the concept of community-based projects is needed. According to Taylor (2008), unwillingness to address key social issues can result in the failure of community-based projects. Dealing with the issue of benefits and costs almost guarantees the successful implementation of a project.

To expect a buy-in from communities, they must perceive the benefits, namely the direct economic benefits and indirect development, social or cultural that are greater than the cost of conserving resources (Taylor, 2008; Snyman, 2016). Studies by Gillingham and Lee (1999) in Tanzania and Infield and Namara (2001) in Uganda have shown that access to conservation benefits can in practice produce positive attitudes to protected areas (Nelson, 2010). Stronza and Gordillo (2008) in their study of three Amazon ecotourism projects found that ecotourism brought incentives for conservation, positive economic change and heightened self-esteem and greater community organisation.

Another theme identified by Taylor (2008) is community capacity. Community-based conservation can lead to an enhanced capacity of communities to control their own destinies. On the other hand, with a shortage of goodwill or intentions, a lack of capacity can lead to conservation failure (Taylor, 2008). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011) defines capacity as the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. In terms of management, capacity can be viewed as a product of willingness, competence, skills, capability and adequate resources (UNDP, 2002; Enemark & Ahene, 2003; IUCN, 2010). In a diversity of definitions of capacity, the universal unifying goal is a transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within, which goes beyond performing tasks. Instead, it is more a matter of changing mind-sets and attitudes (Rechlin & Taylor, 2008).

Critics of community-based conservation approaches argue that many community approaches fail to meet conservation and can never co-exist (Currie, 2001). In relation to these views, Wells (1996) questions whether communities have the capacity and knowledge to manage wildlife and whether, given the often impoverished nature of many rural communities, they are willing to participate actively in the conservation process. For instance, in community-based tourism, there is a widespread lack of entrepreneurial skills (Mbaiwa, 2003, 2005; Murphy & Roe, 2004). Quite often, the local communities lack the most basic understanding of business, such as profit-making and marketing, was observed by Janis (2009).

Olson (2012) highlights the complexity of ecotourism development in the studies of ecotourism projects in Mexico. Local circumstances, management issues, developmental stages, local skills, financial resources, location and cultures all combine to demonstrate that ecotourism is not a “one-size-fit-all” approach to sustainable development (Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012).

In view of these observations, capacity development becomes an imperative for the success of community-based conservation and tourism. Nielsen (2011) explains capacity development as a continuous and undated process seeking to accumulate knowledge and social capital over time by means of learning by doing. Individual capacities are the cornerstones of any organisation. Swanson and Holton (2009), state that organisations are human-made entities that rely on human expertise to establish and achieve goals. Capacity development should aim at improving personal learning and understanding, as well as personal performance (Swanson & Holton, 2009).

With respect to community-based conservation in protected areas (CBC-PA), capacity clearly includes relevant technical, managerial and political skills (Balint, 2006). In addition, capacity also includes intangible assets, such as motivation, perseverance, resilience, confidence, optimism, openness to change, among others. Research reveals that individual capacities are strengthened or constrained by organisational and social environments in which people function. In agreement with Nielsen (2011), greater attention should be given to intangible assets where protected area managers, employees, local community leaders and other stakeholders must be enabled to be more self-reliant and self-responsible in order to foster a lasting learning process. Improvement of relationships between relevant stakeholders is important for two reasons, firstly, the diverse single efforts can be fused into new, larger and collective capacities and, secondly, strong networks will facilitate self-supportive and

continuous capacity development, thus enabling people to collaborate and transform situations in a more comprehensive, strategic and progressive manner (Nielsen, 2011).

The Zimbabwean CAMPFIRE programme is possibly one of the best known examples of attempts to practice community-based resource management and development. The goals of the programme is to harness the economic value of wildlife, primarily through ecotourism and to demonstrate that wildlife can be more beneficial than traditional livelihoods like cattle farming (Koch, 1997). The second principle of Local Resources Management (LRM) is building on formal and informal structures that facilitate community participation in wildlife (and tourism) management. Community participation should go beyond the simple involvement in the project implementation and ensure interactive involvement in an on-going process of project design, planning, implementation and evaluation of wildlife management (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). Active participation concerns community engagement in all the phases of the programme, from design and planning stages to implementation and evaluation (Burgoyne & Mearns, 2017).

Although this principle identifies with the objectives of the CAMPFIRE, the outcomes of the programme have clearly shown that most communities continue to have negative and hostile attitudes towards the programme. Some researchers conceded that it is viewed as a top-down initiative imposed on local communities by government or private operators (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). Many conflicts stem from the fact that local communities are alienated from decision-making on and/or management of ecotourism projects (Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012).

Sayer and Wells (2004) and Springer (2009) argue that projects are often too limited in both space and time and are initiated and owned by external actors using inappropriate funding mechanisms and reach a limited number of people. Furthermore, participation tends to be superficial and promised benefits are unrealistic and often lack an awareness of the broader socio-ecological context. The hostile attitudes are therefore rooted in the fact that community participation is mainly restricted to the project implementation. Decision about resource management often comes from outside the producer community (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). One of the most successful Integrated Conservation and Development Programme (ICDP) is the Purros Project in the Kaokoveld region in Namibia that is widely accepted as a model to be emulated throughout Africa (Cock & Koch, 1991). This project attempted to redress the negative effects of tourism and conservation by providing meaningful and tangible benefits to

the Purros people. Improvement from CAMPFIRE experiences includes active participation of community members in the conservation process.

Community members are directly involved in the planning and implementation of the project. They decide how to allocate revenue from tourism levy (Jacobsohn, 1991). The local people are directly involved in the conservation of wildlife and the community management body has the right to tell tour operators how to behave and conduct their operations (Jacobsohn, 1991). Community participation encourages environmental protection; environmental education and sustainable utilisation of local resources (Byrd & Gustke, 2007).

The provision of opportunities to participate in management, the planning process or discussing issues affecting conservation, tourism and community itself, reduces the conflict potential and can lead to a “shift” in attitudes of stakeholders (Nielsen, 2011). For example, in Bhutan (a Buddhist kingdom on the eastern edge of the Himalayas) local communities are seen as an integral part of ecosystem management that support understaffed protected areas in monitoring activities. In Malaysia, protected areas of Sarawak cooperate with local communities to prevent illegal activities (Nielsen, 2011). On the whole, all the parks in Malaysia contribute significantly by generating income for the local communities through direct employment and indirect benefits from tourism (Nielsen, 2011).

Another success story is the community-based tourism in the Oloolosokwan Serengeti of Tanzania as reported by Nelson (2010). The Loliondo area, which borders the north-eastern side of Serengeti National Park, is inhabited by Maasai agro-pastoralists, some of whom formerly lived in what is now the national park. Maasai communities in Tanzania co-exist extremely well with large wild animals, as a result of both their mobile livelihood-based land use systems and traditions of not eating most species of wildlife (Nelson, 2010). Oloolosokwan, located in the north-western corner of Loliondo, forged a substantial investment agreement with Conservation Corporation Africa (CCA). By 2003, the village was the top-earning community in the country in terms of tourism revenue, being about US\$55000 annually, in addition to various employment and side benefits (Nelson, 2010). The Village Council’s ability to improve service provision improved tremendously, such as investments in educational facilities, bursaries for secondary and university students, health facilities, individual medical expenses, nursery school and renovation of the village offices. Given that the Pastoral Women’s Council of the Catholic Archdiocese of Arusha fostered women’s empowerment in reference to decision-making taking place in the community, the matter of enhancing the status of women

must be considered in community-based conservation efforts directed towards sustainable tourism (<http://www.wri.org/blog/2015/01/one-village-tanzania-shows-locally-managed-development-makes-good-business-sense>).

Ololosokwan is the most successful example of community-based tourism in Tanzania in terms of generating revenue through a private operator joint venture. Most significantly, this example highlights the importance of strong local governance and accountability. The village was able to contest, legally and politically, its claims over the land sold to CCA (&Beyond) through dubious and improper means. During the past decade, this strong capacity for advocating its land and resource rights has been essential to the development and maintenance of the village's tourism revenues (Nelson, 2010).

The Ololosokwan community has demonstrated a relatively open and transparent decision-making process in relation to tourism planning and the use of revenue. Of note is the strong role of the Village Assembly (meeting of community members) in demanding accountability from the Village Council (community management body) and effectively performing its oversight and monitoring functions to ensure decisions are made in the interest of the broader community. For example, the Village Assembly has demanded special audits to be done of the financial records of the Village Council. In another alleged corruption case, the Village Assembly successfully demanded for the removal of the entire Village Council and a new council was elected (Nelson, 2010). Failure of local collective decision-making undermines the objectives of community-based tourism and degrades both the tourism product and long term community resource interests. Community participation in decision-making entails democratisation of the decision-making process, which can lead to the improvement of the quality of life for rural residents (Zou *et al.*, 2014; Bello *et al.* 2016). The community-driven development approach gives the community the decision-making power and the right to use and control resources. Community participation is to a large extent dependent on the management system, but it is not the only aspect required to make ecotourism successful (Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012).

Whilst empowerment is the key to CDD, community participation, democratisation and village autonomy are also critical to its implementation (Zou *et al.*, 2014). Many studies note the lack of local participation as a common challenge of ecotourism projects in most of the protected areas in developing countries (Stronza & Gordillo, 2008; Bruyere *et al.*, 2009; Xu *et al.*, 2009). Yang and Wang (2006) argue that community-based sustainable development is a social

construct, as well as a negotiation process. The evolution of community participation, according to Zou *et al.* (2014), follows four developmental stages, namely individual participation, organizational participation, mass participation and comprehensive participation. The authors believe that only comprehensive participation could prevent the decline of tourism destinations and disintegration of the community. Influential factors affecting community participation include, among others, the perceptions of villagers concerning local tourism development, place attachment, the impact of tourism development, the ability to participate, their attitude towards participation, their involvement in decision-making, tourism development preferences and tourism involvement behaviours (Zou *et al.*, 2014; Bello *et al.*, 2016).

Although CAMPFIRE may have managed to convince local communities of the benefits of wildlife conservation, the projects remain too reliant on outside input resulting in the local people remaining passive recipients rather than active participants in wildlife conservation. Balint (2006) points out that the projects deteriorated due to the loss of external capacity and the collapse of local governance. In addition, Balint (2006) explains that the involvement of traditional leaders could easily stifle the efforts of wildlife committees. The power that the committee has at local level is subject to the acknowledgement of other institutions, like the traditional political leadership. In Mahenye, situated on the borders of Gonarezhou National Park, the traditional chief and his family took over the management of the wildlife committees and all transparency and accountability rules were discarded (Balint, 2006).

Some authors (Kull, 2002; Rechlin & Taylor, 2008) point out the equity concerns relating to gender, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic-political status within a community. Arya (2007) argues that community-based watershed projects in India were compromised by the imbalance in ownership rights of between men and women and the division of labour and income. The importance of empowering women has been noted in conservation within diverse contexts (Taylor, 2008). Greater gender equity has been shown to enhance collaboration, solidarity and conflict resolution (Taylor, 2008). According to Jones (2007), cast privilege has presented an obstacle to the shared benefits and shared participation in community-based conservation projects in Nepal. Massyn (2010) observed that the challenge in the Okavango Lodge sector of Botswana is not only to increase the proportion of citizens, especially local residents employed in higher paying positions, but also to improve the position of Botswana women relative to their male compatriots.

On another note, some authors (Spierenberg *et al.*, 2009) argue that while helping people in need is a noble idea, one important question when considering all developmental projects, is how to avoid the assistance becoming an instrument of dependency. In practice, people may become seduced by their own subordination, preferring to stay dependent as long as reasonable living standard can be maintained, the obstacle of change, both intrinsic and extrinsic, appearing too large to be surmounted. Hence, there is need to ensure that capacity development initiatives are part of any community-based conservation and tourism project to empower the members from the grassroots so that they can actively participate in both management and benefit-sharing. As recommended by Snyman (2016), capacity development could be one of the key interventions of the private sector to effect positive change in their areas of operation for long-term sustainability.

Over-reliance on outsiders to run projects and very little transference of skills to local people has a large impact on the long-term survival of the community-based conservation projects. The absence of community capacity development initiatives, most probably deliberately caused by management authorities, compromises the gains in both conservation and social development. Where governance is weak at local level, community participation might be limited and traditional leaders or state officials or private firms or all aforementioned, might expropriate community resources and benefits (Balint, 2006). It is critical that governance structures at all levels, especially local level, are transparent, trustworthy, fair and allow for participation, thus creating an environment that enables the productive use of existing capacities (Ruhanen *et al.*, 2010; Nielsen, 2011).

The transparency and collectively accountable management of conservation and tourism (Loliondo in Tanzania, Purros Projects of Namibia, El Naranjito Project of El Salvador) are exceptions rather than a rule. Critics of CBC&E have highlighted the high failure rate of the community participation initiatives. Some authors argue that this is because much of the conservation thinking in Africa has been and is still shaped by the psyche of the “Yellowstone Model” of the Western World.

The new land policy in democratic South Africa was meant to address the injustices of racially-based land dispossession of the past. However, literature has indicated that most of the restitution of land rights agreements did not practically empower or capacitate the local rural communities around the protected areas (Naguran, 2002). Empowerment approaches should enable all individuals to participate on equal terms, as illustrated by the private sector joint

venture of the Ololosokwan community (Nelson, 2010). To this effect, the results of Burgoyne and Mearns (2017) indicate that mistrust among stakeholders persisted and there was a tendency of people to align themselves to groups of similar interest that hindered progress to work together. Using land allocation procedures and instruments to promote greater domestic participation in the land-based sector, such as tourism, is widely used in some countries, like Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa. A combination of regulation, licencing and conditional award of commercial rights to promote broad-based indigenous empowerment was used (Massyn, 2010). In Botswana's Okavango Lodge Sector, shorter term lease agreements made room to review compliance with the regulations protecting local community participation (Massyn, 2010).

In South Africa, there is substantial evidence from literature that many of the land rights restitution agreements did not create conditions for the active participation of the local communities in wildlife conservation and tourism management. In fact, according to Ostrom and Schlager (1996), local communities, in terms of property rights concept, only received operational level rights, such as access and withdrawal rights. In practice, the management of game reserves still follows the "Yellowstone Model" that tries to isolate the natural resources from local inhabitants (Nash, 2014). On the other hand, the social development projects come as a favour, a charity case, towards the poor local people, some of whom, ironically own that piece of productive land. The issue of capacity development has not been fully addressed so as to enable the local residents, through their management structures, to have a say in the decision-making processes affecting conservation and tourism, as is the case of the Dukuduku land claim settlement (Nustad & Sundnes, 2011).

Naguran (2002) gives a full account of the Mbangweni community, living around the Ndumo Game Reserve, who virtually possesses operational level rights, but completely lacks collective rights. Dahlberg and Burlando (2009) argue that, although the Mbila community and Mnqobokazi, later in 2007, won their land claims within the protected areas (state and private, respectively), the communities do not actively participate in the management of these sites. The same situation prevails in land restoration agreement of the Makuleke community of Kruger National Park (Bosch, 2003; Spierenberg *et al.*, 2009). Koch (1997) notes that outside/external tour operators, hunting organisers and government officials have also tended to exercise more power than their community counterparts. Songorwa *et al.* (2000) wonders whether tourism operators (and government officials) will exert too much influence, on not only ecological decisions but also, on the ability of rural communities to be genuinely represented.

2.4 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN BENEFIT-SHARING AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The third principle of Local Resource Management deals with operation of effective mechanisms for sharing of the benefits of wildlife and all natural resources with communities. Management of protected areas is largely in the hands of local communities which often results in increased economic use of the resources (Becken & Job, 2014). Benefits to the community arising from natural resources and tourism should be long term and perceived to be better than the alternative ways of utilising land resources (Taylor, 2008). People benefiting from wildlife utilisation would be more willing to cooperate in conservation and tourism. Literature on tourism illustrates that residents directly involved in the tourism business may have more positive attitudes toward tourism development than those who are completely devoid of tourism benefits (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Imran *et al.*, 2014). One of the most regular claims in community-based conservation research is that for projects to be successful, they must offer benefits to the community, offset by the expected demands and sacrifices (Adams *et al.*, 2004; Rechlin & Taylor, 2008; Burgoyne & Mearns, 2017). Research has also established direct correlations between community attitudes towards conservation and tourism, and the perceived community benefits in terms of both tangible and less tangible assets (Taylor, 2008; Simpson, 2009).

Positive livelihood impacts include the creation of employment and economic opportunities and benefits for individuals, households and the collective community (Simpson, 2009; Ruschkowski *et al.*, 2013; Zou, *et al.*, 2014). According to the author, non-financial benefits include decreasing vulnerability, skills development, improved access to information, enhancement and creation of new infrastructure provision of credit and markets, improved food security and strengthening community organisation. The findings of Snyman (2016) confirm that the private sector has an important role to play in local socio-economic development in terms of employment creation, skills training and development, the payment of lease fees and through philanthropic development projects.

Balint (2006), in a comparative analysis of two projects, El Salvador and CAMPFIRE of Zimbabwe, emphasises that community-based conservation will only be effective if it incorporates a broader view of developmental variables, such as rights, capacity, governance and revenue. Nelson (2010) rightly observed that if communities are able to secure commercial tourism agreements that recognise their jurisdiction over village land and create economic opportunities at the local level, it can support local interests in maintaining their resources in the

face of external appropriative pressures. Many studies have also focused on non-financial factors, which are key to the success of community-based conservation projects, for example, the installation of solar panels in the El Naranjito Project of El Salvador (Balint, 2006); the educational level of the community influenced their perception of the protected areas (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2004; Taylor, 2008) and nutritional status (Gjertsen, 2005). Zou *et al.* (2014), in their study of the community-driven development for rural tourism in China, confirm that this type of tourism can also help to preserve the tangible and intangible cultural heritage accumulated in rural communities. A study reported by Black and Cobinnah (2016) on local community attitudes, highlights the goals of Wildlife Foundation Conservation Enterprise model, one of which is to improve the quality of life of local communities and encourage positive local attitudes to conservation. This confirms the importance of considering the needs and aspirations of the local residents.

In practice, however, benefits do not seem to compensate enough due to a variety of reasons, which includes unequal and irregular distribution of income derived from wildlife conservation and tourism. Nelson (2010) notes that, in many instances, tourism revenues are captured by elites (both political and economic) within village governments (local community management structures) and few economic benefits reach the community members except for those benefiting directly through employment at tourist centres (Massyn, 2010). In northern Tanzania, just like in other countries, like the Okavango Delta of Botswana, the capture of public resources by the private elite is increasingly the dominant theme in social and political discourses in the countries (Mbaiwa, 2005; Massyn, 2010; Nelson, 2010).

According to critics, one of the shortcomings of the principles of LRM is the assumption that communities are homogenous (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997). The local communities consist of individuals of diverse backgrounds, with diverse interests, level of attainment, attitudes and perceptions with regard to their environment. The communities are heterogeneous, with both corresponding and conflicting interests. Research has also dealt with issues of representation in terms of both participation and benefit-sharing, focusing on gender, religion and minority groups (Dzingirai, 2003; Jones, 2007; King, 2007). Carr *et al.* (2016) explain that communities often share common challenges and/or aspirations pertaining to the development of opportunities, nurturing healthy families or groupings, facilitating employment, improving health and providing education opportunities for local residents. Dahlberg and Burlando (2009) observe that the garden project of Mnqobokazi did not manage to target the most vulnerable groups it was meant for, a typical situation in developmental efforts.

For the success of the CBC&E projects, active community participation is required, therefore, the benefits to the local community must be clearly indicated. Sceptics point out that despite promises, many ecotourism, trophy hunting and community-based conservation projects around the world have not been evaluated rigorously (Taylor, 2008). The problems resulting from a lack of perceived community benefit have been well documented. For example, West (2006) investigated the contradiction between the goals of NGO workers and community members in Papua New Guinea, where NGO workers sought to instil valuation of biodiversity as an economic benefit, while community members expected benefits, such as medicine and technology.

Tourism has long been a major economic booster to parks, but often local communities have not realised those benefits. Many studies have established that, given the context of the community-based conservation initiatives, a “win-win” situation is almost impossible and utopian (Sanderson & Redford, 2003; Wells & McShane, 2004; Dahlberg & Burlando, 2009). It has been argued that communities will do better if they take a more advocacy approach to their own interests instead (Andereck *et al.*, 2005; Fay, 2007; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Imran *et al.*, 2014). Recent literature has also shown that trade-offs within and between conservation and development interests are the norm and more realistic (Brown, 2004; Dahlberg & Burlando, 2009). Negotiating trade-offs is complicated further if there is a high dependence on natural resources and if this dependence is unequally represented within the community and between different stakeholders, including the local communities. Although there is a large amount of literature in this area, it is not possible to explore each and every one of them for the purpose of this study. However, an extensive literature review was conducted to address the concerns of this current research.

2.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, an in-depth literature analysis of community-based conservation and tourism was presented. Diverse epistemological perspectives were discussed. The historical background of protected area management, with special focus on Southern Africa was provided. Principles around community participation in conservation, tourism and social development were among the important areas were reviewed. Issues associated with land rights, including the concept of property rights with respect to community-based conservation and tourism management, were elaborated. Relevant literature references were used to elucidate local community participation

in wildlife conservation, tourism management and social development. The present study was therefore put into context with respect to available literature.

The next chapter provides a detailed profile of &Beyond and the Africa Foundation, then it zooms in on the study area, &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve and its surrounding local communities. The vision, goals, activities and relationships of &Beyond Phinda, the Africa Foundation and the local communities are explored, in order to set a platform for questioning the voice and perceptions of the community on its role in wildlife and tourism management and decision-making processes.

Chapter 3

JOURNEY OF &BEYOND AND AFRICA FOUNDATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

“Let’s create an integrated global community where we have shared benefits and responsibilities and we don’t fight because of our differences.”

(Bill Clinton)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, literature on community-based nature conservation and tourism was analysed and discussed. General principles of community participation and sustainable conservation and tourism, the historical contexts, successes, challenges and potential were explored as given by literature. This chapter specifically focuses on the site of the research project, &Beyond (the company to which Phinda Private Game Reserve belongs), the Africa Foundation (its social development partner) and their relationship with local communities around Phinda Game Reserve. The historical background of the two organisations, their philosophies, strategies and impacts on the local communities, conservation and tourism are discussed. This chapter sets a platform to investigate community perceptions of their role in conservation and tourism management, social development and benefit-sharing, with respect to &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF &BEYOND

&Beyond was established as a response to the rising international demand for ecotourism and wildlife experiences and also the belief that through business enterprise, wildlife conservation is economically sustainable. The year 1990 saw the establishment of &Beyond, then known as Conservation Corporation Africa (CC Africa) (&Beyond, 2014). The original name was chosen to reflect the beneficial and sustainable co-existence of conservation, communities and business. The company was based on an improved model originally established at Londolozi Private Game Reserve, years before its formation (&Beyond, 2014). This model demonstrated that conservation land could improve its economic viability, whilst affording local communities a meaningful share of the benefits by harnessing low-impact, high yield tourism (&Beyond, 2014). The opening of &Beyond Phinda Mountain Lodge in 1991 signalled the rising of a pioneering ecotourism model. The following year saw the establishment of &Beyond Ngala

Private Game Reserve and, in 1993, &Beyond Forest Lodge opened its doors (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). Figure 3.1 below is a map showing the distribution of lodges within &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve. Thereafter, the company spread its wings to East Africa.

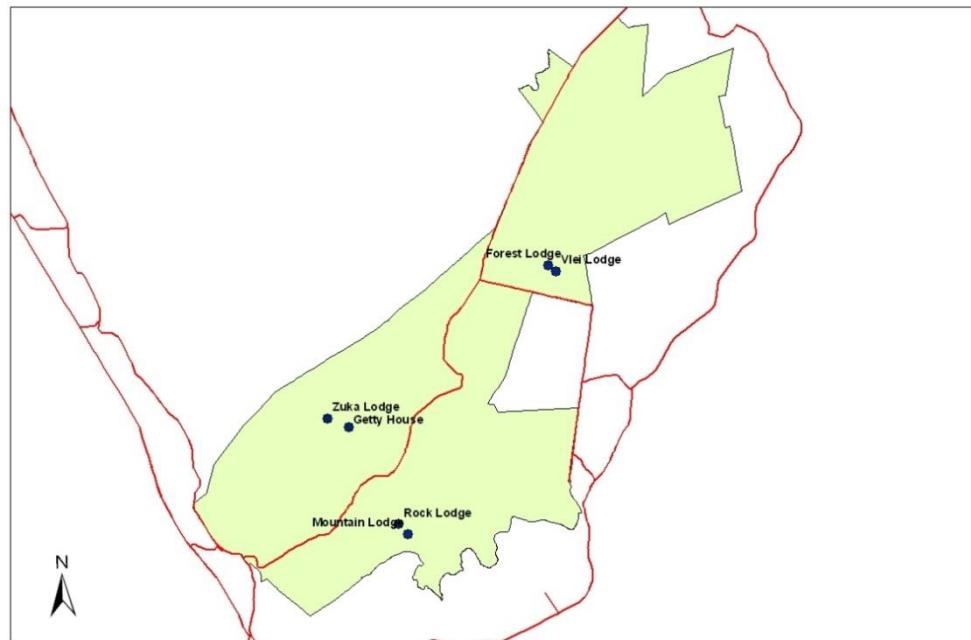


Figure 3.1: Lodges in &Beyond Phinda Game Reserve (Source: &Beyond data)

The expansion of the innovative ecotourism model into Asia brought with it new responsibilities and a new outlook, resulting in the change of identity of &Beyond. Currently, the organisation is one of the world leaders in luxury experiential travel, specialising in tours and safaris to Africa and South Asia. It runs 33 luxury safari lodges and camps in the most breath-taking parts of the African continent and has contributed immensely to the sustainability of local rural communities and the conservation of wildlife land (&Beyond, 2014).

3.2.1 Birth of &Beyond and its vision

The background and activities of &Beyond are important in order to make sense of different views provided by the stakeholders participating in the study. This section is therefore related to research objectives 1, 2 and 3 and would contribute immensely to the analysis of the findings. Since its birth, the vision of &Beyond has been that of conservation, development and rural community empowerment. &Beyond's pioneering model of low impact, high yield wildlife tourism is based on its philosophy of caring for the land, its wildlife and its people (&Beyond, 2016). The company believes that the earth's wild heritage is one of the most precious resources of humanity and that the best way to sustain it, is to share it, honour it and to realise

its value. &Beyond is convinced that by placing conservation and wildlife land on an economically sustainable footing, through responsible tourism, it is the only way to ensure that these resources are enjoyed by future generation (Dahlberg & Burlando, 2009; African Sky, 2014).

From a business perspective, Care of the Land consists of the efficiency strategy of the company, which ensures that the physical footprint and its impact on the environment, is minimised (&Beyond, 2015; 2016). Care of the Wildlife is defined in &Beyond's conservation strategy, which encompasses the preservation of endangered species through conservation, translocations and breeding programmes (&Beyond, 2015; 2016). The community strategy of the organisation, Care of the People, is jointly executed together in partnership with the Africa Foundation. &Beyond believes that the land, people and animals of Africa and India are inextricably intertwined.

On the same note, as wildlife conservation and ecotourism are vital for the future and prosperity of the people, so is the support of these people is critical in protecting the threatened ecosystems, endangered species and the precious biodiversity of its wildlife areas (&Beyond, 2016). The three legged African pot best describes &Beyond's three beliefs, each of them representing land, wildlife and the people. The well-being of the Company depends on how well the three legs balance (&Beyond, 2016). Being one of the pioneers in this philosophy, the conservation strategy of &Beyond is broadly based on the following objectives:

- To minimise environmental impacts and maximise sensitivity towards wildlife and habitats (in construction and operation);
- To facilitate sustainable conservation and social development projects with the local communities. (One of the goals of this study is to establish whether there is a common understanding of the role of the local communities on sustainable conservation and development initiatives, from the latter perspective.);
- To provide a world class interpretive experience for the guest, thereby advancing the education aspect of sustainable conservation;
- To encourage and stimulate personal commitment from the staff;
- To provide financial and other support to independent wildlife conservation NGOs; and
- To channel profits from financially successful safari operations into projects and programmes that conserve biodiversity by securing threatened ecosystem (&Beyond, 2014; 2016).

Working together with the Africa Foundation, &Beyond contributes towards the conservation of biodiversity and community empowerment and sustainability (&Beyond, 2016). It also

facilitates and supports hands-on collaboration in terms of data gathering and research relevant to the three pillars of its philosophy.

&Beyond believes that the cornerstone of successful conservation is the engagement of the rural communities in meaningful and dignified partnerships, so that they share the benefits. The current research is actually exploring the philosophy and beliefs of &Beyond with respect to what is on the ground. It is of interest to this study to establish whether there is a common understanding between the Company and local rural communities around the game reserve. It has also been noted from research that projects are often too limited in space and time, initiated and owned by external actors who have inappropriate funding mechanisms and reach a limited number of people (Dahlberg & Burlando, 2009). There is limited participation (which tends to be superficial), promised benefits are unrealistic and awareness of the wider social-ecological context is often lacking (Sayer & Wells, 2004; Springer, 2009).

The questions that come to mind are, for example to what extent does &Beyond allow community engagements and how is the question of ownership of natural resource being realised? Does the local community have any say in the decision-making of critical conservation, tourism and development issues, in spite of their limited knowledge and social status? &Beyond states that its philosophy of “doing well by doing good”, extends beyond commitment to employing local people. Together with the Africa Foundation, they identify and address community priorities, such as providing classrooms, clinics, developing enterprises and increasingly creating ownership opportunities for communities. Taking into account the nature of the relationship between &Beyond and the other stakeholders, especially local communities, how different would be their goals from those of a charitable non-governmental organisation helping a disadvantaged society? The views of the stakeholders, most importantly the local residents, are likely to clarify this cloudy area.

3.2.2 &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve: Historical perspective

The concept of Phinda Game Reserve was conceived by Trevor Cappen, a property and timeshare developer when he passed through Southern Maputaland from Durban, on his way to a little village called Mbazwana (&Beyond, 2014; 2015) . He conceived an idea that the area could be restored to its original state and become a prime game reserve. However, the initial challenge to be dealt with was that at that time the area consisted of farms for cattle, pineapples, cotton and hunting. Cappen did a preliminary investigation of the area before

acquiring the land. By purchasing adjoining farms and taking down fences, he gradually enlarged the area until Phinda was born (Africa Sky, 2014; &Beyond, 2014; 2015).

Phinda Private Game Reserve was officially established in February 1991 (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). One hundred and twenty (120) kilometres of fencing had to be erected and thousands of animals had to be reintroduced to the area. &Beyond's flagship game reserve was named Phinda, after a Zulu word which means “the return” and in the context of conservation, it will mean “the return to the wild”. The expansion of &Beyond’s vision has its roots at Phinda Game Reserve, which has become an icon in the realisation of the dream of creating sustainable conservation through responsible tourism (&Beyond, 2014).

With its roots at Phinda Game Reserve from 1995, &Beyond continued to expand its portfolio of superior safari lodge and moved into Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and later Botswana, India and Namibia (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). In February, 2000, &Beyond merged with two other travel companies (Afro-Ventures and Into Africa), to form one of Africa’s most comprehensive tourism companies, combining the strength of its lodge portfolio with a large tour operating division, destination management group travel and mobile safari specialists (&Beyond, 2014).

3.2.3 &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve: Features and activities

Set within easy reach of the Indian ocean coastline and the famous iSimangaliso (Greater St Lucia) Wetland Park, one of South Africa's first World Heritage Sites in the Northern KZN, &Beyond Phinda Game reserve is known for its abundant wildlife, diversity of habitats and a wide range of safari activities (&Beyond, 2014).

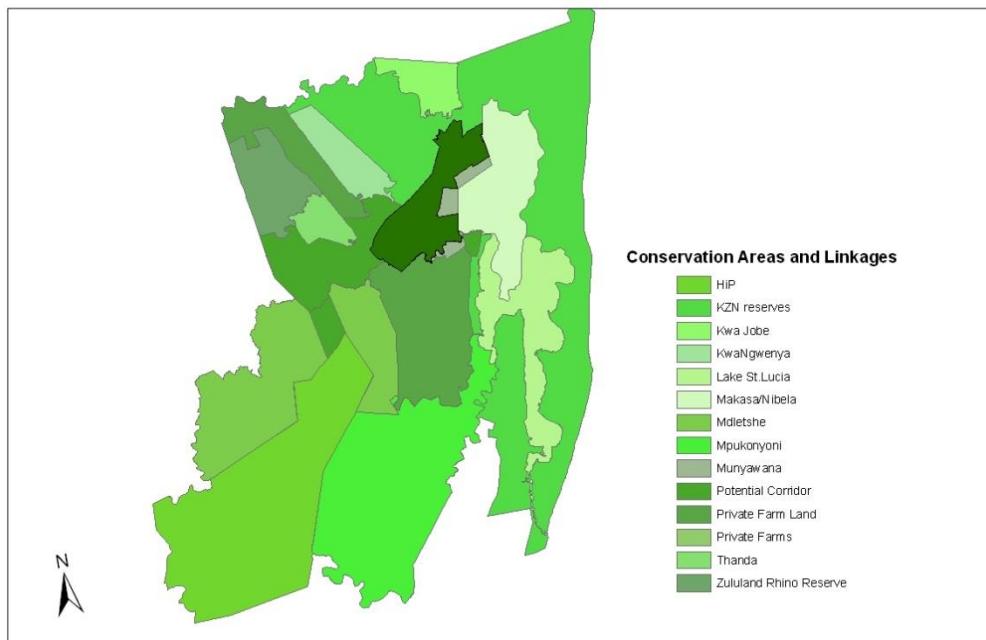


Figure 3.2: KZN conservation areas and linkages (Source: &Beyond data)

Of significance, &Beyond Phinda was the first Big Five private game reserve to be established in KwaZulu-Natal, demonstrating for the first time that dedicating land to wildlife had a potential to produce better returns than cattle farming in marginal rainfall areas (&Beyond, 2016). It is situated in the lush region sandwiched between Mkuze Game Reserve to the west and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park to the east, a world heritage site. The map in Figure 3.2 shows the conservation areas and linkages within KZN. It comprises of 23000ha of prime conservation land within which a handful of lodges are located (&Beyond, 2014), illustrating &Beyond's pioneering model of low impact and high yield wildlife tourism (&Beyond, 2016).

Seven distinct habitats, including the rare sand forest, shelter an abundance of wildlife including Africa's Big five (lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo) and over 415 bird species (Highbeam, 2007). Phinda Game Reserve has certain plants that are endemic to this area. Due to its coastal rainfall pattern, &Beyond Phinda Game Reserve enjoys a lush green environment and it is often referred to as the “Seven Worlds of Wonder” (&Beyond, 2015). The seven district habitats allow for a much greater variation in species and landscapes. The summer climate temperatures ranges between an average minimum of 24°C to a maximum of 32°C and in the winter from 8°C to 23°C (&Beyond, 2014; 2015).

3.2.3.1 &Beyond Phinda Conservation

Present day conservation policies usually include the aim to integrate biodiversity, conservation and local development. The main reasons for integration relate to poverty alleviation, democracy, human rights and more efficient conservation. Such efforts commonly include the so-called Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDP) (Adams & Hulme, 2001). Phinda adopted a model similar to the ICDP. Many questions have been raised as to whether the conservation benefits generated by the ICDPs are sufficient to replace reliance on land and other resources (Dahlberg & Burlando, 2009), as well as around the state of land tenure in the new South African dispensation.

Conservation is the foundation of &Beyond activities. The Company defines it as the preservation and careful management of the environment and nature resources (&Beyond, 2014). It involves the utilisation of natural resources along with the protection of biodiversity within natural ecosystem. The future of humankind is entirely dependent on dialogue. This stems from &Beyond's belief in the care of the land, the care of the wildlife and care of the people. Conservation and development do not have to be irreconcilable goals, but they need to be realistically considered as part of a political and social process of engagement and negotiation among different interests. Therefore, there is need for transparency in these deliberations (Brown 2004; Wells & McShane, 2004; Ruhanen *et al.*, 2010).

3.2.3.2 Return to the Wild

The area has been restocked with the big five, giraffe and other big game in Operation Phindalzilwane (the return of the wild animals) (&Beyond, 2014). The buffalo quarantine protocols developed at Phinda, have become accepted as the national protocol for relocation of buffalo onto private land. &Beyond Phinda Game Reserve was one of the pioneers in the use of sedation techniques, which were meant to socialise animals, from different groups before releasing them into the wild. It was also the first reserve to transport sedated lions by air (&Beyond, 2014; 2016). The techniques and protocols used by Les Carlisle and his team at Phinda are currently recognised as excellent examples of predator reintroduction. Their elephant reintroduction techniques and protocols have also positively impacted and revolutionised the methods of elephant capture and reintroduction internationally (&Beyond, 2016). At present, &Beyond Phinda provides sanctuary for threatened wildlife, such as the cheetah and black rhino.

According to Places, cited in &Beyond (2014), predators like the cheetah, leopard and lion are tracked on a daily basis and the chances of visitors encountering them are extremely high. The territorial white rhinos prefer waterholes and wallows whilst herds of elephants and buffalo roam around, throughout the reserve, which make them easily spotted. The nyala antelope, impala and warthog are usually found feeding together. The bush-pig, “aardvark” and greater bush-baby are nocturnal. Mountain reedbuck dwell on rocky slopes, whilst common reedbuck favours palm-veld and wetlands (&Beyond, 2014; 2015).

&Beyond (2014) describes biodiversity as the full spectrum of living things in a particular place, as well as the web of ecological processes that involves the plant and animal community. Conservation of biodiversity is critical, not only because of maintaining the vital life sustaining systems of our planet, but also because of the complexity and beauty of wild nature that fulfils deep aesthetic, intellectual and sometimes, spiritual needs among humans (&Beyond, 2014). The Company, currently contributes to the sustenance of over 3.7 million acres of wildlife land of which Phinda is a part (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). &Beyond model seeks to place more land on a sustainable economic footing through high yield and low impact responsible tourism.

&Beyond endeavours to promote a greater consciousness of the possibilities and responsibilities of managing the wildlife resources on our planet, demonstrating that they can be conserved on a sustainable basis, if all respect and value them. To achieve this, the organisation works hand in hand with a number of conservation bodies and the local communities surrounding the lodges and game reserves, who are vital stakeholders in sustainable conservation. In many instances, the land surrounding the lodges belongs to national or private park owners.

In the case of Phinda, part of the land within the game reserve belongs to the local communities. Burgoyne and Mearns (2017) discuss the importance of maintaining successful and sustainable community conservation in the area in collaboration with private tourism operators. While &Beyond strives to remain integrally involved in decision-making at a high level, as well as in managing careful and sensitive interactions with the wildlife and habitat, it is also critical to ensure that the other stakeholders, especially the local communities, are involved as equal partners and not recipients of resolution and the benefits of sustainable conservation.

3.2.4 Achievements of &Beyond, in general, and Phinda, in particular

&Beyond Phinda Game Reserve is the first private game reserve to be established in KwaZulu-Natal. The first southern hemisphere private game reserve to receive the British Airways

Tourism Awards was &Beyond Phinda. &Beyond was the first organisation to relocate elephant herds from Zimbabwe to private land in South Africa (Phinda) (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). The reintroduction of lion began with seven individuals in 1992. Over the years, they have flourished, with 81 animals translocated to other wildlife areas and introducing a contraception programme to keep the population levels appropriate to the land size (&Beyond, 2016). &Beyond Phinda was the first to use sedation to socialise lions from different prides in acclimatisation pens prior to release.

&Beyond believes the reward of wildlife and nature conservation can be reaped sustainably through multi-sectorial tourism, benefiting not only the tourist but also the land, animals and rural communities (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). In the first ever private game reserve donation of rhino to another country, &Beyond translocated six white rhino from Phinda Private Game Reserve in SA to Botswana's Okavango Delta, in partnership with RHINO FORCE as lead sponsor (&Beyond, 2014). The Ezemvelo KZN-Wildlife Black Rhino Range Expansion project selected &Beyond Phinda Game Reserve as the first release site for 16 black rhino in 2004 (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). The endangered rhino has done extremely well in the new habitat with Phinda having its third black rhino calf born in 2008 (&Beyond, 2014). A leopard monitoring program is being run at &Beyond Phinda Game Reserve. Several leopards have been radio collared for satellite tracking and their movements and interactions documented. The research findings have contributed immensely to the reduction of both, leopard trophy-hunting and poaching in the region (&Beyond, 2014).

&Beyond is a partner to a variety of regional and international conservation bodies that include the following: WWF, Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania, International Eco-tourism Society, Bird Life South Africa and Endangered Wildlife Trust, among others. The success of &Beyond in sustainable conservation of wildlife and nature reserves is through collaboration with these and other partners (&Beyond, 2014; 2015).

&Beyond 'Phinda' pioneered the successful land restitution settlements with local communities with the return of land to its ancestral owners. Makhasa and Mnqobokazi community leaders and &Beyond signed a ground-breaking, mutually beneficial land claim settlement, in favour of the community for 9500 hectares of Phinda Private Game Reserve land (&Beyond, 2012). On the 11th of August 2007, local communities around Phinda gathered at Mduku to witness the historic signing of legal documents giving the Makhasa and Mnqobokazi communities' restitution for the Phinda land they were dispossessed of during Apartheid. Former &Beyond

CEO, Steve Fitzgerald, played a fundamental role in the land claim process through the application of the principle that it was vital to own the business but not necessarily to own the land.

It has also always been our dream to return Phinda's land to the community, but obviously in a way that can also benefit the company. We realised that the best way forward was to support the land claim process and then lease the land back from the communities to ensure ongoing sustainability. (&Beyond, 2014:1).

After rigorous negotiations with local iziNkosi (Chiefs) and land claim commissioners, an acceptable pay-out of R268 million was agreed upon and a 72-year lease agreement was signed to secure occupancy rights for &Beyond and ensure reviewable annual rental incomes for the communities (&Beyond, 2014; 2015). An upfront R18 million was paid to each community to facilitate future joint venture and community empowerment projects. In 2009, two more pieces of land were given back to the two communities resulting from separate claims on farmland in the area, which were also incorporated to &Beyond Phinda upon their request, on a 36-year lease (&Beyond, 2016). In terms of these agreements, &Beyond secured a commitment from the community to keep the land under wildlife rather than return it to farming (&Beyond, 2016). In this way, both the communities and conservation benefit, demonstrating once more &Beyond's commitment to the Care of the Land, Care of the Wildlife and Care of the People (&Beyond, 2016).

3.3 AFRICA FOUNDATION

The Africa Foundation was established in 1992 by &Beyond (then known as Conservation Corporation Africa). Initially it was part of &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve known as Phinda Community Development Trust Fund (Africa Foundation, 2016). With the support of &Beyond, the Organisation was able to hire two employees to oversee the planning and management of community projects together with fundraising. In 1993, the organisation became known as the Rural Investment Fund, due to its continued expansion and delivery (Africa Foundation, 2016). Two full-time community development officials were employed. Development committees were set up in the communities. Tribal chiefs and community elders were invited to prioritise the projects required by each community. The Rural Investment Fund grew, expanded and evolved into what is known today as the Africa Foundation (Africa Foundation, 2016).

&Beyond's community development partner, Africa Foundation, is a successful, independent, non-profit organisation registered in South Africa, the United States and the United Kingdom

(Africa Foundation, 2016). The focus of &Beyond is primarily on conservation of wildlife and tourism, in the form of low impact, high earn lodge management. Phinda is surrounded by neighbouring communities with whom they necessarily have to interact. Positive relationships tend to benefit both stakeholders and negative interactions bring about costs on both sides. &Beyond's tourism business, which is the engine behind both conservation and social development, would be greatly affected.

From a business perspective, divided attention between conservation and tourism on one side and community responsibility on the other would compromise the output for all stakeholders. Hence, there was need for an independent, full-time social-development organisation. Working together with &Beyond and in consultation with local communities, Africa Foundation facilitates the socio-economic development of rural communities around conservation areas in Africa (Africa Foundation, 2016). The involvement of Africa Foundation represents one of the pillars of &Beyond's ethos, *Care for the People* (&Beyond, 2016).

Since its inception, the ideals of the Africa Foundation rest in the collaboration with local communities and other stakeholders, in order to bring positive change to local residents. &Beyond Phinda contributes directly and indirectly to the social development endeavours of Africa Foundation. &Beyond provides most of the administrative requirements of Africa Foundation, including office space, transport and logistics. Staff on site, were using &Beyond Phinda vehicles and even uniforms until recently when the organisation embarked on a process of re-establishing its identity.

Indirect contributions include the accessibility of Phinda guests, some of whom are potential donors to community projects. Through its lodges, &Beyond Phinda also facilitates community familiarisation visits that are conducted by the Africa Foundation. The guests experience the real African (in general) and Zulu (in particular) cultures and also appreciate the challenges faced by rural communities.

For the surrounding communities, such as Makhassa, Mnqobokazi and Nibela, the Africa Foundation has made a huge positive impact on their livelihoods. However, the majority of residents in the project perceived all activities undertaken in the community as being done by Phinda Private Game Reserve. Informal interviews with community members, employees and management of both Phinda and the Africa Foundation confirm that local residents in general, cannot distinguish clearly between &Beyond, Phinda and the Africa Foundation. In this context, Phinda is therefore the umbrella name for the three as would be evidenced in the

responses of the participants during data collection. The community work of the Africa Foundation is overshadowed, under the guise of Phinda. Very few knowledgeable members of the community, most of whom are either community leaders, trust management and members or Phinda employees, clearly acknowledge and recognise the Africa Foundation as an independent, non-profit social development organisation contributing to their welfare.

The close and confusing (for some community members) relationship between &Beyond Phinda and the Africa Foundation, whilst beneficial to both, is a matter of concern for the identity and autonomy of the latter. Currently, according to top management of the Africa Foundation, there are strides to rebrand the organisation so that it restores its outlook and that stakeholders may easily recognise, appreciate and relate with it and its developmental projects. In this discourse, for social development and community participation, with reference to Phinda by members of the community, is understood to also represent the Africa Foundation.

While Phinda still has some community responsibility activities, especially those directly associated with conservation of wildlife and tourism, the company gave almost all social development responsibilities to the Africa Foundation as the custodian of the *Care for the People* ethos. The success of the Africa Foundation-community relationship has a positive impact on the conservation and tourism efforts by Phinda on one hand, and the social development and the raising of the standard of living in general, on the other hand. Community support ensures that Phinda conservation and tourism business thrive.

3.3.1 Nature of local communities

Rural communities in South Africa continue to be under-served and neglected to a certain extent, as government struggles to meet the infrastructure gap left behind by the Apartheid legacy (Africa Foundation, 2016). Makhaza, Mnqobokazi and Nibela are situated about 30-40 kilometres north-east of Hluhluwe, on the R22 that links the town with Sodwana Bay. On the south-western side of the three communities, is a fence which borders these communities with &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve and to the east, is the renowned World Heritage Site of iSimangaliso Wetland Park (Africa Foundation, 2016; &Beyond, 2016). The villages are deeply entrenched in the Zulu culture. There is a strong belief in the extended family and polygamy is still practised by some members of the community, resulting in very large family sizes managed by a single breadwinner, who might not be gainfully employed.

Local employment opportunities are so limited that around 30% of bread-winners emigrated to cities in order to fend for their families. The youth is hit hard due to the lack of opportunities for

a better future. Umkhanyakude Region (in which Makhaza, Mnqobokazi and Nibela belong) is reported to have one of the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates in the country (30%), three times the national average of one in ten (Big Five False Bay Municipality IDP, 2007/2008). The social structure of the local communities has since shifted, with the population demographics now being dominated by children under 15 and the elderly, and a sudden increase of orphans, other vulnerable children and child-headed families (Africa Foundation, 2016). The communities are still characterised by the social stigma of HIV/AIDS, stemming from cultural and traditional belief systems. There is also a high prevalence of TB which has been worsened by HIV infections (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Even though electricity is available in the area, very few households can afford the cost. This means, a lot of the residents still rely on paraffin and firewood as a source of fuel. Access to clean water remains one of the major challenges for the area (Africa Foundation, 2016). Communities are almost entirely dependent on rainwater harvesting, compromising health during the dry season. The government has tried to address the water challenge by installing a reticulation system piping water from Hluhluwe Dam to the villages. However, very few households would be in a position to pay for water access. Furthermore, the water service delivery scheme is compromised by farming activities, which tend to waste a lot of water (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Education is characterised by fewer schools, both primary and secondary, and over-enrolment resulting in schools having the teacher-pupil ratio of much more than 1:40 (Africa Foundation, 2016). These educational institutions suffer from teacher, classroom and learning resource shortages. Poverty also impacts on learner attendance. Water shortages and inadequate sanitation at schools greatly compromise the health of the learners and is attributed to absenteeism among girls in puberty (Africa Foundation, 2016). Given the socio-economic situation of the households in the villages, a lack of infant and childcare facilities often prevents young mothers from seeking employment and business opportunities to support their families (Africa Foundation, 2016).

In spite of the fact that conservation and tourism efforts were initiated some years ago, the economic opportunities for rural communities living in the neighbourhood of these ecotourism ventures still remain a dream. In addition, the agricultural sector (dominated by pineapple farming), offers very little employment opportunities to make a difference (&Beyond, 2014).

The issue of local community governance has compromised some gains brought by democracy. As is typical in rural communities, traditional leaders work in collaboration with the political leadership to effect policies. The main challenge is the alignment of individual, community and political agendas so that they all contribute to social development and improvement of livelihoods.

The Big Five False Bay Municipality IDP (2007) summarises the state of local communities around Phinda. The population of the three communities (Makhasa, Mnqobokazi and Nibela) was estimated to be around 33000 people, with Makhasa having 12000. Children under 15 years constitute 45% of the population and the HIV/AIDS infection rate for the Umkhanyakude Region is estimated to be 30%. Adult illiteracy is estimated at 75% and unemployment is also sitting at 75% (Big Five False Bay Municipality IDP, 2007/2008).

With the backdrop of the socio-economic challenges associated with the local communities around &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve, how are the activities of &Beyond, the Africa Foundation together with the local communities contributing to sustainability of wildlife, tourism and community development? The Africa Foundation (2016) sees its role as being to:

- Facilitate the fulfilment of needs identified by rural communities;
- Communicate those needs to potential donors;
- Allocate and manage donor funds prudently;
- Work with community leaders and project champions to achieve the success of the project;
- Account and report to donors;
- Evaluate the short- and long-term impacts of its projects.

The projects facilitated by the Africa Foundation are based on two sets of values: they are grounded in community participation and are driven by local leadership, but is it enough to solely rely on community leadership? Partnership with local stakeholders is vital for the achievement of the goals of the projects and the Organisation plays a critical role in forging the relationship between communities, local government and &Beyond (Africa Foundation, 2016). The Foundation focuses on four key development areas, namely Healthcare, Education, Enterprise development and Environment and Conservation.

3.3.2 Africa Foundation-&Beyond-Community partnership and its impact on social development and benefit-sharing

Interactive community-led and consultative approach followed by the Africa Foundation contributes to positive development experienced by the local communities. The liaison with

established community leadership structures (both social and political) facilitates the identification of local champions – dedicated and motivated community members who are already taking leadership roles in activities of community interest (Africa Foundation, 2016). These chosen community leaders ensure that the projects are well managed and sustainable, because of their enthusiasm, motivation, knowledge and experience. The Africa Foundation has successfully facilitated several projects that directly or indirectly affect the local population in areas of health, education, skills development and small business development, amongst others.

3.3.2.1 *Health*

The construction of the Mduku Clinic was one of the pioneer and milestone projects of the Africa Foundation. Community consultations began in 1993, followed by the implementation of the project, which was completed in 1994 (Africa Foundation, 2016). According to Nurse Gumede (one of the community champions), before the construction of the clinic, the staff was administering treatments to patients under a tree in a group consultation, without privacy and confidentiality (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Local communities actively participated through the provision of local skills, labour and materials. Close collaboration with local government and traditional leadership ensured the sustainability and integration of Mduku Clinic into a State primary healthcare plan for Umkhanyakude Region (Africa Foundation, 2016). The Africa Foundation managed to construct a modern clinic successfully, consisting of seven rooms. Water from a drilled borehole and supplementary rain tanks has translated into improved hygiene and sanitation of the clinic. Staff accommodation was also renovated recently. Figure 3.3 below shows Mduku Clinic as it currently appears. The Government has stepped in and built an additional wing to accommodate and upgrade the Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Through the construction of two-cottage nurse quarters, the Foundation ensured that the clinic would operate 24 hours a week. According to the Big Five False Bay Municipality IDP (2007), 489 patients are receiving ARV's and 250 patients are on TB treatment at Mduku Clinic.



Figure 3.3: **Mduku Clinic** (A milestone project servicing more than 33000 people, unlike the mobile clinics with poor health services which used to exist)
[Photograph by J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]

3.3.2.2 Education

Makhasa community has six primary and two secondary schools. The Africa Foundation, through its schools infrastructural development endeavours, has constructed 33 classrooms in the eight schools within Mduku, thereby alleviating the challenge of over-crowding (&Beyond, 2014; Africa Foundation, 2016). Also, the Foundation has constructed a school called Nkomo Primary School at Mnqobokazi. The school has a community water project and a currently built biodigester toilet block, as shown in Figures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6. Besides making an impact on reducing the burden of the high teacher-pupil ratio, more classrooms ensure the creation of a conducive learning environment, which has the potential to improve performance. The Foundation has also contributed to the nutrition programme of the school by extending it to secondary schools (Africa Foundation, 2016).



Figure 3.4: Nkomo Primary School, Mnqobokazi (Improved access to education for the local children) [Photograph by J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]



Figure 3.5: Nkomo Primary School Community Water Project, Mnqobokazi (Clean and safe water: Good sanitation for health of the local community) [Photograph by J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]



Figure 3.6: Modern biodigester toilet block at Nkomo Primary School, Mnqobokazi
(Improved health for the children) [Photograph by J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]

Through the support of the Africa Foundation, Qhubekani Crèche was started by a volunteer, in response to the challenge faced by young mothers. At present, the crèche has three volunteers caring for 86 children. More funding is required for expansion and sourcing of more qualified and skilled staff (Africa Foundation, 2016).

As a way of motivating learners who come from diverse backgrounds, the Africa Foundation came up with a tertiary scholarship scheme. Learners who excel, against all odds, in their studies in Matric are offered a tertiary level bursary by the Africa Foundation. Being extremely competitive, measures were put in place that only deserving learners would be supported (&Beyond, 2016). Graduates are encouraged through the Buyisela Project (Giving back) to plough back into the community so that more disadvantaged children would be assisted. In spite of all the precautions taken, dissatisfaction came from some quarters of the community with regard to the process and criteria of selection (Africa Foundation, 2016).

3.3.2.3 Skills development

In 2005, through the collaboration between &Beyond Phinda, the Africa Foundation and the community, information technology and telecommunication services were made available to the three communities neighbouring Phinda, with the donation of a structure for cyber space by the Makhasa Tribal Authority. The establishment of the Mduku Digital Eco-Village

(DevCentre) has brought a facelift to this rural community (&Beyond, 2015; Africa Foundation, 2016). The DevCentre has become a knowledge and skills hub, where the community members can obtain services, computer skills, access technology, and research, as well as communicate with relatives. The satellite Skills and Health Centre provides health and lifestyle counselling (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Learners from neighbouring Mduku High School and school-leavers frequent the DevCentre for their academic research, application for tertiary education, IT, computer literacy, career guidance and counselling (Africa Foundation, 2016). The centre is helping to empower the community to eventually take leadership roles in a productive and healthy future generation. The computer literacy courses offered by the centre are subsidised by the Africa Foundation up to 50% and therefore motivate participants for more commitment in their personal development. While only 120 people have received formal computer literacy training, many others have had informal skills development through interaction with technology, which has since assisted them in finding job opportunities in the administration, retail and hospitality fields (&Beyond, 2015; Africa Foundation, 2016).

Due to the high rate of unemployment in the region, apathy is taking its toll among the youth, as many of them stay for a long time without any hope of employment. The biggest challenge of community leaders is to find ways of keeping the youth motivated and hopeful for the future (Africa Foundation, 2016). Mduku DevCentre, subject to funding, is planning to serve as an entrepreneurial skills development centre. It will impart skills to establish and run small businesses, such as a bakery, poultry farming, gardening, etc. A rigorous selection process would be undertaken in order to involve committed and motivated youth in the learnership programmes (Africa Foundation, 2016).

Mr. Zulu, the DevCentre Chairperson, observes that people do not only visit to use the services provided by the Centre, but they also come with business ideas and seek advice on proposals and plans. Approximately 50 people visit the centre daily and receive efficient services (Africa Foundation, 2016).

3.3.2.4 Business enterprises

Mbhedula Craft Market is located in Mduku community. Africa Foundation helped to unite crafters under one roof. Many women used to travel as far as Durban to sell their craft, leaving their families unattended and exposed. The craft market is a cooperative of 15 crafters, all representing different skills and talents (Africa Foundation, 2016). Tourists are spoiled with a

wide variety of artefacts. Families are now kept together, as crafters are more flexible with their time management. Through the community familiarisation tour programme, &Beyond Phinda afford the guests an opportunity to experience local community life, as they are taken into the communities by the guides. One of the stations is Mbhedula Craft Market (Figure 3.7). This means, clients come to the crafters instead of the latter looking for the buyers of their artefacts. The chances of their crafts being bought are high and it has the potential of good business opportunities, as the market is just off the R22 to Sodwana Bay. Both &Beyond and the Africa Foundation assist the crafters by also marketing the Mbhedula Craft Market (&Beyond, 2016).



Figure 3.7: Mbhedula Craft Market, Mduku (No need for local women to travel long distances to sell their products - convenient and economical) (Photograph by Muzirambi JM, 2016)

3.3.3 Impact of the Africa Foundation on local communities around &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve

Some of the Africa Foundation's greatest community achievements in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, include (Africa Foundation, 2016; &Beyond, 2016):

- *Nkomo Primary School:* 60 children used to gather in four makeshift classrooms on the grass beneath four large trees until the Africa Foundation constructed ten classrooms and other facilities;
- *Mduku Clinic:* A dedicated 24-hour healthcare facility for communities living around &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve serving 25 000 people;
- *Mbedhula Craft Market:* Empowers local artisans to showcase and sell their crafts in order to support their families;
- *Nkomo Ark:* A safe haven for over 500 children affected and/or orphaned by HIV/Aids;

- *Khulani Special School*: Only special-needs school within a 300km radius, catering to 167 children with disabilities ranging from paralysis to hearing and visual impairment;
- *Ikusasalethu Sewing Club*: 15 women sew school and church uniforms for the KwaJobe community, as well as making linen for nearby lodges;
- *Water Reticulation*: The Foundation connected 21 schools to the municipal main water pipeline, providing over 16 000 children with access to clean water;
- *Dongwelethu Poultry*: Eight community members rear chickens and sell eggs, chickens and chicken products to their community;
- *Conservation lessons*: Teachers and children from communities neighbouring the wildlife areas have enjoyed interpretive game drives with &Beyond rangers to learn about the importance of conservation, while conservation debates on topics relating to conservation have been held at community high schools;
- *Community Leaders Education Fund (CLEF) bursary programme*: Provides tertiary education bursaries to aspiring young learners.

3.4 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the historical background of &Beyond (the company which owns Phinda), its philosophy and journey towards sustainable wildlife conservation, tourism and social development. The relationship between &Beyond, the Africa Foundation and the local communities was also explored, in the context of &Beyond's pioneering model on stakeholder participation. The role of the Africa Foundation as a social development partner of &Beyond, its origin, activities and achievements have also been discussed. In view of the success stories of both &Beyond and the Africa Foundation, the current research questions whether the perceptions, views and attitudes of the local residents share a common understanding and support the thinking of the two organisations.

The following chapter focuses on the methodological approaches to collecting data on the community views about their participation in conservation and tourism management, social development and benefit-sharing.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better.”
(Albert Einstein)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter commences by locating the current research study within the conceptual framework of qualitative approaches. A detailed explanation and analysis of the research design as suggested by a variety of authors will be provided. Justification is offered for the choice of the research approaches using the aim and objectives of the current study. The literature makes a contribution, as well as the context in which the research study was conducted.

The research methodology will be elucidated and related to the goals and objectives of the study. To begin with, a general overview of qualitative methodological approaches provides the justification of the selection of the research design. The specific methods and their contextualisation with respect to this research project follow. Data collection methods and tools for this study will be identified, explained and justified. Issues pertaining to data analysis and the available options are dealt with. A general explanation of the data analysis methods is provided. The identification of appropriate data collection and analysis methods for the study and the description of their implementation follow. Attention will also be given to the issues of reliability and validity pertaining to the data.

4.2 QUALITATIVE PARADIGM

A paradigm is viewed as a worldview, a whole framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place. Research design of any study begins with careful selection of a topic and a paradigm. Contemporary qualitative research has been conducted within a various paradigms that influence conceptual and meta-theoretical concerns of legitimacy, control, data analysis, ontology and epistemology, among others (Muhammad *et al.*, 2011). Qualitative research by nature is an inter- and trans-disciplinary field. It spans across the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Qualitative research therefore becomes multi-paradigmatic in focus. The researchers are committed to the naturalistic approach and to the

interpretive understanding of human experiences. At the same time, it is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions.

Epistemologically, this study is qualitative and more specifically, a critical indigenous qualitative methodology. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), a merger of indigenous and critical methodologies is known as critical indigenous pedagogy (CIP), of which critical indigenous qualitative research is part. It understands that all inquiry is both political and moral. It uses methods critically for explicit social justice purposes. It values the transformative power of indigenous subjugated knowledge.

Bishop (2005) puts forward some of the criteria that CIP should meet. It must be ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonising and participatory; it must be committed to dialogue, community self-determination and cultural autonomy. It must meet the perceived needs of the people and must resist efforts to confine inquiry to a single paradigm or interpretative strategy. The researcher must consider how his/her research will benefit, as well as promotes self-determination for research participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

In conjunction with the research literature (Bryman & Burgess, 1993; Bishop, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), this research study is concerned with issues of representation, legitimacy, accountability and benefits. Critical indigenous inquiry begins with the concerns of local and indigenous people and is assessed in terms of the benefits it creates for them. The research must represent local and indigenous people honestly, without distortion or stereotype and should honour indigenous knowledge, customs and rituals. The researcher should be accountable to indigenous and local residents, who should have first access to research findings and have control over the distribution of knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Critical qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the engendered observer in the world. It represents a reflective discourse constantly in search of open-ended subversive, multi-voiced epistemology (Lather, 2007).

4.2.1 Research design

According to Muhammad *et al.* (2011), a qualitative approach is used to help us to understand how people feel and why they feel the way they do. Bryman and Burgess (1993) note that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. It seeks to answer questions, such as: Why do people behave the way they do? How are opinions and attitudes formed? How are people affected by the events that take place around themselves? In

addition, in this study the qualitative approach will also be used to determine the current developments and the needs of local communities (Simpson, 2009).

The reasoning process is used in the qualitative approach and includes perceptually putting pieces together, like a jig-saw puzzle, to make wholes. In line with Denzin and Lincoln (2000), a qualitative approach emphasises the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantities, amount, intensity or frequency. Berg (2007) defines qualitative research as the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things. Qualitative research is a generic term for investigative methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological or participant-observer research. It emphasises the importance of looking at variables in the natural setting in which they are found and the interaction between these variables is critical (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative research studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Creswell (1994) views qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding, based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry, which explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 1994).

All definitions above emphasise the naturalistic characteristic of qualitative research and the pursuit of anthropological answers that cannot be mathematically quantified. Also, the importance of the participant-observer interaction and an ultimate goal of building a complex, holistic picture from perceptually putting together simple pieces, cannot be over-emphasised. Hence, qualitative research, by its very nature, is inductive.

The research design is both determined and influenced by the aim and objectives of the study. The aim of this study is to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of local communities and other stakeholders of their participation in the following: The land rights issue of the restitution of land rights and agreements of land use between local communities and private operators and planning, decision-making and management in nature conservation, tourism, benefit-sharing and social development. It is difficult to quantify perceptions, attitudes and feelings of the stakeholders. In order to understand the communities, it is imperative that the researcher has to

familiarise with the participants' way of life, become accepted within the setting and to interact with them. Answers to these issues can only be obtained through a qualitative research approach and methodologies.

The research questions often stress how social experience is created and given meaning. The value-laden nature of such an inquiry emphasises the relationship between the researcher and the research participants or subjects; as well as the situational constraints that shape the inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research has the following characteristics, among others:

- It seeks to understand people's interpretation;
- Reality is dynamic as it changes with changes in people's perceptions;
- Reality is viewed as what people perceive it to be;
- It is value-bound, as values will have an impact and should be understood and taken into account when conducting and reporting research;
- It has a holistic focus that seeks a total or complete picture of the phenomena;
- It is subjective by nature as the data are perceptions of the people in the environment;
- Human people are the primary subject for the data collection instrument; and
- It is naturalistic, as investigations are conducted under natural conditions.

(Adapted from Muhammad *et al.*, 2011)

In accordance with Creswell's (1994) qualitative research typology, this project is a Case Study, carried out in Umkhanyakude District of KZN, including Phinda Game Reserve and the surrounding local communities, as detailed in Chapter 3. Cooper and Schindler (2006) explain that qualitative research aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of the situation. For this study, it is critical to get a deeper insight into the perceptions and attitudes of the local communities on their participation in nature conservation, tourism management, benefit-sharing and social development.

Case studies focus on one or a limited number of settings and are used to explore contemporary phenomena, especially where complex inter-related issues are involved. They can be exploratory or explanatory or descriptive or a combination of these (Pope & Mays, 1995). Yin (2009) adds that case studies are research designs used to investigate a current phenomenon in-depth within real world settings. Rowley (2002) and Yin (2009) contend that case studies are useful in providing answers to the how and why questions. The case study research design is appropriate for this study because it enables comprehensive responses to the research objectives and achievement of the study purpose. Community and stakeholder perceptions and attitudes on land restitution and land use issues and their participation in nature conservation, tourism

management, benefit-sharing and social development will be explored. The design allows participants more flexibility to expand on their responses to questionnaires and interviews in expressing their perceptions of their community participation (Keyes, 2010).

To follow is an analysis of the research methodology. The section starts with a general description of qualitative methodology conceptual framework, placing the current research into context. Data collection methods, analysis and synthesis strategies will be discussed. Issues of reliability and validity would also be addressed. Most importantly, the research methods critical to this research study will be explained, relating them to the themes of the project.

4.2.2 Research methodology

This study, being a critical qualitative inquiry, utilised the *qualitative methodology* for data collection, analysis and synthesis. The common element of all types of qualitative methods is their main goal of seeking a deeper understanding of, and a comprehensive insight into, the research object. Qualitative research methods lend themselves to analysis in many ways. For example, insights may be conceived and be more easily understood using qualitative approaches, some behavioural changes can be detected and processed easily (both at individual and community levels). Also, power structures and dynamics, social justices, group dynamics, exploitation and domination, including description of processes can be dealt with more efficiently using qualitative methods (Simpson, 2009).normative

Qualitative methodology involves nominal or ordinal data (Muhammad *et al.*, 2011). Nominal data assigns a label to categories, while ordinal data assigns a label as well as a rank. Depending on the nature of data collected, both types of data are considered in this investigation. According to Muhammad *et al.* (2011), the words and actions of respondents represent the data of qualitative inquiry and this requires methods that allow the researcher to capture language and behaviour. Therefore, qualitative research is a broad field of inquiry that uses unstructured data collection methods.

Creswell (2009) identifies the following characteristics common to several qualitative methods (among others):

- Multiple sources of data are preferred over a single source; this requires the researcher to review all data, make sense of it and organise it into categories or themes that cut across all sources.
- Qualitative methods are inductive by nature and researchers often build their patterns, categories and themes from the bottom upwards.

- The focus is on learning the meaning participants hold rather than the meaning brought in by the researcher.

In order to elicit the attitudes and perceptions of the local communities with regard to their relationship with Game Reserve operators, and their participation in wildlife and tourism management and social responsibilities, this study considered the following qualitative *data collection methods*, namely in-depth interviews (both individual and group), documentary analysis, direct personal observation; and adapted nominal group technique.

An extensive and comprehensive *literature review* was conducted to establish a sound theoretical grounding for the relevant concepts, such as community-based nature conservation and tourism management; sustainable development; land restitution and use; and methodological approaches. Due to the naturalistic condition of the qualitative approach, *intensive fieldwork* was conducted at Phinda and the surrounding communities, in order to elucidate the views, perceptions and attitudes with respect to the participation of local residents in decision-making and management of local resources. Interviews, documentary analysis and direct observation were the main methods for collecting the qualitative data. The adapted nominal group technique was used to support the other methods and improve the reliability of the data collected by consolidating, verifying and cross-checking the responses of the participants.

4.2.3 Sampling strategy and sample size

Purposive sampling was applied. The aim was to identify “information rich” participants who had certain characteristics, detailed knowledge or direct experience relevant to the phenomenon being studied, such as community participation in nature conservation, tourism management of Phinda Game Reserve and social development (Curry *et al.*, 2009). Purposeful or purposive sampling seeks to include the full spectrum of cases and reflect the diversity within a given population by including extreme or negative cases. Pope and Mays (1995) describe purposive or systematic sampling as a deliberate choice of respondents, participants or subjects or settings as opposed to statistical sampling, which is concerned with the representativeness of a sample in relation to the total population.

4.2.4 Data collection methods

4.2.4.1 In-depth interview

An in-depth interview is characterised by a one-to-one interaction between a researcher and a study participant. It is for the exploration of individual experiences and perceptions in great

detail (Patton, 2002; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006), which is the goal of this current research. Interviews are of particular importance to ensure honesty and impartiality or, in instances when privacy may alleviate fear of reprisal for negative views. They allow the respondents to direct the course of a discussion as much as possible.

The format of in-depth interviews allows the study participants to identify and describe concerns or concepts that may not have been expected or considered by the researcher (Curry *et al.*, 2009). To achieve this for the current study, semi-structured discussion guides were prepared and applied. Due to the highly interactive nature of interviews, the interviewer should therefore aim to be responsive to language, gestures and concepts used by the interviewee. This means that the interviewer must be skilled in passive listening and in the use of neutral, non-judgemental language in encouraging participants to speak in detail. However, interviewers must maintain control of data gathering through paying close attention to the purpose of the interview, asking appropriate questions to obtain relevant data and giving correct verbal and non-verbal feedback.

4.2.4.2 Documentary review

A wide variety of written materials may serve as valuable source of data. Documents include, among others, institutional documents (organisational records), personal and public documents (legislative testimony and legal documents) (Patton, 2002). In this research study, content analysis (Finfgeld-Connett, 2014) was one of the main methods used. It is a strategy that generates inferences through objective and systematic identification of core elements of a written communication (Curry *et al.*, 2009). Pope and Mays (1995) further describe content analysis as a systematic examination of text (or field notes) by identifying and grouping themes and coding, classifying and developing categories.

Constant comparison is an iterative method of content analysis, where each category is searched for in the entire data set and in all instances, is compared until no new categories can be identified. This means that this strategy involves the categorisation and clarification of data to make inferences about the antecedents of a communication, describe and make inferences about characteristics of a communication and make inferences about the effect of a communication (Curry *et al.*, 2009).

4.2.4.3 Questionnaire

Rowley (2014) describes questionnaires as documents that include a series of open and closed questions to which the respondent is invited to provide answers. Unlike interviews,

questionnaires are normally designed to be completed without any direct interaction with the researcher either in person or remotely. Research questionnaires may be distributed to the potential respondents by post, email, as an on-line questionnaire, or face-to-face by hand.

Quite a number of authors (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Denscombe, 2010) have provided some information about the questionnaire as one of the data collection methods. Some advice and guidelines on designing and the use of a questionnaire were provided. It is not easy to design and use questionnaires. A lot of effort goes into creating a good questionnaire that collects the data that would provide answers to the research questions and attracts a sufficient response rate. Rowley (2014) points out, just like all research methods, designing and using questionnaires is an iterative process in which initial guidance allows the researchers to get started, but experience and reflection sharpens and perfects their art. Further advice helps the researcher to develop their research skills, even further. Keyes (2010) adds that correctly written questionnaires are effective tools for obtaining qualitative data. Also, the use of open-ended questions allows for the expansion of a simple yes or no answer and the provision of more details from real-life experiences.

The questionnaire, as demonstrated by the results of piloting (Section 5.2.2) in the next chapter, would not provide the rich data on the perceptions of the local community on its participation in conservation and ecotourism.

4.2.4.4 Focus groups

Focus groups are guided discussions among a small group of people who share a common characteristic central to the topic of interest (Morgan, 1996; Krueger & Casey, 2000). Group interaction can serve as a catalyst to generate unique insights into understanding shared experiences and social norms. Focus groups are ideal when the goal of the study is to understand differences in perspectives between groups or categories of people or to uncover factors that influence opinions or behaviour (Curry *et al.*, 2009). They are also effective with a socially marginalised population and can be useful in facilitating comfort among members in discussing potentially a sensitive or intimate issue (Halcomb *et al.*, 2007).

Focus groups rely on interactions among group members to widen the range of responses, activate forgotten details of individual experiences or release inhibitions that otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information (Morgan, 1996). Members should be encouraged to describe and compare their experiences and opinions with other group members so as to uncover the degree of consensus or diversity on the topics (Curry *et al.*, 2009).

4.2.4.5 Observation

Observation involves the systematic, detailed observation of people and events to learn about behaviour and interactions in natural settings (Pope & Mays, 1995). Observational data collection designs are important when the situation of interest is hidden from the public or when those in the setting appear to have notably different views from those of the outsiders. It is achieved through extended period of interaction between researcher and study participants, in the latter's natural environment (Curry *et al.*, 2009). In this study, the researcher was a non-participant observer (the role of the observer was made clear to all in the setting) and direct observation was used to augment the other methods. Detailed observational field notes were systematically and unobtrusively collected by the researcher for further analysis (Pope & Mays, 1995).

4.3 ADAPTED NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE (ANGT)

4.3.1 Sampling

IziNdunas of Makhasa Tribal Authority were requested to identify and send at least four members of the community representing, as closely as possible, most of the categories of the community. Therefore purposive sampling, involving identification of participants who were likely to have some knowledge about the historical background and current relationship between &Beyond Phinda and the community, was done with the involvement of community leadership. It was also necessary to have a mix of key informants in all age categories, gender, social status, including general community members, Trust members and those employed by Phinda.

4.3.2 Data collection

The Adapted Nominal Group Technique (ANGT) was used to collect data. The strategy of the research was simply to provide the very basic directions and clarifications while avoiding, at all costs, to guide, lead or influence the thinking and attitudes of participants. The principles of Nominal Group Technique (NGT) formed the basis for ANGT. The NGT is a structured method for group brainstorming that encourages contributions from everyone (Carsen & Liburd, 2008; Albrecht, 2013). In this research, the first stages of NGT were used.

Table 4.1: Profile of participants according to age and gender

Age group (yr)	Gender			Age group percentage (%)
	Male	Female	Total	
21 – 30	8	3	11	52.4
31 – 40	4	3	7	33.3
41 – 50	1	1	2	9.5
51+	1	0	1	4.8
Total	14 (66.7%)	7 (33.3%)	21	100

The AGNT workshop was held at Makhasa Tribal Authority Community Hall. Twenty-one participants, mainly young people, as evidenced by the age groups on the attendance register, and both men and women participated. Table 4.1 shows the profile of the participants in terms of age group and gender. The register taken requested the following details: name, age, gender, village and iziNduna of the village. The distribution of participants according to their villages is illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Distribution of participants according to their villages (Makhasa Community)

Name of village and iziNduna (n=6)	Number of participants	Village percentage (%)
Nyathini (J.B. Mathenjwa)	5	23.8
Mgwanya 1 (T. Mlambo)	7	33.3
Mgwanya 2 (N. Mpungose)	3	14.3
Sikwakwane (B. Dlamini)	3	14.3
Mphakathini (I. Nxumalo)	2	9.5
Simane (J. Nsukwini Mlambo)	1	4.8

The purpose of the research was explained to participants who were allowed to ask questions for clarification. The participants were given an opportunity to personally introduce themselves. Informed consent was explained and administered. The participants divided themselves into four heterogeneous groups. Some participants, however, left during the workshop (and it was noted) and a few other new ones joined in. Each group was allocated a colour code (pink, blue, green and yellow). In this study four main objectives were dealt with, namely active community participation in (1) conservation, (2) tourism, (3) community development and (4) benefit-sharing. The opening statement was deliberately vague for each objective and to avoid leading the participants in any direction.



Figure 4.1: Participants brainstorming during ANGT session

The first stages of NGT were slightly adapted from the original: silent brainstorming; then each individual writing each idea on a piece of paper (word, phrase, sentence, in English or in Zulu). They could write as many ideas as they wished but on separate pieces of paper. In small groups, participants could then discuss/clarify/explain ideas (Figure 4.1).

As a group, they then moved to a bigger chart on the wall to organise ideas into different categories (Figure 4.2). Each group was given a turn. All participants then analysed each category, reshuffled the groups and made new ones, creating a consensus in terms of their understanding. Participants also agreed on the naming of each category. One or two members would take a lead but they certainly tried to attain group consensus. The same process was repeated for all the four objectives, the lead members took turns and ensured that everyone was afforded an opportunity to participate.



Figure 4.2: Participants discussing categories on bigger wall chart during ANGT session

Data was captured by the facilitators, in exactly the way it was presented by participants (with spelling mistakes) in Zulu, etc. The facilitators then sought for both clarification and translation of some of the confusing words, phrases or sentences written in Zulu from one of the employees at &Beyond Phinda. Initial stages of Atlas.ti software package were used for data analysis due to the advantages the tool offers in qualitative research.

4.4 RESEARCH THEMES

4.4.1 Investigation the perceptions of the local communities on restitution of land rights.

Documentary analysis: Relevant documents from the community leadership pertaining to the historical background of community ownership of the land, legal documents of the process of the restitution of land rights, the commission and government departmental documents, organisations that assisted in the restitution of land rights process, were analysed. Also, documents from the information-rich community members were requested. Agreements of local communities with &Beyond and therefore Phinda Private Game Reserve were reviewed to get a deeper insight into the participation of local communities in the land rights issues.

Interviews: Key information-rich stakeholders were identified and interviewed. Issues were addressed regarding the restitution of land rights process and ownership of land issues, and the nature of agreements made between the local communities and the private operators. Members

of the community leadership and other information-rich community members, government officials, NGOs, management and employees of Phinda Private Game Reserve and other important stakeholders were also interviewed.

Focus groups were also used to investigate general perceptions of the specific groups of the community.

4.4.2 Local community participation in decision-making and management of tourism and conservation

Documentary analysis: Phinda Game Reserve documents, which include an organogram, employment and management records. *Interviews* were conducted with selected members of the community, including leadership, management and employees of Phinda and the Africa Foundation. *Direct observation* of general relationships between the community and Phinda management, and the patterns of behaviour of stakeholders among one another were observed.

4.4.3 Benefit-sharing and social development issues

Documentary analysis: Relevant documents from the Africa Foundation, Phinda Game Reserve and community leadership were analysed and *interviews* conducted. The Africa Foundation officials, Phinda management, community leadership, government officials and selected information-rich community members were the main sources.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Data collection in the field can take a long time. However, the researcher could continually reflect, analyse and then adjust the study during this time. Pieces of information need to be carefully labelled and organised in such a way that facilitates the on-going analysis. The whole process of analysis involves making sense out of data recorded in text, images, audios and/or video formats. This research study followed, among others, Creswell's (2009) suggestions for data analysis.

- Organise and prepare the data for analysis;
- Read through all the data and gain a general sense of the information and reflect on the overall meaning;
- Conduct analysis based on the specific theoretic approach and method, which involves coding or organising related segments of data into categories;
- Generate a description of the setting or people and identify themes from the coding and then search for theme connections;
- Represent the data within a research report;

- Interpret the larger meaning of the data.

Nothing can replace the researcher's flexibility, creativity, insight and intuition (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

4.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Reliability is an examination of the stability or consistency of responses. Creswell (2009) suggests some reliability procedures which include the following: check transcript for obvious mistakes; make sure there is no drift in definitions of codes or applications of them during the coding process. When working with a team, the researcher coordinates and documents communication from meetings and cross-check codes with different researchers by comparing results that are independently derived.

Qualitative validity consists of determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant or the reader (Creswell, 2009). Procedurally, a researcher can check for accuracy of the findings by employing a combination of multiple validity strategies, namely triangulation, member-checking, rich thick description, clarify researcher bias and include negative or discrepant information, spend prolonged time in the field and make use of peer debriefing. For this, responses from interviews are analysed and cross-checked with other sources to check for clarity of questions, quality of responses, comprehension, relevance and important issues arising from data collection. This research applies a combination of triangulation, thick description and clarification of bias, negative and/or discrepant information through probing, and frequent visits to and stay in the study area to ensure both reliability and validity.

4.7 SUMMARY

This chapter provided both theoretical and empirical grounding of qualitative research approaches, as illustrated by literature. An analysis of research designs, with special focus on qualitative design followed. It also gave an insight into the location of the present study within the qualitative research framework. Methodological approaches were explained in detail. Data collection and analysis methods and tools were also identified, explained and justified. The chapter also dealt with the issues of reliability and validity in relation to the current study.

The next chapter starts with the description of the practical application of the data collecting methods through analysis of piloted methods and the identification of the appropriate ones ideal

for the present research study. Findings from semi-structured interviews (both individual and group), observations, documentary analyses and the ANGT are then presented.

Chapter 5

RESULTS, FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

“We should not forget that it will be just as important to our descendants to be prosperous in their time as it is to us to be prosperous in our time”
(Theodore Roosevelt)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a brief analysis of the results of the piloted data collection methods, as a way of determining the most appropriate for collecting relevant information. A description of the interview sample is provided to place the reader in the actual context in which the data was collected. The findings from interviews are presented in three different categories. The first one, which is the main focus of this study, concerns the perceptions of the community. The results of interviews with the community members are combined with those of the general employees of Phinda. The next set of findings are from the interviews with the management of Phinda and the interviews with the management of the Africa Foundation follows. The chapter concludes with the findings of the adapted nominal group technique, which was applied to compare and triangulate findings from the other data collection methods.

5.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY AREA AND PROCESS

Makhasa, Mnqobokazi and Nibela belong to the Big Five False Bay Municipality (name given due to the presence of the Big Five mammals in the game reserves located in the area). Phinda is one of the game reserves and shares a fence with Makhasa and Mnqobokazi communities, whilst Nibela is just a stone-throw away. Activities of Phinda directly impact on these communities and the activities of the community affect the wildlife and ecotourism operator (Snyman, 2014). Due to this close proximity, the cultural, socio-economic and political relationships need to be managed appropriately to build a common understanding about the roles of each stakeholder in mutually beneficial interaction. This results in the improvement of communication and ensures the inculcation of trust among all parties involved. The local communities are a very important and critical stakeholder as they are capable of making or breaking conservation and tourism management efforts. The views, perceptions and attitudes of the local residents matter and need to be considered seriously (Gillingham & Lee, 1999).

5.2.1 Permission to conduct research

Permission to conduct research in the study area (both Phinda and the local communities) was sought from and granted by both &Beyond and the relevant Tribal Authorities (refer to Appendix B and C). As the focus of this research was to elucidate perceptions through the actual voice of the common local community members on their participation in conservation, tourism, social development and benefit-sharing, data collecting methods being the questionnaire and interviews were piloted.

5.2.2 Piloting questionnaire

Five participants from Phinda, five from Makhasa and three from Mnqobokazi were engaged in the piloting for this study. The questionnaire was explained and they were given an opportunity to seek clarification. Later, the participants responded to the questionnaire questions, which were then analysed. In spite of the explanation of the purpose of the research, translation into isiZulu and clarification of their concerns, the five participants who were employed by Phinda answered the questionnaire with great apprehension. They did not respond freely to the questions because (according to some of them) they thought that everything they said would be taken to their employer and their jobs would be jeopardised. The responses on questions pertaining to Phinda were biased because the employees tried to reason as to what their employer would expect them to say. Hence, the objectivity and truthfulness was lost, and this would have great impact on the reliability of the findings.

For both the Phinda employees and the community members (Makhasa and Mnqobokazi) involved in the piloting, the lack of comprehension was the biggest challenge. In spite of having translated the questionnaire into isiZulu, eight of the thirteen participants struggled at different levels to respond to the questions. It was also apparent that some respondents had difficulty with writing skills and felt embarrassed by not being able to express themselves well. For community members, politics and economic reasons also made them hesitate to respond to the questionnaire objectively. The issues addressed by this research start off from the era of land dispossession, forced removals, then land restitution up to the current relationship between the local communities and Phinda. Members of the community feared that their contributions would be handed over to their leadership (some of them confessed later that they were afraid to be punished for any negative comments they might have made). From an economic perspective, participants expressed concern that they might compromise the benefit flow from Phinda and the Africa Foundation they were enjoying, by participating in the project and writing comments about their relationship, some of which might be negative.

Also, questionnaires proved to be too long (for the concentration span of participants) and required a lot of time and effort to complete. Some responses were vague and confusing but there was no opportunity to seek clarification. The goals of this study would therefore not be achieved because it would be difficult to get the true perceptions, views and attitudes of the community.

There was a need to win the confidence and trust of the community. More time was allocated for familiarisation with different aspects of the culture of the local communities, to become visible and to be able to interact informally through conversations and meetings. Fortunately, community leaders allowed me to attend their meetings with the chiefs and village meetings organised by iziNdunas. The informal interactions allowed the researcher to clarify the purpose of the research and its contributions to all the stakeholders in terms of its findings. Participants were assured of both confidentiality and anonymity and that the researcher is bound by the ethical guidelines and consent of UNISA (**Ref. No.: 2013/CAES/066**). Mingling with the local residents made it easier for them to open-up later during the formal interviews.

5.2.3 Piloting semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview (Appendix E for the interview guide) was tested with both community members and employees of Phinda. The piloting involved eight of the thirteen participants. The results proved to yield much more and richer data than the questionnaire. As a result, interviews were adopted as the main data collection method. Preparations in the form of appointments and other logistic issues were done for individual participants. Although the researcher had already been formally introduced to the Tribal Authorities and Phinda management with the help of the Africa foundation staff, the researcher was introduced again to the participants and assured them that his introduction (Appendix A) and permission letters (Appendices B and C) were at their disposal. The interviews could now be conducted.

Group interviews were both voluntary and by request. Community members were asked to volunteer to participate in the interviews. However, with the help of community leaders, some key members were requested to be part of the interviews. The environment of the interviews was created such that it appeared as if it was a continuation of the village meetings. For the Phinda employees, researcher took advantage of the offer he received to be able to buy lunch at the Canteen. Therefore, group interviews were organised during the lunch hour. After the introductory remarks, explaining the purpose of the interviews and the importance of contributions from participants, the community facilitators then handed over to the researcher.

Participants were encouraged to be open and free to express themselves during the process. Every interviewee was given ample time and attention to articulate their views and seek clarification if necessary.

5.2.4 Participants in study

A total of 44 individuals of three group interviews were conducted during three different data collection periods so as to ensure objectivity and reliability of the data collected. For the group interviews, Nyathini village of the Makhasa community was represented by 26 participants. Mnqobokazi had 19 people coming from different villages. The group of Phinda employees consisted of 12 participants. All in all, for both individual and group interviews, a total of 100 people participated.

The participants from the community were diverse and included all of the following variables: gender, age, occupation, Trust, non-Trust, etc. They included iziNdunas, councillors, Trust members, non-Trust members, current and former Trust leaders, young, middle-aged and old, males and females, those directly connected to Phinda (employed or relatives employed) and other community members. The composition of participants employed by Phinda included general workers (maintenance, housekeeping, waiting, and trackers), chefs, administration assistants, supervisors and management. The 42 participants of *Makhasa* included 16 individual interviewees and 26 group interviewees consisting of 19 women and 23 men. *Mnqobokazi* had 10 individual interviewees and 19 group interviewees of which there were 13 females and 16 males. Twenty-two (22) employees from lower levels and three members from management of *Phinda* participated in the interviews, 16 of whom were males and 10 females. Fourteen of the 25 were interviewed individually. Three members (two males and one female) of the management of the Africa Foundation of which one was from KZN region and two from Head-Office, were interviewed.

Table 5.1: Composition of participants

Age Group (yrs)	Phinda		Makhasa		Mnqobokazi		Africa Foundation		Total Gender		Grand total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Up to 25	2	1	5	6	3	4	0	0	10	11	21
26 – 35	7	6	9	7	7	4	0	0	23	17	40
36 – 45	3	2	4	4	5	3	2	0	14	9	23
46 – 55	3	1	3	1	1	1	0	1	7	4	11
56+	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	5
Total %	16	10	23	19	16	13	2	1	57	43	100
	62%	38%	55%	45%	55%	45%	67%	33%	57%	43%	

M= Male F= Female

Table 5.1 shows the composition of the participants interviewed. The majority of participants (61%) belong to the age group of below 36 years. This means that the most active members of the local communities are young and energetic men and women. Their perceptions and attitudes with respect to their participation in the activities of Phinda should be considered seriously. Due to the patriarchal nature of the Zulu culture, the number of women is slightly lower than that of the men. Some women shied off from participation in the group interviews.

The generation that was actively involved in and clearly understand the issues relating to the loss of land, restitution of land rights and negotiations with Phinda, is phasing out due to age and death. The number and percentage of participants who are 56 and above were very few (5%). It can also be deduced from the table that most of the views volunteered in the interviews came from participants of the ages of not more than 45 years (84%).

Although consent to conduct the research had already been sought and granted. I requested for permission to interview the individuals and the iziNdunas for the group interviews. Both levels consented to the interviews (Appendix D for the informed consent form). Permission to record the proceedings of the interviews manually and electronically was requested by the researcher and granted by the interviewees. They gave reasons relating to culture and religion but a few of them opened up and confessed that they were afraid of victimisation from both political and traditional leadership. I reminded the participants assuredly about the clause of anonymity and confidentiality we had discussed before.

The language barrier was a potential obstacle in achieving the purpose of the research because quite a large number of community members in the research location had challenges in understanding and expressing themselves in English. However, this challenge was addressed so that the findings of study would not be compromised. Interview questions were interpreted into Zulu. The interviewees were requested to respond in any of the two languages (English or Zulu) or even any other besides these. The interviews were then conducted. The researcher then sought the services of a professional interpreter to translate isiZulu into English and transcribe all the information recorded both electronically and manually, for each of the interviews.

5.3 INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PHINDA EMPLOYEES

The interview guide is structured in such a way that a set of guiding questions would address one of the four objectives of the study (Appendix E). However, interviewees were not restricted to respond in any particular way and were afforded a great deal of autonomy to articulate their

views. The first section of the interview guide dealt with the history, processes and agreements of the restitution of the land rights. The perceptions of the local communities on their expectations, participation and the outcome of the restitution of land rights processes were sought. The second part of the interview was concerned with the perceptions and views of the local residents of their participation in decision-making and management of wildlife conservation and tourism. The last part of the interview focused on the perceptions of the local communities on their participation in social development and benefit-sharing.

Being semi-structured interviews, the questions asked were only meant to break the ice and introduce the topic of discussion. Interviewees were allowed to express themselves as much as possible and in whatever way they chose to communicate. Where necessary, follow-up questions, or questions seeking clarifications would be asked. The researcher captured the main ideas on paper, as they were presented by the interviewees, audio-recordings of all the proceedings were also made. The electronically recorded data was then translated and transcribed, with as much detail as possible to avoid loss of important information.

In an attempt to give form and making sense of the data, the transcribed notes were arranged, grouped and written in a format which was easier to follow and read, eliminating all the extra verbal material captured by the audio-recorder. It is important to note that gestures which expressed the emotional and attitudinal aspects of the participants were also recorded for analysis purposes.

Based on the grounded theory approach, rich data was presented in order to avoid loss of important linkages. The responses would be presented according to the main ideas which the questions represented. There is a possibility of some responses overlapping due to the nature of the interviews. For example, the interviewees gave answers to questions which address a totally different objective when responding to another one.

5.3.1 Knowledge and understanding of the restitution of land rights, as well as community expectations

There was a divide with respect to the participants' knowledge of the land restitution process. The older participants seemed to have some knowledge about the historical background of the area, which included the forced removals, denial of access to their ancestral land and the establishment of &Beyond Phinda Private Game Reserve. Fifteen of the seventeen participants who had knowledge of the historical past, were more than forty years of age. Still, very few of these older participants had a complete understanding of the restitution of land rights process.

The younger generations who participated in this study were indifferent and demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the whole process of land restitution and agreements with Phinda. The responses were therefore a mixed bag which cut across all the four themes of the thesis.

There was great appreciation of the fact that the land was brought back to the rightful owners, through the restitution of land rights process and negotiations with Phinda. The participants acknowledged the existence of Phinda Private Game Reserve. The local community conceded that since they did not have skills and knowledge to run both the conservation and tourism businesses, they saw it appropriate not to interfere with the activities. There was a strong feeling among the older generation that Phinda should continue to run conservation and tourism ventures, as long as they (the community) continue to get their benefits according to the agreement. Of the 39% of the participants above 36 years, 23 expressed this view.

Some interviewees (11%) said that, initially they had thought of physically repossessing their ancestral land but were later advised to lease it out in order to preserve nature and also to allow the tourism business to continue. The participants believed justice was done because they had their land back and had also agreed to let Phinda rent it and run the tourism business. The participants who were actively involved in the restitution process expressed that they had a cordial relationship with Phinda during the negotiations and had many consultations during the process. One interviewee said that whilst he was not part of the negotiations, he received feedback from the community leaders involved.

Whilst negotiations were taking place, I was not part of it but I got feedback- What I liked was that both parties agreed and they met halfway.... By renting out the land instead of getting a lump-sum that can only last for two years or so.

Another participant added that at least by leasing out the land, there would be a constant flow of income, which the Trust might use to educate children and do other social development projects. The participants indicated that the Government (through people from Pietermaritzburg) held many meetings with the community to explain how the land would be given back to the affected community members. The contributions of the late Chief Gumede (Jabu) and the government official, Silawu in explaining and facilitating the restitution of land rights process was hailed by some interviewees. Indeed, a responsible leader, trusted by all sides, makes things happen. The community chose a committee called iziThenjwa (“trusted ones”) to represent the people in the negotiations and update them on all developments.

In general, the participants agreed that the Government did not prepare them properly for the land restitution negotiations, through education and training, to familiarise them with the language, the laws and conditions associated with the process.

The Government could have sent people (officials) who could at least teach us that since the land is given back, we should do this or that.

There was appreciation that Phinda made an effort to train and educate the community leaders about the restitution process. For the other participants, all responsibilities of the negotiations and the current relationships with Phinda were placed on the Committee. They felt that if the Committee had problems, it would come back to the community. The interviewees said that they ceded the whole business (conservation and tourism) to Phinda.

We say 'Yes', the community was prepared because those who were representing us were trained so that they can represent the community. In the long run, we benefitted from the Trustees representing the community.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants felt strongly that the education and training on the negotiation process, regarding restitution of land rights, was a community issue and the whole community was entitled to the knowledge and skills, not only the Trustee representatives. They argued that the feedback of meetings and workshops were and are still inconsistent. According to some interviewees, part of the community feels excluded from the affairs of and relationship with Phinda.

I am free; knowing the land at Phinda is mine. However, their laws in Phinda, you will find that they ostracise (discriminate against, probably?) people who are not in the committees but are members of the community, you see what I am saying?"

Yes, justice was done, we have seen what was said and the land is still there but it doesn't belong to us",

We fought for the land but we are getting little from what they are making.

We are getting very little whilst Phinda is benefitting from our land.

The local community had expectations from the land restitution and Phinda agreements. These include the following: active participation in conservation of wildlife, improved relationship with Phinda, improvement of community infrastructure and social development, contribution to the education of their children, financial benefits, employment, business opportunities and participation in management and decision-making on issues that affect them.

The next section focuses on each of the four themes to establish perceptions of the community on the extent to which their aspirations and expectations have been met since the restitution of land rights agreement. The current relationship of the local community and &Beyond Phinda

would be explored as viewed by the participants. A wide range of views came from the interviewees, ranging from positive, indifferent to negative perceptions.

5.3.2 The perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in conservation

Community members who were interviewed felt that, as a result of the land restitution and Phinda agreements, there is an opportunity for both stakeholders to work together as partners and neighbours in the conservation of nature. Participants pointed out that Phinda should take youth from the community and train them in wildlife management. To this effect, forty-three interviewees felt that education and training in wildlife management should be offered to any member of the community and not only to the committee members and community leaders. The following quotes, illustrates these sentiments.

As a community, we need such training because we also live in the proximity of the game reserve. Our lives and that of our livestock may also be in danger from wild animals. The lions will attack both Trust members, as well as other community members, attacking their goats, cattle and crops.

I would like Phinda to be as close to the community as possible and bring them inside the game reserve. They [Phinda] should show and educate the people [the community] about wildlife management, including the dangers they pose to humans. As a result, the community may be well informed as to what to do when they come across such violent and dangerous animals, even outside Phinda.

Some participants said that the community was not taught about the role they were expected to play in this new dispensation of being partners and owners of the land.

Now, we cannot say the community is welcome because as we are sitting here, there is no one amongst us who understands their responsibilities and privileges inside Phinda. You see? That is why I am saying the land is theirs. You should feel welcome but at the end I am hoping Phinda will notice and address this.

One interviewee added that while he was still a committee member, he suggested that Phinda should engage knowledgeable members, even from the community to collaborate with its staff, so as to educate and train the community about wildlife conservation and foster a sense of ownership of the activities in the game reserve. It was also noted that some community members had both knowledge and experience in nature conservation and only needed support from Phinda to render their services, if asked to do so. Participants felt that Phinda did not put enough effort into integrating the locals in the management of wildlife and tourism, in spite of the fact that quite a number of children had completed tertiary education in relevant areas, through the support of the company and the Africa Foundation.

Phinda has not trained any person to manage the game reserve as we expected, even though it has assisted in the education of our children at tertiary level.

Asked whether they felt as partners or co-owners of the conservation activities at Phinda, the participants mentioned that whilst they knew that they had the land, they were not *educated on what to do with animals*. They argued that some members of the community ended up poaching, because of lack of knowledge and sense of ownership. Certainly, this is disconcerting, for today, one rhino is killed every seven hours (<http://flying4rhino.com>). Their numbers are quickly dwindling and other animals are increasingly being threatened as well. The importance of African wildlife to local communities has not been adequately addressed. The community was not well versed about the laws that govern conservation of wildlife. The participants called for Phinda to facilitate community education on nature conservation and training in relevant skills. They claimed that the community was not involved in decision-making processes. They just saw things happening. According to the interviewees, the local communities are not represented on the Board and hence their interests, aspirations and concerns are not considered.

Other participants, however, felt that they were owners of the land and had decided not to interfere with conservation and tourism ventures at Phinda, as long as they were receiving their rentals and some other benefits. The interviewees suggested that there was an amicable relationship between Phinda and the community. The issues of employment opportunities, equity and progression in wildlife management were raised by most of the interviewees.

5.3.3 The perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in tourism management

One of the expectations of the local community, after the signing of the agreement with Phinda, was that the company would equip their youth with skills, take them to universities and absorb them into tourism management. However, participants observed that currently, there are very few, if any, people from Makhasa, Mnqobokazi or even Nibela who are in management or decision-making positions, or who are being trained for such portfolios at Phinda. The tourism sector, including the lodges, has employed the largest number of local residents. Whilst there is great appreciation for the job opportunities created by Phinda, the participants indicated that the majority of the jobs available for the local people were at the lowest levels, including waiters, maintenance workers, housekeepers and trackers. They said that some of the jobs were not permanent. One participant stated that he had been working for Phinda for over 20 years. He was initially employed in the maintenance section, where he used to fix fences. From there, he

was engaged in the anti-poaching exercise and now he is working as a tracker. Another participant added that he has been waiting for over 15 years and he is still in the same job.

Some interviewees alleged that people from outside the area, most of them who were whites, were being given preference and occupied important decision-making, management positions:

Many youngsters from Makhassa, Mnqobokazi and Nibela wish to be future leaders of Phinda. Some have even studied tourism and other relevant courses, but they are not being given a chance. Leaders at Phinda are whites only.

The participants interviewed suggested that the community was not involved in the actual management and decision-making processes of tourism at Phinda.

The findings of the practical observations of the researcher concur with the views of the grassroots community participants. During two separate visits at Forest Lodge, the researcher observed guests leaving for game drives, in the morning and late afternoon. From the nine vehicles which left the lodge on the first day, all game rangers were whites. On the second visit, there were six white rangers and one black ranger. The trend was the same at Mountain Lodge, in the two different days observed, eight of the eleven game drive outings observed, had white game rangers and only three with black rangers.

Whether or not it is intended, or for whatever other reasons, placing a disproportionate number of whites in managerial roles accentuates white privilege and fuels a subtle form of racism, especially when advancement of indigenous people from local communities is considered inconsequential.

5.3.4 The perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in social development

Phinda as a business venture came as a lifeline to the otherwise impoverished area of KZN. The participants were hopeful that since there was an official agreement that ushered a paradigm shift in terms of relationships, Phinda was going to contribute more to the development of the community. The interviewees stated that the community was expecting to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of projects that directly affected their livelihoods. As indicated in Chapter 3, as far as the community is concerned, there is no difference between Phinda, &Beyond and the Africa Foundation. The relationship with and activities of the three are all under the umbrella of Phinda. The community expected infrastructural development, in terms of the construction of the much needed social amenities, which included health centre, schools, water, communication and business enterprises. Some community members

interviewed pointed out that they were not happy with the level of community participation in planning, decision-making and management of community development projects. On the other hand, other participants expressed satisfaction about their relationship with Phinda: *We work well with Phinda and in general, Phinda is very cooperative.*

There is general appreciation of the strides that Phinda (in partnership with the Africa Foundation) has made in community development. Almost all participants in one way or another referred to the achievements, which were made as a result of the partnership between Phinda and the local communities. Of significance, are the successes scored in the areas of health and education, which also include the bursary support scheme.

Phinda (through Africa Foundation) brought about infrastructural development, e.g. our clinic at Mduku, classroom blocks and school renovations in most schools in our area.

Participants also highlighted the achievements made in small business development. Previously, some women used to leave their families to far-away places, such as Durban to sell their crafts. Phinda (Africa Foundation) constructed a curio shop in their backyard. Guests from Phinda and other tourists passing through R22 Road to Sodwana Bay visit the craft shop. Families are more stable because parents are able to work from home. Interviewees also mentioned other social development projects, including water reticulation and harvesting, market gardening, poultry and brick-making.

Whilst the community was grateful for the development efforts, most of the participants felt that the participation in decision-making and management of these projects was minimal. Some interviewees viewed the Phinda-Community relationship as that of donor and beneficiary or recipient. According to participants, the community, through its leadership, seem to be powerless to influence, let alone determine the course of development as perceived by residents. For example:

“We are not involved in decision-making processes”,

“We just see things happening”,

“Phinda does not respond to our priorities”.

Participants expressed concerns on the manner in which the bursary scheme operates. They questioned the selection criteria and the process itself. Some of the interviewees alleged the process was not transparent and instead suggested a quota system for the villages. There was a strong feeling that children from Mduku were more advantaged than others, especially because they were from better resourced schools and had more access to information than others.

Participants advocated for transparency and good governance with regard to community projects. Some interviewees even challenged the Africa Foundation to assist and facilitate training and education for good local community governance.

There is general agreement among participants that the management of the projects was inconsistent with their expectations. Firstly, they argued that, as a community, they did not have the final say in the prioritisation of projects that were supposed to address their challenges. Interviewees added that the community should take ownership of the projects which were intended to assist them. Concerns were also raised over projects which come and go as indicated by one interviewee:

“I would be happy if Phinda can assist us as they have promised, to create such educational projects that are sustainable, instead of people coming in and disappear, without any continuity in the activities they do.”

5.3.5 The perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in benefit-sharing

During the land rights restitution negotiations, the community had expectations. According to the participants, some members of the community were expecting their land to be physically returned to them so that they might go on with their subsistent agricultural activities.

“We expected white people to return our land back but it was not the case. They came up with an idea of renting the land for their business [Phinda] and they offered to pay us monthly.

Participants indicated that the community was expecting to receive something as compensation for their land so that they should benefit from the land. Some interviewees stated that they were happy because everything happened as they expected.

“At least by renting out the land, there would be a constant flow of income which the Trust can use to educate children and do others social development jobs”.

Participation of local community in benefit-sharing involves the management and decision-making processes with respect to the inventory of such benefits, who should receive what, how, when and why. Interviewees distanced themselves from involvement in decision-making processes. They categorically stated that they were not involved and they just see things happening. However, other participants, who were closer to either Trust leadership or traditional and Government or to Phinda and the Africa Foundation, suggested that there was some level of consultation. As to what extent the community was involved, is subject to more investigation and discourse. Interviewees concurred that, as a result of the signing of an agreement with Phinda, there were some financial benefits which were both directed to individual households of beneficiaries and also to the community at large. Some participants,

however, expressed dissatisfaction about benefit-sharing processes. They felt that there were some community members who were benefitting at the expense of others.

Some are benefitting but others are not.

My answer is that, because we live in the community and there are things that could be done so that all members of the public will also benefit, not just the beneficiaries. Also, that the kids get financial support when they pass interviews, to go to school, from the money that comes from the rentals, according to the agreement. The money should not only cater for the beneficiaries but for any deserving member of the community.

There are some people who receive benefits but I don't.

Another group of participants believe that they are getting a raw deal with Phinda.

We fought for the land but we are getting very little from what they are making.

We are getting very little whilst Phinda is benefitting from our land.

Yet others are of the view that they were betrayed by the government. They alleged that the government (through its representatives) was enticing them with promises during the negotiations, which it did not fulfil after the agreements. For sure, the government did little to foster trust among the people of the local community.

The government did not do anything in all its promises. The money it promised never materialised. Instead, they promised to develop the area by building more schools, hospitals, etc., but they are no longer visible.

The Minister said he would bring money into our pockets but up to now, there is no money.

The Government doesn't care about us. It doesn't even come to check if Phinda is doing what it promised. So Phinda can do whatever it wants with us.

There is great appreciation (as expressed by participants) for the non-financial benefits that have emerged from the relationship with Phinda. For example, in education, more children have an opportunity to go to school thanks to the activities of Phinda and the Africa Foundation. Some interviewees expressed their gratitude towards the Organisation because children, siblings and relatives are now able to acquire tertiary education through the bursary scheme. Two elderly participants gave anecdotes of their struggles to get themselves and their families treated when they had fallen ill, prior to the construction of Mduku Clinic, just to demonstrate how the community is benefitting from the Healthcare projects. Interviewees explained that the building of the craft market shop at Mduku brought both a facelift to the area and a guaranteed means of livelihood for many households.

Employment was the most salient benefit which came out as two viewpoints, namely one of appreciation and the other one of expectation. Of the 100 participants in this research, 69 of

them mentioned employment in one way or another. One of the community expectations of the agreements with Phinda was that the company would provide job opportunities for the young local residents. *We expected Phinda to open job opportunities for our children.* Twenty-nine (29) of the 69 participants were appreciating that they or their family members have been employed either by the lodge section or the game reserve. The interviewees affirmed that as breadwinners, those employed by Phinda were able to take care of their families and improve their livelihoods:

We are thankful to Phinda for offering jobs to our children.

Without Phinda, I would not be able to send my children to school.

Phinda opened job opportunities for us people of Makhasa and Mnqobokazi.

Our community is benefitting because Phinda gives us jobs in the lodges.

Whilst the other group of participants (40 out of 69), appreciated the role Phinda has played in providing employment, they raised concerns on the number and nature of jobs, as well as the manner in which the opportunities where handled. The younger participants argued that Phinda was not providing enough openings, because they were loitering in the streets unemployed. They were urging Phinda to create more employment opportunities for the local youth. The interviewees claimed that most of the local residents were employed at the lowest job levels at Phinda (maintenance of fences, waitering, housekeeping or tracking).

Participants observed that whilst they can start in any position, promotion was extremely slow. For example, one male participant indicated that he has been employed for over 20 years. He started off in maintenance, fixing fences, then, worked as an anti-poacher and now he is a tracker. Some interviewees were not happy because very few (if any) of the local community members employed at Phinda are in the middle or top management levels. The participants argued that people from outside are coming to occupy most influential positions at Phinda, whilst they have children who have been sponsored for their tertiary education by the bursary scheme of the Africa Foundation. They felt that Phinda was not doing enough to harness the potential of the local children and train them into management positions.

There is no one or if any, very few people from our communities who are in management positions or who are currently being trained for these.

Interviewees acknowledged that Phinda was assisting members of the community to start up small scale business enterprises. A number of households are being sustained through business at the curio shops where crafters sell their artefacts to tourists. One participant was able to explain the process from the inception of the business idea through to the final project approval,

which is done by the Africa Foundation. He said that the Africa Foundation trains groups of people on how to write a project proposal and assist them to do it. Those people with projects that are of community interest, would be trained on how to run a business before the Africa Foundation finds a sponsor for their project. According to the participants, there are several projects that include market gardening, where the members are encouraged to tailor-make their production to the needs of the lodge sector. Others are in chicken farming, brick-moulding and bakery businesses.

However, some interviewees felt that the whole process of business beneficiaries was not transparent, as they have been unsuccessful with their proposals several times and have failed to get support from the Africa Foundation. The participants argued that for some members of the community, it was very easy to get financial support for their businesses from the Africa Foundation, yet for others, it was an uphill struggle, even to get approval of their projects. This group of participants was recommending that 'Phinda' should review both its criteria and processes, so that the organisation might be able to cater for the interests of all the members of the community and not only a selected few.

The interview schedule applied to the members of the community was also used for the Management of both Phinda and the Africa Foundation. This was done in order to improve the authenticity of the findings and reliability of the investigation as a whole. Views of all stakeholders would be compared and analysed during discussion.

5.4 INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT AT PHINDA

Members of the management for both &Beyond Phinda and the Africa Foundation who participated in this research ranged from six years to more than twenty years of experience with these organisations. This means that they had varied perspectives on community participation at Phinda. On the restitution of land rights issues, one of the managers admitted that it was the first time for everyone to experience the process. No one knew or had experience about the land claims before. With respect to the level of preparedness of the community for the negotiations, one of the participants pointed out that the community was not prepared for the process, because they did not receive adequate education and training to fully understand the process, requirements and legalities of the restitution of land rights. The other interviewee was not sure about community preparedness, but assumed that the community was prepared because together with Phinda, they were breaking new ground.

Looking back, people might see areas of improvement but success has been made in this respect because the stakeholders successfully and amicably concluded the negotiation processes.

Despite these challenges, the Government-Community-Phinda partnership was established. The interviewees stated that Phinda assisted to constitute the community committees as required by law and came up with programmes to train the community leaders. The members of Management interviewed, also concurred with the community on the vital role played by iNkosi Gumede and one parliamentarian at the time of the negotiations. The participants were convinced that there was, and still is, a good understanding between the parties involved. One manager concluded that with regard to land restoration and business agreements, Phinda is a success story when compared to other places who have had similar experiences.

On the question, whether &Beyond Phinda is meeting community expectations or not, one manager responded ‘Yes’ and ‘No’. He said ‘Yes’ because the lodges were doing well thanks to many guests they were receiving and this allowed the company to be able to fulfil its community obligations. The negative response was because the manager felt that they could be doing much more than they were doing regarding their community responsibilities. For example, they could be more involved in community initiatives and hence improve their relationship and communication with the local residents. The participant explained that most of the workers in the northern region of Phinda’s lodge section come from Makhasa (some from Mnqobokazi and Nibela) and most of the activities involving guests are also done by these communities. It was also mentioned that the Chairperson of the Trust, at the time of the research, was employed by Phinda and was one of the iziNdunas of Makhasa. The interviewee mentioned an example of some of the initiatives of the lodge section.

Phinda northern region lodge section organises and offers transport to local residents from Mduku Gate through the game reserve to Mkombe Gate (near Bayete Camp), twice a day, i.e. morning and evening.

The participants were requested to suggest any changes they felt would improve the current situation and their interaction with the community. It was suggested that more staff from local communities should be appointed to experience what Phinda has achieved. Currently, lodges are not directly involved in community investment. There is a need to improve lodge section participation so that it can contribute meaningfully and play an active role in community development.

Considering the views on local community participation in decision-making and management processes as equal partners on issues that affect them, the participant managers conceded that Phinda had much more control over the communities. However,

With time, the community has since realised that it is a business and they have a say in the running of the game reserve, e.g. in rhino poaching issues where Phinda has to work directly with communities.

In 2013, workers nearly had a strike but the community intervened and prevented it.

To instil a sense of ownership in the local community, the interviewees suggested that there should be preparation of youth from the community for more meaningful involvement and deeper understanding of the ethos and activities of Phinda. They added that there was room for improvement in the management of the bursary scheme of the Africa Foundation. The participants advocated for an improvement of community training programmes, for example the ‘Stars-in-Training’ could be made more transparent, democratic and effective.

According to the interviewees, most of the employees from Mduku and the general community regard Phinda as home but there are others who just consider it as a work place. Involving the community, talks to the motto of &Beyond- the three ethos of ‘Care for the Land’; ‘Care for the Wildlife’ and ‘Care for the People’. By making the community understand the goals, vision and motto of &Beyond the earlier would they support and own both conservation and tourism activities of the later. The construction of classroom blocks, renovation of school and other community development projects may also serve a purpose of sensitising the locals, who should not be taken for granted. The participants also added that the lodge section should organise game drives for local community members in order for them to appreciate the activities of &Beyond Phinda and also their roles as stakeholders.

The interviewees felt that although these activities were being done to some extent, there was still room for improvement. They indicated that some educators arrange trips for their learners but still more could be done to ensure that the community fully understand and appreciate what happens at Phinda. The participants said that although Phinda has a monthly reporting system on community work, it was possible that there could be communication breakdown in the flow of information. They acknowledged that more work could be done to get people educated and trained in basic wildlife and tourism management. Community leaders have regular meetings with General Manager. However, there seem to be a challenge of cascading information in both direction- to and from the community.

In an attempt to put into perspective some issues raised by the community participants, I requested the managers to provide details concerning their staff complement and the organogram of the lodge section. They would also state the origin of their staff members (whether they were from the local communities or outside). The northern region of Phinda has a complement of 120 workers and the southern region has 121 employees, according to the managers. The researcher consulted the Human Resources Department, but I could not obtain the number of workers, from the 241, who were from the local community, that is Makhaza, Mnqobokazi and Nibela.

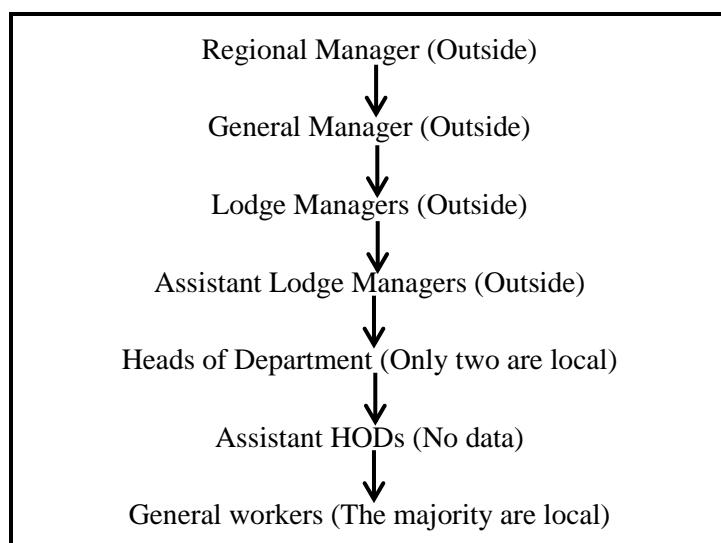


Figure 5.1: Organogram of northern region lodge section of Phinda

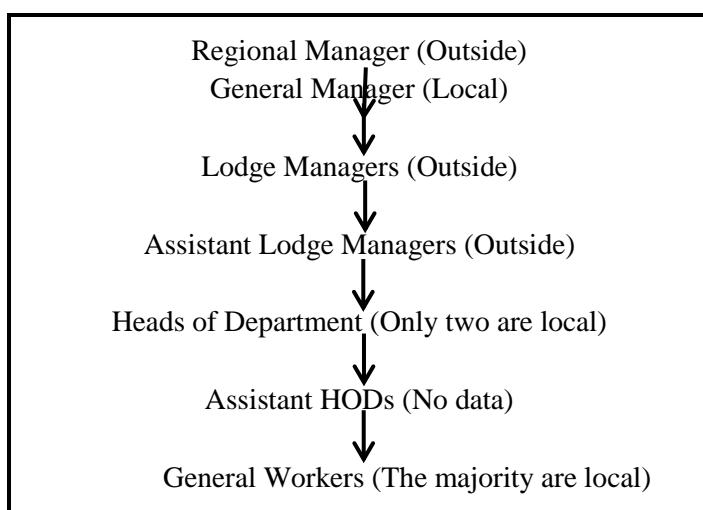


Figure 5.2: Organogram of the southern region lodge section of Phinda

The organograms provided in Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 show the distribution of workers, whether they are from the local communities or outside. There are only two employees from the local communities who are in the middle to top management positions (from Head of Department to General Manager) in the northern region and three in the southern region of Phinda's lodge section.

The lodge section management was able to provide the total staff complement and the number of employees from the surrounding communities in the middle to top management positions. To have a better understanding of the employment conditions at Phinda, I asked the lodge section management to explain the conditions and process of recruitment. At grassroots, advertisements are done both internally and in the community, but as one goes up to higher and specialised positions, &Beyond looks for quality. Therefore, advertisements are more public by including the media and the Internet. Internal advertising cater for employees of Phinda who wish to upgrade themselves or for lateral movement. Participants explained that the media was used if there were no suitable candidates from within and &Beyond had no other option except to look outside.

The interviewees added that &Beyond Phinda kept a database of all applicants and contacted them when suitable vacancies arose. Beside internal and external advertisements, Trustees and community leaders were directly informed by Phinda so that the information would be transmitted to their respective villages. The participant managers also observed that although there were many youths from the communities studying for relevant careers at tertiary level, more needs to be done to integrate them into Phinda. The interviewees went on to elaborate that the company was still very young, 21 years since its establishment. There were no programmes yet to motivate and recruit local qualified people, but something was being done in order to address this issue. However, monitoring of performance and student movements were there as a condition for the bursary programmes. Unfortunately, no details on the modalities of the monitoring were provided.

On the question of staff development and community initiative programmes, the interviewees said that Phinda took members of the community, especially youth for 'On-Training-Programme', in which they would be trained under different departments. The participants noted that there was an allocation of funds in each department for staff development. The programme was for free and the company also gave the trainees an allowance during the period of attachment. Through this training, some youth have been absorbed by Phinda and others

were able to find employment elsewhere. The participants also discussed the ‘Stars-In-Training’ programme, where the community contributed to the training of four people and the lodges paid for the other two.

It was also explained during the interviews, that some youth (mostly employees of Phinda) participated in the ‘iNkwazi Project’ which was an in-house training programme to ascertain whether the candidates were ready to be trained as rangers. Very few of the iNkwazi trainees were from the local communities and the interviewees argued that the demands of the programme were well beyond the reach of the poor local residents. Community participation was well below expectation.

The interviewees explained that training was done at different levels. Internally it might be organised and facilitated by the management, and externally outside resource persons would be invited for facilitation. Training is important in the succession plan of &Beyond, in which priority is given to those who already understand the culture and expectations of the organisation. It also makes economic sense in that employees have limited bargaining powers when compared to outsiders. One participant gave an example of an employee (local) who started off with the ‘Stars-in-Training’ programme employed as a waiter and then receptionist. Another employee started as a butler, then safari shop manager and then executive housekeeper. One of the managers (who is from the local community) provided his employment history. He was employed as a potter, then a bar-boy. He became a barman, then head barman. From there he was appointed assistant food and beverages manager, promoted to lodge manager and then operations manager. He is now one of the general managers. The participants observed that some of the local employees were illiterate and had no motivation to improve themselves, even when opportunities were made available.

The participants also clarified that the bursary programme was mostly funded by donations from guests and other well-wishers and was managed by the Africa Foundation. They added that community outreach programmes for the guests provided them with first-hand experience of the real situations in the poor rural communities, resulting in some of them making pledges and donations.

5.5 INTERVIEWS WITH PHINDA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE MANAGEMENT

The Assistant Game Manager was interviewed using the schedule applied to the lodge section. Although not a member of Makhasa, Mnqobokazi or Niblela communities, he comes from the

area which is relatively close to Phinda and had witnessed the land restitution process. The interviewee started by relating the restoration process that took place at a private game reserve near Phinda. He said that the community claimed their ancestral land in the game reserve and their land rights were successfully restored. Being part of the management of that game reserve, they tried to persuade the community to keep the place as a game reserve, but the community refused and wanted to move back into their ancestral land. The reserve closed down. After four years, the interviewee went back to his former game reserve and found out that the place was in a dilapidated state, with the buildings having been vandalised. The local residents removed window frames, door frames, fencing and most of the infrastructure constructed for the tourism business.

At the time he went to Phinda, the negotiations with the community were almost completed. The participant said that the expectations of community members were different to the ideas of managing a business. Some members had hated and wanted to move back to their land because *we had everything when we were there*. There was need for other people to try and convince the residents about the negative impact of moving into the game reserve and also the benefits of keeping the reserves running. The management therefore worked with Trust representatives who would communicate with the beneficiaries. Although the interviewee was not yet at Phinda, he understood that Phinda was involved in educating the Trust leaders. The interviewee hailed the role of Chief Gumede and described the latter as a visionary, who contributed immensely to the land restitution process.

On social development issues, the interviewee explained the role of the Africa Foundation and its partnership with Phinda. The Organisation was brought in to help communities full-time, so that Phinda might concentrate on its core business of conservation and tourism. He stated that the company was leasing land from two communities who are the land owners. People who were evicted from the land were getting cash every year towards Christmas. The Africa Foundation allocates a budget for community development to each community annually. According to the participant, one community has so far built a large community hall, connected electricity to approximately 150 households and has funded more than 60 children for tertiary education through Africa Foundation bursary scheme. The interviewee argued that most community members were aware of what Phinda was doing, but did admit that there were others who were still ignorant.

The researcher also posed the question of whether Phinda was meeting community expectations. The participant conceded that it was not easy, but the company was making great strides towards this goal. He explained that their main challenge was that the current communities were much larger than they were at the beginning. Also the generation that negotiated with Phinda was slowly phasing out through aging and death. The company was now dealing with the younger generation and it was necessary that they understood what the goals and values of Phinda were. At the same time, the company needed to be sensitive about the new expectations of the community. The interviewee said that among other tasks, he goes to communities and schools to make presentations, in an attempt to make the presence of Phinda known by the next generation and consolidate linkages with the older members of the society.

Phinda Private Game Reserve staff, upon invitation, visit schools and present conservation lessons and also take learners for educational game drives. The participant also added that they try to go out to communities to explain how things work in a business like Phinda. They believe that even if the communities were not directly involved in the business, they needed to know how it worked. However, progress has been slow. The company was introducing the eco-schools project, starting in a year's time. The participant explained that the school programmes they were running so far, involved the environment as a whole and were more general. The eco-school project would be more specific to ecosystems and conservation and more detailed.

In the findings of Currie (2000), one of the challenges of &Beyond Phinda mentioned by Carlisle, was getting locals involved in decision-making and management. When the researcher asked the interviewee how far they have gone in addressing this issue, he said that the Reserve Manager was the best person to respond because the participant joined the company almost at the end of the negotiations. He, however, gave an example of one of the lodge section general managers who started 20 years ago. The member of management grew from butler through different levels to top management and he is from the local community. He explained that &Beyond has a culture, which someone must understand before they become a manager. Some people would want Phinda to recruit from outside, but it was difficult. The participant affirmed that he has been with the company for nine years and has a good understanding of its culture. He also added that he was a conservationist from the surrounding communities and therefore a living example.

Some members of the community interviewed in this research, raised as one of their concerns, the lack of education and training in wildlife management and conservation. Thus, the

researcher requested a response from management. The interviewee admitted that the community members were correct, because Phinda did not have the capacity to reach out to the more than 15000 people living just outside the game reserve. For that reason most of the information is passed on to the community leadership so that it may be cascaded to the grassroots. In addition, Phinda has the Star-in-Training programme every six months in which six people from the two communities are enrolled. The company trains them, gives them an allowance, food and certificates. If there are vacancies, the trained people could apply for employment. The participant stated that they go into schools to talk about conservation, although they might not be able to reach everyone at the same time. Community leaders were educated and requested to do the same at their villages on what to do when wild animals have escaped from the game reserve into the community.

Exploring the alternatives that might be used to reach out to community members at grassroots level, the researcher asked whether Phinda had made use of various community meetings, as an example, starting from the villages themselves to involve the local residents. The participant noted that in the previous years they had requested permission from iziNdunas to address their people on rhino poaching issues. A school invited Phinda to make a presentation during the commemoration of World Environment Day. The interviewee agreed that the Company has not yet fully explored the potential of community meetings for the wildlife conservation education and there was still room for improvement. There were programmes in the pipeline, in which Phinda was going to maximise the use of the community forums. One of them, the Eco-School environmental education programme, was in its final stages of preparation and by the end of data collection, it was already being implemented.



Figure 5.3 Eco-school Environmental Education Camp at Bayete Camp, Phinda
[Photograph: J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]

It is a partnership of an outside service provider WESSA, the Africa Foundation and &Beyond Phinda. Primary school learners from identified local schools had an opportunity for hands-on experience of environmental and wildlife education, which was accompanied by a game drive. The researcher happened to attend one of the sessions and observed that there was high level of motivation among the children as they explored a variety of environmental issues. Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 show the children actively participating during an eco-school environmental education camp.



Figure 5.4 Learner presentation: Eco-school Environmental Education Camp, Bayete
[Photograph: J.M. Muzirambi, 2016]

The participant indicated that the game reserve has a staff complement of 25 employees. He then went on to explain the organogram of the reserve section, as indicated in Figure 5.5.

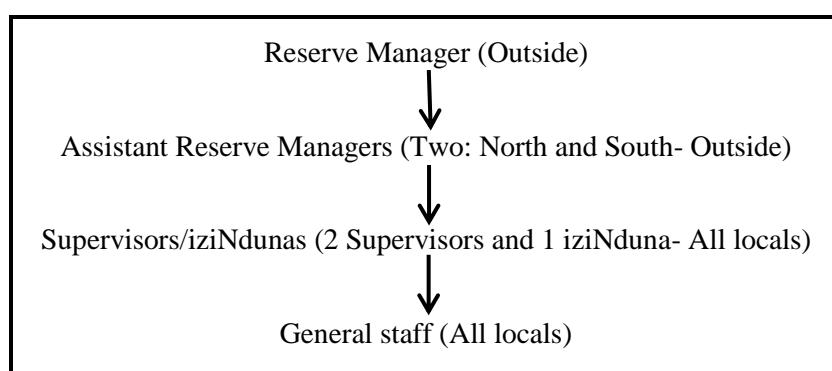


Figure 5.5: Organogram of Phinda Game Reserve

Concerning the staff development programmes of the Company, the interviewee said that the Human Resources Section handle this area. He added that the Company trains general workers to become supervisors. However, the greatest challenge was the language barrier. Phinda

creates more opportunities for fieldwork, then the employees build up to more responsibilities, like they all got driver's licences. The participant also made an observation of the youth, who were being trained in the Inkwazi Project, that out of the three groups in session, no one was from the local communities. The interviewee acknowledged that so far there was no programme in place to recruit and integrate the university graduates, who are products of the bursary scheme. Phinda is currently working on a long-term plan to get people from the community, especially the youth, to attain qualifications, and training them in various fields according to their qualifications. The locals need to be at Phinda in order to learn its culture. He concluded that it was still work in progress.

5.6 INTERVIEWS WITH AFRICA FOUNDATION MANAGEMENT

Perceptions on community participation and their views of their impact, were pursued from the perspective of Africa Foundation Management. I also requested clarification on issues directly affecting the Organisation, which include community participation in social development and benefit-sharing.

According to the interviewees, there has always been a good relationship between Phinda and the community, unlike the State identified conservation areas or game reserves. In the latter, people had no say in the forced removals. There was no consideration of the local people's cultures, traditions and the importance of their ancestral heritage. Phinda wanted to address this historical challenge by engaging the local communities on its vision and goals, their expectations and needs. Issues of social development, job creation, roles and responsibilities needed to be addressed. It was necessary for Phinda to get a 'buy-in' from the community for the success of the tourism and wildlife management business.

The participants emphasised that &Beyond was not involved in the forced removals and relocations of the local communities. They explained that the company purchased land from commercial farmers, who were using it for other agricultural purposes, which included crop, livestock and game farming. Phinda came to the community so that there could be a common understanding and cooperation relating to issues of mutual concern. The Africa Foundation originated from this belief. The interviewee added that the first initiative of Phinda was known as the Phinda Community Development Fund. Its aim was to engage the community from the beginning to establish good working relationships through cooperation and assistance as much as possible. The fund was renamed Rural Development Fund and spread to all lodges of &Beyond and also led to an expansion of its activities.

The Africa Foundation was founded from the Rural Development Fund and has since expanded from KZN to the rest of Southern Africa, East Africa and Asia. The participants noted that the establishment and work of the Africa Foundation was not easy, like other charitable organisations, because the community had to identify their areas of need through their structures, namely iziNdunas, Tribal Authorities, Councillors and Chiefs. The interviewee stated that communities were able to identify their challenges that included, among others, areas of education (especially infrastructure, such as more classroom blocks, renovations, more furniture and textbooks). The second challenge identified by the communities was primary healthcare. The participant explained that the community used to depend on a mobile clinic, which came to their area once a week. Clinics and hospitals were only found in bigger towns and cities. Doctors and nurses used to move from one clinic to another, hence it was difficult to consult, especially for these communities. The third area mentioned by the participant was the lack of entrepreneurial opportunities and business skills. Many people, especially women, were involved in the making of art and craft, but had insufficient skill to perfect them and had to travel long distances to urban areas in order to sell their merchandise.

The participants believed that community expectations in education were met to a larger extent, although there was still room for improvement. The Africa Foundation started off with three communities, two of which have already finalised their restitution of land rights negotiations. Phinda has since contributed in the construction of classroom blocks, renovation of schools, purchase of furniture and textbooks in a number of schools in the surrounding communities and also the establishment of a bursary scheme. &Beyond Phinda has constructed up to 140 classrooms in the five surrounding communities.

The participant indicated that in the primary healthcare, Phinda constructed a clinic at Mduku, which had a positive impact, not only for the immediate community but also for the other communities around Makhasa. The clinic was officially opened in 1995. The Africa Foundation constructed the clinic except for one wing which was donated by a certain pharmaceutical company and handed over in 2009. The Foundation further built the TB Wing at Mduku, which was commissioned in 2013.

In the small business development area, the Africa Foundation organised and conducted training workshops and is still doing so .The participants said that the organisation established three craft markets from which community members do their selling, hence reducing the need to travel long distances away from their families by commenting, *In the evening, vendors are*

able to lock up their products and go back home to their families. According to the interviewees, the markets are also accessible and visited by Phinda guests through organised community outreach tours.

The participants stated that there were five farming projects in which the Africa Foundation encourages and supports the farmers to produce commercially relevant and viable crops that will also be on demand in the lodges within Phinda. There were three vegetable farming groups producing such crops as butternuts, which are quite marketable. One group specialised in permaculture, the products of which are relevant to the lodges. The fifth group was doing poultry farming. This group was doing well, so much so that the Africa Foundation assisted it to acquire funding from Government to expand its business.

The interviewees conceded that challenges were still there within the communities because some members still believed that the Africa Foundation was doing more for some people than for others. The participants explained that expectations of the community were being met without creating a ‘donor-syndrome’ within the society. Even the Africa Foundation staff felt the pressure, as they were always expected to give account to the locals.

The participants related the process of project assessment and approvals. Communities send their proposals and their priorities. The interviewee clarified that it did not mean that the community’s first priority would be considered and addressed first. Being a thorny issue, the researcher asked for further explanation. The participants said that the Africa Foundation did thorough research, analysis and profiling of the proposals, based on standard criteria and then finalise the prioritisation and approval of projects. If the Africa Foundation was not satisfied during profiling, areas of development would be identified and training workshops organised. The community members are given another chance to improve their project proposals. After approval, the proposals entered into the Africa Foundation Project Menu. Funders then select projects they want to sponsor from the menu. It was also stated that funding of projects mostly depended on the interests of the donors, who might choose any one of the proposals as they wish.

According to the interviewees, the modalities of project approval and funding were very difficult to explain to the communities for them to understand. The Africa Foundation might not be in a position to determine the choice of projects, although in some cases, they may be able to influence the priorities. The participants also acknowledged that some of the disgruntlements by the communities originate from a lack of understanding of the rigorous selection process. For

example, a community might propose the construction of a school because their children are travelling long distances to the nearest school. However, the Department of Education has already established conditions and standards, which have to be complied with, such as the minimum number of children required in order to establish a school. If the community does not meet these conditions, then their proposal would be rejected. The participant emphasised that the small business enterprise projects have to be a community endeavour to address community challenges and benefit the community as a whole. They argued that some proposals were often found to be of individuals serving their selfish motives at the expense of the community. The Africa Foundation would therefore reject these projects and send them back for reviewing. Some proposals might lack shareholders or a constitution or any other necessary requirements.

Community participants raised issues related to the approval and management of projects, including the bursary scheme. The researcher asked the management of the Africa Foundation to clarify and shed some light on the process of assessment, approval and implementation of projects. The interviewees argued that some of the concerns and comments raised by community members were politically motivated, because some of the residents wanted to gain political mileage. They pointed out that the Africa Foundation preferred to deal with community leadership instead of individuals on the ground, because the Organisation does not have the capacity to deal with the diverse interests of individuals. The participants, however, acknowledged that some of the concerns of the community were genuine and this was because of the complexity of the approval process and the criteria for funding.

Africa Foundation management explained that some donors might select any project they preferred to fund regardless of the priorities. It appears that Africa Foundation was unaware that donations with stipulations can present more challenges than they are worth. The Organisation was in the process of educating donors so that they become sensitive to the circumstances, interests, needs and challenges of the community and that they respect the priorities of the local residents. The participants also raised the issue of inadequacies of some of the proposals, which result in them being rejected: *To a certain extent, the Africa Foundation agrees with the community and share their concerns but there are also some exaggerations and inaccuracies in some of their views.*

The participants cited an example of crèches being potential money spinners for some individuals, hence the sprouting of many of them within metres of each other. They suggested that the Africa Foundation would welcome an idea whereby a group of crèches would come

together and establish one large pre-school which would be better funded and better resourced. Proposals were therefore rejected on these grounds. The interviewees said that individuals were not willing to join hands in order to get funding, obviously for selfish reasons.

On the bursary issue, the participants from the Africa Foundation shed some light on the approval and funding processes.

Funding of projects is not stable or fixed. It fluctuates all the time, depending on the number of donors and the sizes of donations at that moment.

The participants added that the Africa Foundation came up with a decision that they would announce the number of bursaries annually until they were sure of the availability of funding. The community also raised concerns over interviewing venues that they favoured some villages over others. The local residents advocated for a rotational arrangement of the bursary interview venues. According to the Africa Foundation interviewees, the Organisation looked for logistics to facilitate the process. The Foundation always reported to Tribal Authorities of any progress with respect to projects, through attending meetings with community leadership. The interviewees noted that there was not, at the time of the research, any scientific monitoring mechanism to assess the real impact of the Africa Foundation on the community or to get direct feedback about the perception and attitudes of the community on the impact of the projects from the residents themselves. According to the participants, the Africa Foundation was of the view that interaction with community leadership was good enough to articulate and respond to the challenges of the community.

5.7 RESULTS FROM ADAPTED NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

As the workshop consisted of four main objectives, the contribution of the participants was also put into these categories, as indicated by preliminary stages of Atlas ti (details of which are not necessary for the purpose of this study). Positive, neutral and negative comments were grouped together in the initial stages of Atlas ti, as shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Summary of ANGT findings

Animal and environment: Nature and wildlife conservation	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local community appreciates sustainability.• Local community gets to know nature.• Local community learns to co-exist with wildlife.• Phinda keeps the local residents safe from dangerous animals.• Local community shares land and responsibility.• Phinda Game Reserve provides jobs for the community and other
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	<p>participants were looking forward to being employed by Phinda.</p> <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community living near dangerous animals- Phinda does not protect them from wild animals. • Living with dangerous animals. • Local community is not being educated about the environment. • No job opportunities for local community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was expensive for locals to visit and view wildlife and nature at Phinda. Most of the participants said they had never been inside Phinda. • Local community was not happy about too much and stronger control of Phinda over the natural resources, which should be at their disposal.
Social development	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community assistance in caring for the disabled and vulnerable. • Construction of the clinic at Mduku. • Phinda helps the community with money from the land claims. • Phinda works with NGO's to assist the community. • Phinda builds crèches for children in the community. • Phinda provides bursaries for children to go for tertiary education. • Phinda supports community activities, e.g. those organised by traditional leadership. • Phinda has youth development programmes for the community. • Local community gains knowledge and skills. • Phinda assist in schools, e.g. "Help children at school", "Education". • Phinda builds schools. • Phinda sponsors books • Phinda sponsors uniforms.
Benefit-sharing	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community benefits from showcasing culture. • Local community sell their craft to tourists at Phinda. • Local community recognises the economic impact of the presence of Phinda. • Local community benefits from business opportunities. • Local community gets employment and are able to take care of their families. • Local residents are benefitting from tourism, as well as the provision of tourism to tourists <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community does not get anything from Phinda. • Phinda is getting richer with the resources, which belong to us whilst we get very little.
Tourism and tourists	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community appreciates exposure to different cultures. • Local community cares for tourists. • Local community learns how to care for tourists. • Phinda looks after the local community lodges and the local community recognises the presence of tourism as a means of maintaining the lodges, which they regard as theirs.

Taking into account the objectives of the study, participants expressed their views and opinions through individual and group interviews. Also, data was collected in informal interactions and personal observations. However, it was necessary to consolidate, confirm, clarify and verify some of the views expressed by interviewees by using a more interactive alternative method. ANGT, by its nature, examined some of the views already expressed in this study.

From Table 5.2, it is apparent that in general, the local community shared similar views, opinions, challenges and expectations. It can also be noted that just as most participants interviewed, the ANGT focus group also appreciated the importance of nature conservation and its sustainability. Participants also confirmed the local community's acknowledgement of Phinda's contributions to its life. At the same time, some participants of the ANGT workshop expressed their fears, reservations and unmet expectations. For example, the following notes were posted:

The local community is not being educated about the environment.

There are no job opportunities for local communities.

The local community is not happy about too much and stronger control of Phinda over natural resources which should be at our disposal.

The ANGT participants also confirmed the important role played by Phinda and its partner the Africa Foundation in social development by highlighting community projects that have been undertaken in partnership with the local residents, as indicated in Table 5.2 (Social development section). Whilst acknowledging the positive impact of the activities of Phinda in the form of economic, social and educational benefits, the participants also expressed their dissatisfaction with the management of the benefit-sharing process. Almost all participants posted positive notes on the contribution of Phinda to the local community regarding tourism.

5.8 SUMMARY

This chapter started with an introduction which provided a brief analysis of the results of the piloted data collection methods and the considerations for the selection of the most appropriate data collection tools. A brief description of the study area was also done, thereby linking up with the previous chapter. Presentation of the interview results was introduced, starting with the demographic analysis. Findings from interviews with community members and Phinda employees were presented based on the following objectives: knowledge and understanding of the restitution of land rights processes and community expectations; community perceptions on participation in conservation, tourism, social development and benefit-sharing. The results also incorporated data from observations and documentary analysis.

The outcomes of the interviews with Phinda management (both the lodge section and the game reserve) and the Africa Foundation were provided. The results of the adapted nominal group technique and other observations were also reported. The next chapter attends to the discussion and analysis of the findings.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The conceptual framework of this study exhibits a network of issues surrounding community participation in wildlife conservation and tourism management. It is critical to note the perceptions and attitudes of the local residents themselves on the level of their engagement in decision-making and management of conservation, tourism and any other issues that directly affect their livelihoods. Hence, the voice of the community occupies a critical space, among other stakeholders, because the sustainability of conservation and tourism initiatives hinges on whether the local residents can identify with them or not.

According to the literature (Kamphorst *et al.*, 1997; Balint, 2006; Mutandwa *et al.*, 2007), community-based conservation and tourism project initiatives have often struggled to meet expectations. The researchers offered the following reasons: refusal by authorities to devolve power to lower levels; restrictions on participation by local communities to project implementation; exclusion from management and decision-making; and the inequitable sharing of benefits. Some authors (for example, Dudley *et al.*, 2010) advocate for an active cooperation model of community participation instead of a win-win situation between local communities and the conservation and tourism authorities, as proposed by other researchers. This means the voice of local residents needs to be considered seriously for sustainable conservation, tourism business and livelihoods of households.

Dudley *et al.* (2010) identifies five basic dimensions of social well-being: subsistence, economic, cultural-spiritual, environmental services and political, with economic being the most important factor. Balint (2006) believes that improvement of sustainable economic gains can only be achieved if the project facilitators take into consideration the four developmental indicators (UNDP, 2002), which are rights, capacity, governance and revenue. Nelson (2010) emphasises the importance of effective governance, while Ngubane and Diab (2005) observe that the conflict between local communities and nature conservation authorities negatively impact on wildlife conservation, tourism development and social development.

In South Africa, substantial evidence from literature shows that the land rights restitution agreements did not create a conducive environment for active participation of local communities in wildlife conservation, tourism management and decision-making. Very little change in conservation and tourism management has taken place over the long time of existence and the local communities are still playing a peripheral role in their operations.

As indicated in Chapter 4, the present study is greatly influenced by the critical indigenous qualitative research epistemology. In line with research literature (Bryman & Burgess, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), this present study was concerned with issues of representation, legitimacy, accountability and benefits. The concerns of local and indigenous people were the point of focus, thus the research attempted to represent their perceptions and attitudes as accurately as possible.

Having met all the ethical requirements, including consent by participants, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interviewees were able to articulate their views in as much detail as possible with the minimum interruption from the interviewer, when there was need. Semi-structured interviews facilitated clarification of issues raised by interviewees and also following up on the important contributions from the participants. Prolonged presence in the study area, through frequent visits and informal interactions with community members, assisted by making the interviewees more comfortable to address some issues during the interview sessions that they would not have divulged to a stranger.

The interviews were conducted in three different periods of time in order to remove bias and ensure objectivity and reliability of responses from the participants. The researcher was also able to assess whether or not the questions in the interview guide were addressing the objectives of the study and make adjustments where necessary. The same set of questions was applied with all the different groups and communities within the study area. It was therefore possible to analyse and compare views from a diversity of respondents. The 100 participants consisted of 26 from the Phinda, 42 from Makhaza, 29 from Mnqobokazi and 3 from the Africa Foundation. Fifty-seven percent of the participants were males (57%) and forty-three percent were females (43%). The slight number difference in the number of the gender groups might have been due to cultural and religious reasons, as quite a number of women from the communities declined the request to participate in the present study. Others who participated were not comfortable responding to questions in the presence of their male counterparts.

The participant composition took into consideration the diversity within the communities. The majority of the respondents (61%) were youth below the age of 36 years, representing the sector of the community that have potential to actively contribute to the economy of the area and the country as a whole. The views and attitudes of this age group are therefore an important consideration for sustainable conservation and tourism. All in all, 84% of the participants were not more than 45 years of age. The older generation who participated in the present research were very few (56 years and above were only 5%). The implication of the dwindling numbers of the aged is that those who clearly understood the history of the area, together with the restitution of land rights negotiations, are also becoming fewer and fewer. Their priorities were much different from those of the younger generation, a factor, which conservation and tourism authorities, like &Beyond Phinda need to take into consideration.

One potential challenge was that some participants were afraid of victimisation for volunteering their opinions. Some cited fears of traditional or political leadership while others were afraid of their employers. It was important to assure the participants that their contributions would be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity, as required by the ethics. The challenge of the language barrier was addressed by allowing the participants to use their language of choice and also the interpretation of questions from English to Zulu. Interviewees were able to communicate their opinions without any hindrance, because they were using their mother language and were also held in a conducive environment in which they felt relaxed. Frequent visits and spending time with the local people assisted in the creation of favourable conditions for the interviews.

6.2 KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF RESTITUTION OF LAND RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Knowledge and understanding of the restitution of land rights was age dependent. The older participants were the main contributors on the historical background of the study area and the community's relationship with Phinda. There was a general acknowledgement among the participants, namely community members, Phinda employees and management that the restitution of land rights negotiation process was a new experience to all stakeholders, with its own challenges. Respondents from management concurred with the community members that the local residents were not prepared and neither did they receive sufficient education and training related to the restitution process. In spite of the potential challenges, the participants agreed that Phinda, the local communities and other stakeholders managed the negotiation

process exceptionally well, when compared to other similar cases in South Africa and worldwide.

Looking back, people might see areas of improvement but success has been made in this respect because the stakeholders successfully and amicably concluded the negotiation processes.

The participants demonstrated appreciation for the land restitution negotiations and agreements with Phinda. The interviewees expressed their satisfaction with the current relationship with Phinda. The respondents highlighted the establishment of a government-community-Phinda partnership and the role the company played in the establishment of community committees, which contributed to the successful negotiation process. On the other hand, of concern is the lack of knowledge and understanding of the younger generation, together with their indifferent attitude with respect to the relationship of the community with &Beyond Phinda. The youth are the present and future custodians of the land in which Phinda conducts its conservation and tourism business. Interviewees from Phinda management acknowledged that the community expectations were diverse and complex, and admitted that it was not easy to meet them. However, Phinda was making positive strides towards addressing the community aspirations.

The participants agreed that the conditions during negotiations, like population size and community needs, are different from the current, since there has been an increase in the number of local residents and their needs. The respondents also acknowledged the generational transition, whereby older residents, who participated in the negotiations with Phinda, are aging and dying, whilst the youth are replacing them. According to the interviewees, Phinda has to face the challenge and prepare itself to deal with the younger generation with a totally different set of priorities and expectations. The company needed to be sensitive to the new expectations of the community, including its level of participation in decision-making processes.

Participants from management also confirmed the views of the community members, that the community was not directly involved in conservation and tourism business at Phinda. There is a need, therefore, for an alignment and management of the expectations of the youth through robust engagements of the company with other stakeholders. Campbell and Vainio-Mattila (2003) clarifies the meaning of participation, as referring to the positioning of participatory initiatives on the continuum from manipulating participation for the achievement of externally identified project goals regarding the empowerment of actors to define such goals themselves, as well as the actions required to achieve them. Following this line of thinking, it is critical for tourism and conservation authorities (Phinda) to assess the kind of relationship they used to

have or are still enjoying with the older generation of the community, some of whom participated in the negotiation process, and then re-align community engagement to accommodate the younger generation in the decision-making processes. The youth will eventually take over from their aging elders and may come up with demands that compromise sustainable conservation and tourism efforts and social development.

Nielsen (2011) notes that improved relationships between stakeholders is important for two reasons. Firstly, the diverse single efforts can be fused into new larger and collective capacities and, secondly, strong networks will facilitate self-supportive and continuous capacity development, thus enabling people to collaborate and transform situations in a more comprehensive, strategic and progressive manner. Consultations should cascade to the community members in general, to ensure that there is a common understanding among all involved and to avoid surprises due to the activities of gate-keepers within community leadership. According to the findings, the older community participants advocated for non-involvement in Phinda business, as long as they were getting a constant flow of their benefits, as indicated in the agreements. On the contrary, the voice of the younger generation is urging for much more participation in conservation and tourism endeavours. Hence, there is a potential of future conflict, if the issues are not addressed.

The monitoring role of the Government, as the ultimate custodian of both natural resources and the community, was said to be lacking; a fact which puts the local rural residents at a disadvantage. Even if the communities go into agreements with private operators, the Government remains the legal custodian of the disadvantaged, mostly illiterate, rural communities. Hence, they need to be protected from exploitation and unfair dealings. There was a strong feeling among participants that the whole community should have been exposed to some form of education on the legalities of the restitution of land rights negotiations so that they would have participated meaningfully. This view was shared by some participants from management. A good understanding of the terms of agreements would have avoided the community feeling excluded, as expressed by one of them:

Yes, justice was done, we have seen what was said and the land is still there, but it doesn't belong to us.

Questions of power over, and privilege and access to land are increasingly shaped by global forces often at the expense of fundamental human rights to land, livelihood and food security (Laudati, 2007).

6.3 THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Governance, from national government down to the local communities, is a key aspect in community-based conservation and tourism. Good governance ensures efficient flow of information in all directions, which leads to collective and cooperative decisions, owned by all stakeholders. In agreement with the findings of Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014), governance issues related to power differences and conflict over resources, such as reserve access, benefit-sharing and natural resources management, were some of the concerns also raised by the participants. Community participation in conservation activities at Phinda was a contentious issue among respondents. There was general consensus that the community was not actively engaged in wildlife management and conservation. The findings of this study agrees with Rogerson (2009) who criticises South African tourism enterprises for their limited linkage with disadvantaged black communities and their lack of pro-poor focus. Increased tensions at local level, at the very least, serve to further marginalise certain segments of the population, while, ironically inhibiting the social cohesion necessary for collaborative management and participatory forms of governance (Laudati, 2007).

Community participation promotes sustainable utilisation of natural resources, environmental protection and environmental education. Local community participation increases the sense of belonging to natural land around them (Jusoh, 2012). Much of the research literature has focused on the positive attitudes of local communities towards conservation (Currie, 2001; Balint, 2006; Byrd & Gustke, 2007; Lepp, 2007; Chandralal, 2010; Nustad & Sundnes, 2011; Strickland-Muro & Moore, 2014). Other authors (Gadd, 2005; Rodriguez, 2008; Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012; Snyman, 2014) analysed the negative attitudes of local communities. Snyman (2014; 2016) observed that individual perceptions of the net benefit from an exchange are likely to make them view it positively and those perceiving net costs are likely to view it negatively.

When the community is not actively involved in conservation efforts put in place by the reserve operators, they alienate themselves from the conservation activities and some may start to work against the protection of the important wildlife. The participants felt that Phinda did not put enough effort into integrating the local communities with the management of wildlife and tourism. Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014) further explained that mutual association between protected areas and tourism can have considerable benefits for the surrounding communities, as

well as social costs, which include completion of resources and facilities and threats from dangerous wild animals.

Most of the participants concurred that the community needed education and training in wildlife management in order for them to be relevant and able to actively contribute towards conservation ... *there is no one amongst us who understands their responsibilities and privileges at Phinda*. This stems from their admission of lacking knowledge, understanding and skills on wildlife management, but they were prepared to go out of their comfort zone for the benefit of all stakeholders. Giampiccoli *et al.* (2015) explains the importance of educating the community:

“One of the key differences between community-based tourism and other forms of tourism is the focus on empowering the local community to run their own tourism businesses. The development of local capacity through the raising of awareness, the running of tourism education and training programmes, and the provision of business advisory support, can help build the confidence, knowledge and ability of the local community to control and manage their own development. This in turn is likely to increase residents’ self-esteem, strengthen the cooperation between community members, and improve local governance”. (Twining-Ward *et al.*, 2007:14)

This view is supported by Campbell-Vainio and Mattila (2003) that through community-based conservation, local residents would benefit from and take ownership of conservation and thus will be more likely to support it.

Participation in management of wildlife and related decision-making processes were pertinent issues raised by the respondents. The participants categorically stated that the community was not involved in decision-making and they just saw things happening. Nielsen (2011) argues that provision of opportunity to participate in management and decision-making processes on issues affecting the community, reduces the conflict potential and can shift the attitude of stakeholders. Without greater participation by the local residents in the management of their natural resources, the potential for further conflict is inevitable; a view shared by a number of authors in research literature (Songorwa *et al.*, 2000; Naguran, 2002; Ngubane & Diab, 2005; Bruyere *et al.*, 2009; Hottola, 2009; Nelson, 2010; Somarriba-Chang & Gunnarsdotter, 2012). Jusoh (2012) and Bello *et al.* (2016) summarise it all by emphasising that ignoring local people’s interests and excluding them from planning, management and decision-making around protected areas, are the main sources of conflict between local communities and designated areas, like game reserves.

From all the interview results, participants agreed that &Beyond Phinda had much more power and control over conservation, tourism and even social development issues than the other stakeholders. Respondents from the community, together with employees of Phinda argued that very few, if any, people from the local community were in management and decision-making positions at Phinda; a view which was supported by the organograms provided by management of Phinda. This shows a skewed relationship in favour of Phinda, which has serious implications on the nature and levels of interaction with the local community.

It is necessary for reserve operators, such as Phinda as the greater party to work on levelling the playing field to establish a cooperative, mutually beneficial and fair relationship with disadvantaged communities. Participants suggested that there should be preparation of the local youth, especially the academics, for more meaningful participation in conservation and tourism business of Phinda and also to have a deeper insight into the ethos of the Organisation. Research literature has elaborated on the gains of active participation in management and decision-making processes. One of these, is the development of a sense of ownership of activities by both employees and local community members. As stated by Kamphorst *et al.* (1997), active participation seems to take into account the rights of the local people to make decisions concerning the land they have inhabited for generations, which is their greatest asset.

The results of the open, free and undirected response session of the adapted nominal group technique collaborated with the interview findings of community members, employees and management of Phinda. The participants indicated that local community appreciated Phinda for its contributions. Local residents got to know more about nature, how to co-exist with wildlife and conservation, through Phinda. The other posted notes included the following: that Phinda keeps them safe from dangerous animals, sharing resources and responsibilities and creating employment for the community members. On the other hand, issues of the lack of protection from wild animals (Snyman, 2014), lack of conservation education and the lack of job opportunities for a large number of unemployed youth in the community were some of the issues raised. In addition, inaccessibility of the game reserve for local residents and too much control by Phinda, coupled with the lack of decision-making powers by the community, were considered to be issues of greatest concern, which needs urgent attention by the conservation and tourism authorities. On this note, Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014) associated access difficulties to community perceptions of disconnectedness from the parks and tourism.

6.4 THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM

In general, there is an overlap on issues raised by participants for their roles in conservation and tourism. As indicated by the community interviewees and employees of Phinda, both in individual and group sessions, one of the expectations of the agreements with Phinda was active participation of the community in tourism management. It was important to the local residents that the youth, especially the tertiary graduates who were beneficiaries of the Africa Foundation Bursary Scheme, would be gradually integrated into management at Phinda. However, according to the participants, there were no local people, or very few if any, who were employed in management positions in the tourism sector of Phinda. Hence, their expectations on this aspect were not met. Therefore, the respondents felt that the community members were excluded from both management and decision-making affecting the tourism sector (Campbell-Vainio & Mattila, 2003; Nelson, 2010).

Yoopetch (2015) observed that it was imperative for communities to play a significant role in tourism development at the project level in order to inculcate a sense of ownership; and it is important for both government and tourism authorities to create an enabling environment for this paradigm shift to occur. There was also a strong view that there was preferential treatment of people from outside the community, especially whites, for the management and decision-making affecting the tourism sector.

In general, community members of the present study felt that tourism (and wildlife conservation) created employment and could also help reduce poverty (Snyman, 2014). Being a rural area, there are very few sources of employment. Therefore, the expectations of the local residents, who participated in the study, were that Phinda would offer a lifeline in terms of employment opportunity. For this reason, reference to jobs or employment was the most frequent response, with 69 out of 100 interviewees mentioning it in one way or another. However, of the 69 respondents, only 29 had a positive perception in terms of acknowledging that they or their relatives had been employed by Phinda. The respondents appreciated the job opportunities brought about by the company and expressed that community members employed were now able to cater for their households and the community at large. The findings of the present study concur with Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014) and Snyman (2016) that direct employment was highly valued by community members on account of its ability to provide for family dependents and educational needs. It is also interesting to note that the majority of the participants with these views were within the middle to old age category.

Forty (40) out of the sixty-nine (69) participants (most of whom were youth) were very clear that their expectations, in terms of employment opportunities, were barely met. The respondents anticipated that &Beyond Phinda would open up and avail more job opportunities so that they might get employed and be able to take care of their households. The divergent views and attitudes in terms of employment need to be managed in an appropriate manner to ensure that expectations are dealt with in a sustainable way and that there is no large-scale disappointment on the part of communities (Snyman, 2014). Of interest, is the view that the majority of employees at the lodge section were local residents at Phinda, but almost all of them occupy jobs at the lowest level. The bone of contention of participants, who were employed by Phinda, was the stagnation in terms of employment progression and promotion. The interviewees argued that there was very little movement, as most of the workers have been at the same job level for a long period of time, for example, more than 20 years for one interviewee.

Lack of skills and knowledge, required to successfully engage in conservation and tourism management roles, have prevented local residents from accrual of employment benefits, which were typically limited to those members with the requisite skills and knowledge. This view is supported by the findings of other researchers in this field (Naguran, 2002; Strickland-Munro & Moore, 2014). As observed by Levine (2006), rural communities lack material resources, communication infrastructure, or knowledge regarding the language, priorities and operating procedures of international conservation, tourism and donor community. There is need for serious consideration for capacitation and empowerment of the local communities so that they could start occupying some of the influential positions within the conservation and tourism organisations.

A sense of ownership among local resident employed, quickly cascades to their families and the rest of the community and this would have a positive impact on sustainable conservation and tourism business. Also, attention should be redirected to the youth, especially those benefitting from Africa Foundation bursary initiatives. In-service training for the graduates who are qualified in many different, relevant and critical fields could be one of the many ways to ensure realistic involvement of local community in meaningful decision-making processes and management of wildlife, tourism and even social development.

The results of the Adapted Nominal Group Technique showed that the local community appreciated exposure to different cultures, thanks to Phinda. Participants expressed their care for tourists. Being aware of the benefits associated with tourism, participants recognised the

importance of tourists as the guests of the lodges at Phinda and also as a source of their economic benefit.

Management respondents corroborated the views of community participants that the local community had no or very limited power on the issues associated with tourism and specifically the lodge section. However, they argued that Phinda strives to continuously improve relationships with other stakeholders, including the local communities. According to the participants, the lodge section was doing well due to the many guests received and this would allow the company to fulfil its community obligations. There was confirmation by the interviewees that most of the workers, especially in the northern region lodge section of Phinda, were from Makhasa and Mnqobokazi. In an effort to improve relationships with the surrounding communities, the northern region lodge section offered transport to local residents from Mduku Gate, through the game reserve to Mkombe Gate. Participants suggested more active participation of the lodge section in community projects.

Although the participants from management tried to explain the issues of job discrepancies and equity, it was apparent that community expectations, as indicated by this small sample, and the views and realities of Phinda were not in tandem. There seems to be communication breakdown between Phinda management and the community grassroots. This could be issues of local governance, involving the gate-keepers. Here, an open-door policy that encourages those in non-leadership roles to express their concerns to those in management positions can be an instrumental strategy in developing trust. This might also mean that the community liaison department may require to be strengthened and prioritised. This goes on to question Phinda's communication strategy, that is reliance on both Trust and community leadership without having other alternative assessment and monitoring mechanism to check for a common understanding of activities at the grassroots. The main reasons provided by management, for the local residents employed in the lowest positions were that of illiteracy, lack of motivation of the local community members and the high level of competition for higher and influential positions.

The question of the tertiary graduates, beneficiaries of the Africa Foundation bursary scheme could not be explained clearly. These young local residents graduated in a variety of relevant fields and yet there was no evidence of anyone of them having been absorbed or receiving any form of training to be eventually integrated into the management of Phinda. This makes it difficult for Phinda to justify and to explain the claims of racial preferences raised by the

respondents. Ignoring the grassroots community's perceptions of power imbalances (with respect to management, decision-making, employment opportunities, benefit-sharing and also, as a result of the colonial/apartheid past which promoted white supremacy), would be futile to sustainable development. Evidence from organograms provided by the management participants (Figs. 5.1, 5.2 & 5.5) of both the lodge section and the game reserve of Phinda, shows that there were very few blacks in the middle-to-top management portfolios. A similar trend is observed at &Beyond, the mother company of Phinda Private Game Reserve. Findings from practical observations of the researcher at two lodges-Forest Lodge and Mountain Lodge, which were done during four different field visit periods, confirmed that there were very few black rangers on duty, as indicated in Chapter 5.

In this vein, Nelson (2010) argues that empowerment approaches should enable individuals to participate on equal terms and this was illustrated in the study of private sector- community joint venture of the Ololosokwan community. On the same score, Pegas and Castley (2014) link transition to socially-just approaches to the concept of sustainability. &Beyond may envisage successful, sustainable conservation and tourism business in the next decade, as long as its relationship with its local community stakeholders are continually reviewed and harmonised to cater for the inherent changes therein.

The perceptions of the local community, with respect to their participation in wildlife and tourism management, are a determining factor in the improvement of their relationship with the tourism operators. Skewed power relations are the recipe for future conflict. Burgoyne and Mearns (2017) summed it all when they concluded that to avoid conflict, stakeholders must demonstrate the ability to align their interests instead of competing for them.

A case for consideration, in terms of the volatility of community environments is that of the Sodwana Bay Guesthouse as reported by the *Mail and Guardian* (newspaper) of 29 June 2016. Local community concerns and expectations need to be considered and managed in a manner, which does not disadvantage conservation, tourism and community interests.

6.5 THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Through the data collecting process, the most salient positive attributes of Phinda, together with its partner the Africa Foundation, were associated with community development. All interviewees in one way or another acknowledged that Phinda had made remarkable positive

impact within the surrounding communities. Serving as a lifeline to the poor rural area, the Company brought both hope and expectations to the residents. Documentary analysis provided ample evidence which demonstrates how Phinda has transformed the community in the areas of job opportunities, health, education and skills development, including small business development.

The participants confirmed that Phinda improved their livelihood through the construction of a clinic at Mduku. Healthcare was the greatest challenge of the local residents as they had to wait for the whole week in order to be attended by nurses who came with a mobile clinic. Many of the children from the local villages were unable to attend school due to limited space within the few schools that existed. The Africa Foundation, a social development partner of Phinda, built additional classroom blocks at the schools within the community and therefore affording the children another opportunity of building their future through education. Job opportunities as a social development aspect allowed the breadwinners to be able to provide for, not only their immediate families, but also the community at large, resulting in the improvement of their lives.

The provision of both skills and business opportunities created confidence among members of the community and this had a positive impact on sustainability. The findings of the this study agrees with a number of authors in research literature (Dudley *et al.*, 2010; Strickland-Munro & Moore, 2014). Emptaz- Colomb (2009) urges organisations engaged in conservation and tourism to assist in improving the lives of the local residents through providing access to quality education, health, transport and communication.

There is a general agreement among the participants that the expectations of the community, in terms of infrastructural development, were met. Some interviewees felt that the community had a cordial and cooperative relationship with Phinda. This brings to mind the dynamics of interactions. Historically, Phinda initiated the social responsibility projects well before the restitution of land rights agreements and cherished a donor-beneficiary relationship with the local communities. This association was obviously skewed in favour of Phinda. It is assumed that a paradigm shift in relationships should have resulted from the agreements of the restitution of land rights, in which the local communities assumed a new role of being partners and landlords. In probing this viewpoint, it was not clear whether the relationship of Phinda and the community was based on the past or present circumstances.

The partnership relationship should entail active participation of the community in the planning, decision-making and management of projects. The respondents expressed dissatisfaction on the

level of their involvement in the social development projects. They argued that the community members only featured at the last implementation stages of the initiatives. The participants sensed unwillingness, on the part of Phinda, to actively engage the community in decision-making and management processes inside the game reserve.

Reading between the lines, literature has provided examples of relationship management styles that emphasises the notion of non-interference of community in the core-business of conservation and tourism, staring from the Yellowstone model. Due to the socio-political dynamics, especially in the developing countries of the world, conservation and tourism authorities came up with a disguised form of relationship in which they prefer to interact with local residents in their own backyard through community development projects and prevent them from becoming actively involved in the core-business of tourism and conservation. I refer to this type of interaction as the “arm’s length approach”. For as long as the local community keeps its distance, does not interfere with conservation and tourism and is not directly involved in the management and decision-making processes, the relationships are deemed to be good and the benefits continue to flow in the form of community development to the local residents.

In other words, the authorities prefer partnerships in community development projects, as opposed to active community participation in real conservation and tourism management and decision-making. For the local residents, the mentality of donor-recipient or beneficiary still persists. Most of the respondents did not understand the meaning of the present relationship of partnership, its rights, responsibilities and privileges. Even within the community projects, there were concerns raised by some participants that some processes lacked transparency, fairness and good governance. For example, the bursary scheme management featured many times during data collection process.

The Africa Foundation interviewees raised a number of issues, some of which were meant to clarify those raised by the community members. According to the Foundation, from the beginning even before the restitution agreements, Phinda’s goal was to address the historical challenges by engaging the community. It was necessary to get a nod from the community for successful conservation and tourism business. The respondents pointed out that the strategy of Phinda was to engage the communities, in order to have a common understanding of and cooperation in issues of mutual interests.

Given the background of underdevelopment and poverty in this rural area, the coming of Phinda and its reaching out to the community brought a ray of hope to the local residents.

However, there was an imbalance on the power relations. In the view of the community, Phinda was doing favours as beneficiaries and they felt obliged to comply to show their appreciation and loyalty. It is possible to re-align the relationship between Phinda and the community, as well as re-orientate the local residents to suit the new dispensation, which came as a result of the restitution agreements.

Through the Africa Foundation, there was need to identify the areas of need of the local communities. The local residents identified education, primary healthcare and entrepreneurial development, among others. The Foundation, together with Phinda, believed the community expectations were being met. Success has been registered in community infrastructural development, such as the construction of classroom blocks, renovations of schools, construction of Mduku Clinic, establishment of the bursary scheme, small business training and the establishment of craft markets and farming projects, among others.

Participants from the Africa Foundation acknowledged that on the surface and in the view of residents, it appeared as if some communities were more favoured than others. The reason was that apparently, some villages have had more of their projects funded and implemented and more bursary scheme beneficiaries than others. The interviewees explained that the process of project approval, starting from needs identification through to the funding stages. The following flow elements summarise the stages of project approval and funding, according to the interviewees.

1. Community identify needs and prioritise them
2. Africa Foundation researches, analyses and profiles the proposal using the standard criteria
3. Africa Foundation finalises the prioritisation process
4. Africa Foundation approves the project
5. Approved projects are added on to Africa Foundation Project Menu.
6. Funders/Donors select projects of their choice from the Africa Foundation Project Menu regardless of the position on the prioritisation list.

The majority of the participants in the present study seemed to be ignorant of the modalities of project approval and funding. This knowledge could have gone a long way in improving the people's understanding of the procedures and also the quality of project proposals they made. The question that comes to mind, concerning the cascading of information to the grassroots, is whether the communication strategy of Phinda and the Africa Foundation to work only through community leadership, is effectively serving its purpose. As indicated by literature, the

community perceptions and attitudes may make or break both conservation efforts and the tourism business.

Up to the time of data collection of the present study, the Africa Foundation had no established mechanism to monitor the impact of their social development projects from the perspective of community perceptions and attitudes, especially at the grassroots. The interviewees, however, indicated that the Africa Foundation was busy working on a monitoring programme, which would take into account the perceptions and attitudes of local residents on the ground. The participants also identified the need to educate the donor community on the sensitivity associated with the needs of the rural communities around the game reserve, before they selected projects to fund. Availability of funding was considered a critical factor before the announcement of the number of bursaries could be made. This was meant to improve the management of projects. The interviewees also added that logistical considerations determined the choice of bursary interview venues. Unfortunately, the Organisation took it for granted that the community was aware of these details. At the end of the day, good communication and transmission of information may result in the prevention of unnecessary confrontation and conflict between Phinda and the local. It goes without saying, that responsible leadership (at all levels) plays a significant role in relationship-building and collaboration for addressing the needs of all stakeholders.

The adapted nominal group technique findings on participation in social development showed an overwhelming appreciation for the initiatives of the Africa Foundation by the local community. Participants identified a variety of projects ranging from education, bursary scheme, primary healthcare and small business development and they had high expectations for more projects.

6.6 PARTICIPATION IN BENEFIT-SHARING

Participants indicated that some community members expected the land occupied by Phinda to be physically handed over and others were expecting financial benefits, which would come to them as individuals. Yet others prioritised community needs to be balanced with individual household benefits. To expect a buy-in from communities, they must perceive the benefits of direct economic and indirect developmental, social or cultural, are greater than the cost of conservation (Taylor, 2008). Balint (2006) discusses the significant costs associated with living in or around protected areas. The findings of this present study concur with Telfer and Sharpley (2008) that negative community perceptions and attitudes stemmed from the stifling of

economic diversification, for example agriculture (crops, livestock, horticulture and others) due to the presence of the game reserve and also marginalisation of local residents to jobs of lesser importance. Individual access to project benefits is not only socially stratified but spatially uneven, because unequal socio-political access of benefits amplify existing inequalities at the local level and create new forms of community divisions (Laudati, 2007).

Lack of participation in management and decision-making processes associated with benefit-sharing was also a pertinent issue. According to participants, levels of participation depended on the status and socio-political relations, such as those more connected had more opportunities to participate and also to receive more benefits than those who were not. Democratisation of the decision-making process leads to improvement of the quality of life for rural residents as observed by Zou *et al.* (2014).

There was great appreciation for both financial and non-financial benefits from the participants. Non-financial benefits were popular among the participants. These included job opportunities, infrastructural development, the bursary scheme and business opportunities. In line with Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014), intrinsic benefits appear to provide local community members with a sense of stewardship for the game reserve and its tourism resources. Phinda employed many people from the local communities. Unfortunately, the Human Resources Department of &Beyond Phinda was not able to provide the exact number of workers from Makhasa and Mnqobokazi.

Some participants raised concerns over the number of job openings because there was a growing population of unemployed youth within the community. Tangible economic impacts (and therefore positive perceptions and attitudes), which may be both, direct or indirect dominates the research literature (Strickland-Munro & Moore, 2014). This view is confirmed by the results of the adapted nominal group technique which showed that most of the participants who posted job opportunity were actually referring to the need for Phinda to increase the employment opportunities. The employed local residents were concerned about the low level jobs which most of the local community members occupy and that very few were in the management positions. Promotions were rare and decision-making positions were occupied by outsiders, mostly whites.

The participants explained that in spite of many children from the community having benefited from Africa Foundation bursary scheme and completed their tertiary education in relevant fields, none of them was being trained for management positions by the time of data collection

of this research study. Some respondents were worried about the monitoring role of Government, which was non-existent at Phinda. As a custodian of the people, the Government should have established mechanisms to monitor whether the tourism operators are adhering to agreements and also the communities are receiving their befitting benefits.

However, issues of transparency, fairness and general governance were raised and these views concur with Simpson (2009) who argued that negative perceptions and attitudes may result from inequality of benefit-sharing. Adapted nominal group technique results showed unequal benefit-sharing with Phinda being on the more advantaged side in relation to the local communities. Balint (2006), together with other authors (IUCN, 2010; Ruhanen *et al.*, 2013; Strickland-Munro & Moore, 2014), emphasise the importance of good governance. Participants in this study identified training and educational need for good local governance.

6.7 ISSUES WORTH NOTING

The value of conservation and tourism was clearly understood and well appreciated by participants, especially the older generation and this is in agreement with the findings of Snyman (2014). Perceptions and attitudes of participants on the land rights negotiations, conservation and tourism positively correlated with age. The older respondents were more positive towards and supportive of the activities of Phinda than the younger generation. Due to the complexity of community-based conservation and tourism, perceptions and attitudes from the community participants spanned from one extreme to the other, from very negative to very positive inputs.

Positive contributions from respondents included participant appreciation of the restitution of land rights and agreements with Phinda. Interviewees expressed confidence in Phinda for running conservation and tourism business, as long as the community members were receiving their benefits in accordance with the agreement. Older participants indicated that they enjoyed cordial relationship with Phinda. The respondents demonstrated that there was potential for private nature reserves to contribute to conservation, tourism and social development. Pegas and Castley (2014) made similar observations.

Phinda facilitated the training of the community leadership and Trust members for the negotiation preparations. The respondents also indicated that Phinda familiarised and educated community leadership on wildlife and tourism. There were positive perceptions on the employment opportunities created by Phinda and also the training programmes it had put in

place. These came from some of the participants, especially those who were either beneficiaries or their relatives had been employed by the Company. Participants also appreciated conservation and environmental education offered in schools by Phinda, through once-off presentations and anti-poaching campaigns in the community. The participants valued the protection against wild animals rendered by Phinda.

Among the issues raised by the respondents, is the lack of knowledge and understanding of the historical background of the land in and around Phinda, the restitution of land rights negotiations and the current relationship with Phinda. Almost all participants concurred on the lack of active community participation in conservation and tourism. According to the interviewees, there was not enough community education and training in wildlife management, especially for the youth.

Power relations were perceived to be skewed in favour of Phinda Management. The respondents observed that community participation in management and decision-making on issues of conservation, tourism, social development and all other issues directly affecting the community, was lacking (Nelson, 2010; Nielsen, 2011; Jusoh, 2012; Zou *et al.*, 2014). It was noted that there were very few, if any, community members who were occupying management and decision-making positions at Phinda, in spite of the Company (through the Africa Foundation) having supported a large number of youth, some of whom have already graduated from tertiary education with relevant qualifications.

There was a strong argument from the participants that the majority of community members were employed at the lowest levels within the organisation. The respondents indicated that there was no transparency in employment opportunities, equity and progression, as most of the top post were occupied by outsiders, most of whom were whites. As explained by management, lack of interest to upgrade, high levels of illiteracy and the lack of competitive edge, were some of the attributing factors. Therefore, there is a need to rethink around issues of building capacity as one of the means to achieve more active participation of the local community in order to get their full support for conservation and tourism endeavours.

As was the observation of Mariki (2015), the participants perceived an unequal sharing of the costs and benefits of conservation and tourism. The non-involvement of the community in the management and decision-making about benefit-sharing negatively affected the relationship of Phinda and the community, as well as among the residents themselves. The lack of good local governance motivated the participants to advocate for more education and training in this area.

There is therefore need for capacity development and good governance for the empowerment of the local residents (Muzirambi & Mearns, 2015).

Where to go from now? In an analogue, the University of California Climate Solutions Group stressed that the people most at risk are the world's 3 billion poorest people (the category in which the rural local communities belong), while the majority of pollution is created by the wealthiest 1 billion. Veerabhadran Ramanathan, Director of the Center for Atmospheric Sciences, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the University of California, San Diego, concluded that the wealthy are leaving behind a planet of uncertain future for children and the generations yet to be born (University of California, 2016). Literature has also confirmed that in conservation, the poor local residents bear the heavier cost and are short-changed when it comes to benefit-sharing. It has also been argued that communities will do better if they voice their concerns and expectations and then take a more advocacy approach to their own interests (Muzirambi & Mearns, 2015).

Conservation and tourism authorities such as Phinda, have to be the bigger persons to champion and support a positive shift in participation and hence ownership of natural resources, namely bending the curve. According to Business Dictionary (nd), “bending the curve” consists of changing the conditions of a problem so that the output or the result improves, resulting in the “curve”, or graph of changing conditions over time being “bent” in a more positive direction. In the same vein, negative perceptions and attitudes of local residents could be turned around into more positive, meaningful and productive relationships, as illustrated by Figure 6.1 (to follow).

Knowledge and understanding of both positive and negative perceptions of the local community, is a starting point for conservation and ecotourism authorities to fully appreciate and respect locals and establish linkages for mutually beneficial relationships. There is need for turn-around strategies that takes all stakeholders on board. Hence, the Bending the Curve Model, in which negative views, opinions, attitudes and actions are twisted into positive attributes through improvement of communication strategies. As a result, active participation of local communities is achieved and ultimately sustainability in conservation, ecotourism and social development would be the result.

Engaging local communities by using all possible avenues available facilitates an in-depth understanding of the nature and status of relationships between conservation and tourism authorities (whether private sector or Government) on one hand, and the local communities on the other hand. This study proposes a revolutionary look at negative criticisms in which, instead

of presenting an overshadowing gloom, they usher a world of possibilities of turning darkness into bright light. The whole concept of the Bending the Curve Model is based on taking advantage of one's weaknesses and transforming them into formidable strengths, which would propel organisations and communities in one direction and that is, forward. Improvement of communication strategies and exploration of all avenues of communication allows the tourism and nature conservation authorities and the local communities to undergo thorough introspection aimed at discovering their inner potential to bring about positive change and improved relationships. As a result, sustainability of conservation, tourism and community development would be the major winners.

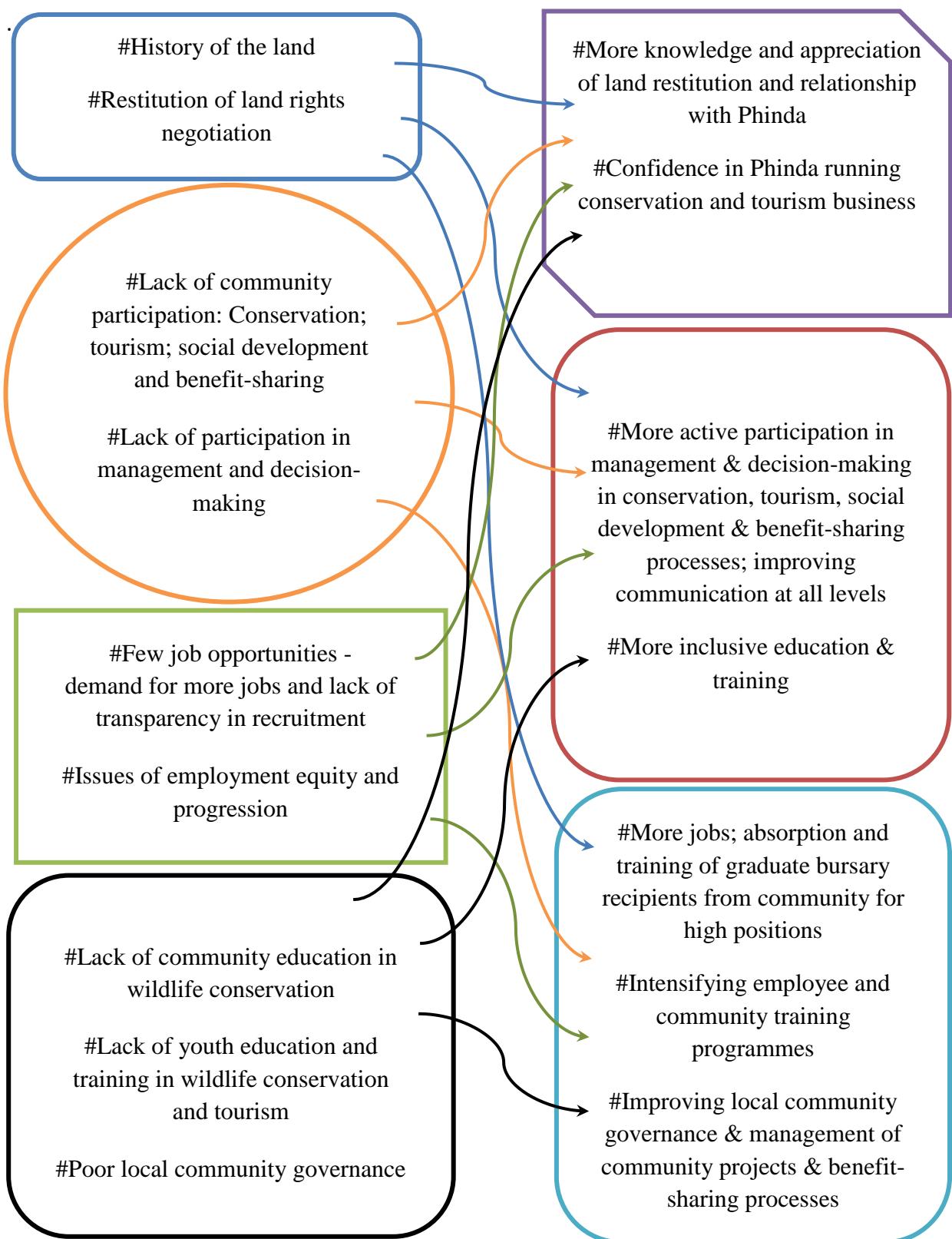


Figure 6.1: Bending the Curve Model for perceptions of participation in conservation and ecotourism to enhance collaboration and communication (Author, 2017)

The Bending the Curve Model, therefore, could contribute enormously as an important tool within the community engagement framework for both private sector and Government, nature conservation and tourism development. This is due to its strength of emphasising the “bending” of negative factors into constructive and progressive attributes that would support sustainable development. A new paradigm is brought about in co-operation with private sector tourism and conservation entities, the community and the Government, as the watch dog of the entire process.

This research proposes that there should be a turn-around strategy to address issues that might negatively affect conservation, tourism and social development and therefore suggests concrete, practical ways which could be implemented by not only Phinda Private Game Reserve, but also other private game reserves. For example, &Beyond and Africa Foundation are facilitating a bursary programme without harnessing the potential of the graduates so that they may directly contribute to sustainability of conservation and social development. This study recommends, in the context of the Bending the Curve Model, that Phinda identifies critical and relevant areas being pursued by the bursary recipients and create a management internship program for the graduates in which they would be exposed to different facets of management, relevant to their qualifications for a stipulated period of time (may be 3, 6 or 12 months). This program may take the shape of the social responsibility programmes in which the graduates would be receiving a stipend. &Beyond would achieve the following goals: firstly, bringing the graduate beneficiaries closer to nature so that they would directly contribute to its sustainability and social development and in the process acquire a sense of responsibility and ownership. Phinda and the community would benefit from an extra hand and could also motivate some of the graduates to pursue conservation and tourism careers. Secondly, by creating this platform, Phinda would help in capacity- building and motivate retention of educated children within the communities, instead of them migrating to big cities.

It is also possible for &Beyond, together with the local community leadership, to create and manage a bursary beneficiary bonding scheme, in which they facilitate that the graduates be attached (for a short period of time, e.g. 3, 6 or 12 months) to Phinda and the local community, according to their qualifications, before they decide where they would like to go and work. Issues in the form of concerns, challenges, expectations and criticisms raised by the research participants could be dealt with by developing an educational programme targeting all stakeholders, i.e. management members of both &Beyond Phinda and Africa Foundation, local community leadership and grassroots community members. Local governance and leadership

educational workshops require to be prioritised and implemented, given their importance in sustainability discourse. Most of the challenges concerned with managing stakeholder relationships and sustainability would be addressed in a more collaborative manner. As noted by Horisch *et al.* (2014), Understanding local community perceptions of their roles in conservation, tourism and social development, and their relationships, enables the creation of critical sustainability-based values for stakeholders.

&Beyond Phinda and other private game reserves may also consider to strengthen and prioritise their community liaison departments in order to effectively implement an open-door communication strategy, besides only depending on community leadership. Community liaison department would be charged to increase both Phinda and Africa Foundation visibility within the context of community and at the same time raise the community status, in the interest of true partnerships. Being on the ground, officials would be able to interact directly with local residents and get accurate perceptions and views, on one end but they would be also in a position to effectively represent these views to &Beyond and vice-versa. The communication gaps brought about by potential gate-keepers would be eliminated. In the process of converting the negatives into positives in the Bending the Curve Model, regular Phinda Private Game Reserve management- Community forums, which are facilitated by community leadership may be organised in order to improve relationships and create a common understanding among stakeholders.

Factors for consideration in the application of the Bending the Curve model to community engagement principles within the context of both private and government game reserves and protected areas are analysed. Basically, there should be an understanding and acceptance of the existence of divergent views and opinions in all the facets of conservation and ecotourism development. It is also important for conservation and ecotourism authorities to be able to distinguish real critical issues and prioritise them. This calls for improved communication strategies, which enable them to reach out to stakeholders in all important segments of the local communities and integrate their views and opinions into the greater framework of planning and management of these entities.

Application of the Bending the Curve Model also depends on the size of the population of the local communities around the protected areas. The model may be more effective for smaller, more cohesive communities, because the possibilities of reaching out to all levels and sectors are higher. A common understanding of issues, expectations, challenges and strengths may be

easily established and a communal way forward could be easily reached. Conservation and ecotourism authorities and researchers should also take into consideration the representativeness of issues affecting the community, game reserves and ecotourism development.

It is critical to note that the collection of data concerning the protected areas and the communication strategies applied, must not interfere negatively with the core business of conservation and ecotourism. This means that effective communication strategies should be put in place before thinking of implementing the Bending the Curve Model. The willingness of conservation authorities to embrace and support change also has an impact on the success of the Bending the Curve Model. For example, the readiness of conservation and ecotourism operators to take on board local communities into true leadership and decision-making roles and that of local residents to support the process through constructive engagement, play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of the model. Essentially, successful application of the Bending the Curve Model can only be possible when all stakeholders share the conviction of the need for change and also regard one another with mutual respect, as critical components of sustainable conservation, ecotourism and community development. Effort must be therefore, given to collaborating with, rather than undercutting, locally-based initiatives, paying attention to local variations, and working with pre-existing societal structures that have the potential to support conservation goals (Levine, 2006) and promote tourism and social development.

6.8 SUMMARY

The participants appreciated the importance of conservation and ecotourism. Perceptions on land rights negotiations, relationship with &Beyond Phinda, conservation and ecotourism were influenced by the age of the participants, with most of the positive contributions coming from the older generation. Skewed power relations, issues around good governance, unemployment, inequitable distribution of costs and benefits were discussed in this chapter. On the other hand, there was evidence of the strides which had been made by &Beyond Phinda and the Africa Foundation in bridging the gap between conservation, ecotourism and community. However, divergent and sometimes conflicting views emanated from local community, employees and management of the game reserve.

It was clear that there were no effective communication strategies between the conservation and ecotourism operators and the local residents, which would keep everyone in the loop about the developments taking place. What management perceived to be the interests, concerns,

challenges, aspirations and roles of the local communities, sometimes differed significantly with reality, as noted from the responses of the local residents, the documentary analysis and the observations that were made by researcher?

The need for active participation in decision-making and management of conservation, ecotourism and social development cannot be over-emphasised. Also, the improvement of communication strategies and the need for capacity development were also discussed. There was general consensus on the importance of sustainable conservation, ecotourism and social development. All that was needed was for all parties to cooperate and collaborate in the process. However, it was not clear how far the authorities were prepared to entrust some of their authority to the community. The Bending the Curve concept may contribute to turning around criticism to the positive contributions that are needed for better communication strategies in the interest of sustainable conservation, ecotourism and social development. The model offers concrete, practical and long-term strategies which, when carefully applied may facilitate collaboration among stakeholders and reduce potential of future conflicts.

Chapter 7

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION

“Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is a process, working together is success.” (Henry Ford)

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This study serves as a vehicle to raise awareness among local communities on their rights and responsibilities with regard to nature conservation, tourism management and social development. It informs conservation and tourism authorities about the challenges, concerns, expectations and attitudes of the local communities, as perceived by the residents themselves which, if addressed appropriately, would lead to sustainable conservation, tourism business and social development. The research then provides an intervention strategy in the form of a model, which if carefully planned and effectively implemented would enhance stakeholder collaboration and sustainability.

This chapter consists of four main sections. It starts off with a summary of the major findings of the research study, with respect to the stated aim: *To investigate perceptions of the nature and extent of local community participation in wildlife conservation, ecotourism management and social development at Phinda Private Game Reserve, and their contribution to sustainability.* Secondly, it presents the limitations of the study and clarifies the context in which it was conducted. Thirdly, the chapter deals with the implications of the findings on conservation, tourism and social development, and the placement of the study within literature. Finally, it provides recommendations for further research and conclusions.

7.2 SYNTHESIS

The main focus of this study was to expose a diversity of issues pertaining to community participation in wildlife conservation and tourism management. The perceptions and attitudes of the local community regarding the level of their involvement in decision-making and management of conservation and tourism formed the core of this study. The underlying research question was, *“What are the perceptions of the local community at Phinda Private Game Reserve of its participation in wildlife conservation, ecotourism and social development and how may these views contribute to sustainability?”*

The related objectives were addressed through the administration of semi-structured interviews with local residents, employees of Phinda and management of Phinda and the Africa Foundation. Documentary analysis, personal observation and the adapted nominal group technique were used to augment the interviews. Data collected yielded substantial insights into the perceptions of the community on its participation in conservation, tourism management and social development.

The following summary of findings will be presented with respect to the five objectives of the study to illustrate how the research goal and question were addressed.

Objective 1: To investigate the perceptions of the local communities on restitution of land rights

In South Africa, evidence from literature illustrates that land rights restitution agreements did not create conducive environments for active community engagement in conservation and tourism planning, decision-making and management (Naguran, 2002; Ngubane & Diab, 2005). Local communities are still playing peripheral roles in protected areas.

One hundred (100) participants from Phinda, Mnqobokazi and Makhaza were interviewed and an additional twenty participated in adapted nominal group technique session. Participant composition considered the diversity of the communities. The majority of the interviewees was youth below the age of 36 years and represented 61% of the total. There is evidence of a positive relationship between the age of participants and their knowledge and understanding of the restitution of land rights negotiations and the history of the area. The older generation was the main contributors to the historical background of the study area and the restitution process (15% were forty years and above). There was great appreciation for the positive role Phinda played during the whole process of restitution negotiations. For example, the establishment of Government-community-Phinda partnership, the facilitation of community committees and the education and training of community leadership contributed to the successful negotiation process.

On the other hand, the youth displayed very limited or even lack of knowledge and understanding of the restitution of land rights negotiations and the current relationship of the community with Phinda. The youth is the future custodians of the land in which conservation and tourism business is being conducted by Phinda. Their indifferent attitude and lack of interest could be futile to conservation, ecotourism and social development agendas. Early engagement of the youth in robust discussions enables the private game reserves, like Phinda, to

prepare them to deal with and integrate the new set of priorities and expectations of the younger generation into the protected areas' developmental plans. The findings also revealed that the participants felt strongly that there was a need for community education in the legalities of the restitution of land rights negotiations to enhance community understanding of the terms of agreements and improve working relationships.

Objective 2: To assess the extent to which Phinda Private Game Reserve is involving the local communities in planning, decision-making and management in conservation, tourism and social development

The findings showed that the older community participants preferred non-involvement in Phinda conservation and tourism business, as long as a constant flow of benefits was maintained, according to the agreements. However, the youth interviewees were advocating for much more and meaningful participation in decision-making, planning and management of wildlife, tourism and social development at Phinda.

There was general agreement among the interviewees that the community members were not directly involved in decision-making and management processes at Phinda. Also, there was a call for an alignment and management of community expectations, especially those of the youth, through robust engagement among stakeholders. Private game reserves, like Phinda, may consider assessing the kind of relationships they have with the local communities. The evolution of the interactions, imply the need for re-alignment of community engagement to accommodate the younger generations in decision-making and management processes.

Research literature illustrates that the exclusion of the community from decision-making processes is the main source of conflict that undermines conservation efforts. There were skewed power relations in favour of Phinda Management, which had much control over conservation, tourism and even social development projects at the expense of the local communities. Participants argued that very few local residents were in management and decision-making positions and that the majority were outsiders, mostly whites. There were also suggestions that more youth from the bursary scheme should be trained and integrated into the management of wildlife and tourism.

Objective 3a: To investigate perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in wildlife management

Very little change in conservation and tourism management has taken place over a long period of time, even after the restitution of land rights processes in South Africa. The perceptions of participants were that local communities were yet to become actively involved in conservation

and tourism management. As Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014) rightly pointed out, this study also identified governance issues related to power differences and conflicts over the use and distribution of resources, like access, benefit and cost sharing and natural resource management as being some of the main concerns of local community participants.

There were negative perceptions due to lack of opportunities for community participation in conservation. As a result, the local residents tended to alienate themselves from both wildlife and tourism management and some even sabotaging the conservation activities. The findings also revealed that there was a need for community education and training in wildlife conservation and tourism management for the residents to be relevant and actively involved. Views and attitudes of local residents on their participation in conservation are a determining factor in the harmonisation of their relationships with the conservation and tourism operators. The concerns and expectations of the local people should be considered and managed in the interest of conservation, ecotourism and community itself.

Objective 3b: To investigate perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in tourism planning and management

One of the expectations of the communities, following the agreements with Phinda, was active participation in ecotourism management. Integration of local residents, especially the youth who were beneficiaries of the Africa Foundation Bursary Scheme, was top on the community priority list. According to the findings, the community members felt excluded in both management and decision-making within the tourism sector of Phinda Private Game Reserve. The study also highlights a strong view from the participants that Phinda gave preferential treatment to people from outside to occupy management and decision-making positions in tourism.

Direct employment was highly commended by the participants. However, there were divergent views expressing that expectations were not met in terms of job opportunities, promotion and progression. This research study also established the need for the consideration of capacity-building and empowerment of local community members for higher positions with more responsibilities in conservation and tourism. Participants suggested more active participation of the community in the lodge section of Phinda and also the improvement of communication strategies among stakeholders.

Objective 3c: To investigate perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in socio-economic development

The findings indicate that there was consensus among participants in terms of meeting community expectations on infrastructural development. The study affirms that Phinda made a remarkably positive impact within the surrounding communities in terms of healthcare, school infrastructural development, employment, education and skills development, and small business development.

Job opportunities and business development directly improved the livelihoods of the local residents, according to the interviewees. Success in local community entrepreneurial activities due to conservation and tourism has a positive impact on the perceptions and attitudes of the local people. The relationship of Phinda and the local community was also under scrutiny. A donor-beneficiary relationship existed prior to the restitution of land rights agreements. A paradigm shift was anticipated, as the local communities changed roles from recipients to partners and land owners. The study showed that, for some community members the donor-beneficiary mentality still persists. It was not clear, from the perspective of the participants, whether the relationship between the community and the private game reserve was based on the previous past or the new dispensation.

According to the findings, the community was not happy about the level of their participation in decision-making and management of social development projects, as they were only involved at the last implementation stages of these initiatives. Local residents perceived the private game reserve (Phinda) as unwilling to actively involve the community in important decision-making and management processes. It seems that conservation and tourism operators prefer a type of relationship which I have referred to as the “arm’s length” approach. As long as the local people keep their distance, do not interfere with conservation and tourism management and are not involved in decision-making processes, the relationships are deemed to be good and consequently, the benefits keep flowing to the community.

The study also highlights concerns, such as lack of transparency, fairness and good governance raised by participants who went on to suggest interventions, such as education and training in local governance issues and also improvement of communication strategies.

Objective 3d: To investigate perceptions and attitudes of local residents on their participation in cost- and benefit-sharing

This study established that there was great appreciation for both financial and non-financial benefits of the community. Healthcare, infrastructural development, job opportunities and business opportunities were the most mentioned non-financial benefits. However, there were

concerns over the limited number of job opportunities, low levels of available employment and limited progression at work. Issues of transparency, fairness and governance also featured with respect to cost- and benefit-sharing. Simpson (2009) summarises it all by arguing that negative perceptions and attitudes may be a result of inequality of cost- and benefit-sharing. The findings of this study are also in line with Snyman's (2014) observation that participants, who are not directly benefitting or are negatively affected by wildlife conservation and tourism, express negative views and attitudes. Participants in this study identified intervention strategies to address these concerns.

Objective 4: To determine the perceptions and attitudes of local communities towards Phinda in terms of its impact on their lives

Community appreciation of the relationship with Phinda and its role during the restitution of land rights negotiations was age-related. The older generation expressed satisfaction with the prevailing relationship with the game reserve, whilst the youth demonstrated indifferent attitudes, lack of knowledge and generally negative perceptions. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the participants in this study were below the age of 46 years. The dwindling numbers of the older people, who clearly understood the history of the land, the restitution of land rights negotiations and the relationship with Phinda, coupled with the increasing population of the young generation with totally different priorities, is cause for concern. This situation needs to be sensitively managed in the interest of sustainable conservation and tourism through a realignment of community participation so that it can accommodate the youth in decision-making processes.

From the findings, the local community appreciated Phinda for its contributions, for example, protection against wild animals, provision of employment, infrastructural development, healthcare and business development. The community participants believed that tourism and wildlife management created employment, which helped in the reduction of poverty. For instance, most of the workers in the northern region lodge section of Phinda come from the nearby communities of Makhasa, Mnqobokazi and Nibela. It was also established in this study that breadwinners were able to support their families and send their children to school and that tourism was a source of economic benefit for the community. Households were being sustained by small businesses, such as a curio market, gardening, poultry, and horticulture, among others. Some of the community members, that is, the Trust members, were still receiving direct financial benefits in accordance with the restitution agreements.

School infrastructural development, together with the bursary scheme by the Africa Foundation have ensured decent and quality education of the children and hence the ultimate improvement of the general standards of living. Some children have already completed their tertiary education and are now gainfully employed. Healthcare, through the construction and support of health centres like the Mduku Clinic, resulted in the improvement of the health of community members and their lives in general. The more the community appreciated the efforts of Phinda, the better the relationship with the game reserve was.

However, some of the participants (especially the younger generation) expressed frustration about the lack of job opportunities, the lower levels of the jobs and the lack of youth empowerment through participation in management and decision-making processes. Lack of active participation in wildlife and tourism management created negative perceptions towards Phinda. Exclusion from decision-making processes may result in alienation and even sabotage. Nielsen (2011), states that the provision of opportunities to participate in management and decision-making processes reduces the conflict potential and creates a sense of ownership of conservation and tourism with the stakeholders. This study affirms that the lack of good communication strategies, transparency and good governance, compromise community perceptions of and the relationships with conservation and tourism authorities.

Objective 5: To develop a new model for perceptions of participation in community-based conservation and ecotourism for enhancing collaboration and communication.

The creation of the bending the curve model was informed by the thinking that many positive outcomes may arise from negative situations. This would depend on a number of factors, but most importantly, our perceptions of the negative factors, our attitudes towards change, the management of the negative condition and the change processes involved. The divergence of views and opinions from stakeholders is the starting point for change. The consideration of issues raised by participants from the local communities, employees of Phinda and Management of both Phinda and Africa Foundation may result in the construction of a developmental framework for conservation, ecotourism and the local community that has a buy-in from all the stakeholders, result in promoting sustainability. Therefore, the Bending the Curve Model represents converting both positive and negative criticisms into tangible, positive outcomes which benefit nature conservation, ecotourism and community development. Recommendations for a turn-around strategy within the realm of the Bending the Curve Model provided, can usher a new paradigm in stakeholder relationships, collaboration and sustainability, when effectively implemented.

Objective 6: To identify gaps, grey areas and opportunities for further research and development in community participation in wildlife and ecotourism management in the context of private game reserves

This study yielded valuable data on community perceptions of its participation in conservation and tourism management in a smaller setting. By nature of being a case study, the results pertain to a particular context. While there are general lessons to be learnt, some of the findings may not apply to certain situations. Therefore, future investigations should strive to explore some areas exposed by the current study, fill in some gaps identified and establish deeper and broader insights into perceptions of the dynamics of community participation in conservation and tourism.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This case study on Phinda Private Game Reserve generated valuable knowledge and understanding of the perceptions and attitudes of local communities on their participation in wildlife conservation and tourism. In spite of the study yielding useful results, there are a few limitations that need to be acknowledged and discussed.

Case study approach: By the very nature of being a case study, this research was limited in both space and scope. Only one private game reserve participated. An ideal situation would have been a study of several cases within the area. This means that while the results of the study contribute to scientific knowledge, the findings may not be easily generalised for other settings. Research literature has illustrated that the local context of each protected area is unique. The more private game reserves and tourism operators studied and geographical coverage, the closer it would be , to establish some level of generalisation on the grassroots perceptions, challenges and solutions.

Identification of cases: This depends on a variety of factors of which one was the willingness of private game reserves and their local communities to support and participate in the study. Voluntary involvement is the most ideal, as opposed to requested. Geographical and logistical accessibility of the study area also needs to be considered because it might interfere with the research process. For this study, the case being the Phinda Private Game Reserve together with its surrounding communities who volunteered to participate in the study. However, geographical accessibility was a challenge as the study area was more than 350 kilometres away

from the residence of the researcher. Transport logistics and expenses were sometimes a challenge.

Size of sample: The sample was small and not necessarily representative of the community. This study being qualitative by nature focused more on the details and in-depth issues raised and the quality of the results than the numerical representatives.

Logistics of data collection: The selection of interview venues was not always easy because there was a need to also consider the nature of the interviewees. Therefore, securing appropriate venues provided challenges at times.

Politics, culture and religion: Some important sources declined the invitation to participate in the study due to fear of political leaders. Some females were not comfortable to attend individual interviews because of their cultural and religious beliefs.

Language barrier: There were also community members who could neither understand nor speak the English Language. The interview questions were translated by an interpreter and the interviewees were requested to respond in any language of their choice.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS ON CONSERVATION, TOURISM, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFIT-SHARING

In a nutshell, the following provides a brief summary of issues that emerged from the present research and may require further consideration. The results of this study may be a valuable tool to be used by both policy-makers and management of private game reserves for their community participation planning programmes, in order to avoid unnecessary and costly conflicts.

Private game reserves, like Phinda, may consider alternative approaches to reach out to the community at grassroots level in the form of education programmes, so as to establish a common vision, understanding and sense of ownership for sustainable tourism and conservation, like taking advantage of their community meetings with iziNdunas or councillors. Effective communication and active participation in decision-making and management of conservation and tourism have a potential to improve relationships in all directions and hence reduce the potential of conflict between conservation and tourism authorities, the local communities and other stakeholders. Fostering development with reference to conservation interests, which requires relationship building among community stakeholders, is an arduous process; but transformational leaders can be integral to achieving goals that benefit all and withstand the test of time.

Power dynamics among stakeholders, especially between the local communities (the land owners) and the conservation and tourism operators (the businesses) need to be carefully managed to avoid future conflict with the younger generation.

A better and fair way of sharing benefits with the local communities should be considered as a way to create a sense of ownership for conservation, tourism and social development. Interventions, including inclusive education and training, may be considered to improve governance at local community level. &Beyond may also play a more pivotal role in educating and guiding the community on good governance, accountability and transparency principles.

Phinda may also consider coming up with a programme where they would identify, recruit, motivate and train bursary beneficiaries and even absorbing the best and most motivated ones into management portfolios. The perceptions and attitudes of the general community members matter and must be taken into consideration in the processes of planning, management and decision-making for conservation, tourism and social development. In summary, the Bending the Curve Model provides the following concrete and practical strategies which could be applied in order to achieve medium-term to long term goals in stakeholder collaboration, sustainable wildlife and tourism management and social development:

- Educational programmes targetting management of both Phinda (representing private game reserves) and Africa Foundation, local community leadership and grassroots community members to deal with issues raised in the study, which may negatively impact on collaboration and sustainability
- Local governance and leadership workshops for local community leaders and other stakeholders.
- Private game reserve management-Community forum may be occasionally planned.
- Strengthening (or establishing, if not available) the community liaison department of the private game reserve
- Establishing a private game reserve management open-door policy
- Management internships for graduate bursary beneficiaries to inculcate values of social responsibility and develop interest in conservation and tourism and social development.
- Creation of a soft bonding scheme for graduate bursary beneficiaries.
- Creating and maintaining a database of the whereabouts of the graduated beneficiaries and facilitating occasional meetings for conservation and community advocacy.

- Developing a special game ranger training programme which takes into account the historical socio-economic and political disadvantages of the local black employees and community members, e.g. increase of the training period and spreading out the learning content.

7.5 PLACEMENT OF RESEARCH STUDY WITHIN LITERATURE

The results of this study illustrates that the issue of restitution of land rights to rightful owners in South Africa is unfinished business. In considering Ostrom's (1990 in Naguran, 2000) property rights principles, as was the case with the Mbangweni and St Lucia in KZN and the Makulele of Kruger Park (Bosch, 2003), the local communities of Phinda, who were beneficiaries of the restitution process, only enjoy limited rights to their land by being restricted to the operational level rights of access and withdrawal. However, the younger generation is beginning to query the status quo.

This study also confirms the importance of active community participation for the sustainability Kamphorst *et al.* (1997), Campbell-Vainio and Mattila (2003), Ngubane and Diab (2005) and Jusoh (2012) investigated the consequences of excluding local communities from actively participating in conservation and tourism. Yoopetch (2015) emphasised the importance of active participation by local communities. This research also revealed skewed power relations in favour of the conservation and tourism authorities, in line with the findings from authors such as Cheong and Miller (2000), Nustad and Sundnes (2011) and Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014).

Kamphorst *et al.* (1997) discuss the refusal of authorities to devolve power to lower levels, which is in agreement with the views of the local community at Phinda. Local residents advocated for more active participation in decision-making and management. Strickland-Munro and Moore (2014) dealt with governance issues related to power differences and conflict over resources. On that note, the findings demonstrated the lack of confidence of the local people on the nature of local level governance. Hence, the participants suggested education and training of the local community in protected area governance. Nielsen (2011) and Giampiccoli *et al.* (2015) also revealed the importance of capacity development in community-based tourism.

Community perceptions of Phinda and participation in conservation, tourism and social development spanned from very positive all the way to very negative. The results of this study concur with the findings reported in the literature. Balint (2006), Hottola (2009), Simpson

(2009), Jusoh (2012), Somarriba-Chang and Gunnarsdotter (2012) and Snyman (2014) investigated positive and negative perceptions of local communities concerning conservation and tourism authorities. The Phinda case study sheds light on the role of good and effective communication strategies and consideration of the voices of the community at grassroots level for more sustainable and effective conservation and tourism. Discrepancies on cost- and benefit-sharing were identified as some of the sources of conflict between local residents and the conservation and tourism operators. Balint (2006) highlighted significant costs associated with living in or around protected areas for both the neighbouring communities and the game reserve owners. Taylor (2008) and Spenceley (2010) also addressed issues pertaining to cost-benefit-sharing and came up with similar results.

The findings of this research shows that the local community around Phinda were not satisfied with their involvement in conservation and tourism at the game reserve and that this could generate potential conflict in the future. Much work has been done on community engagement in protected area management, however, more issues need to be pursued in order to gain a clearer picture of the dynamics of community participation. This investigation engaged with the local residents for their views and opinions and as a result, valuable inputs, including criticism of management, governance and communication strategies, were attained. Also, suggestions for the improvement of the process were made. This method of engaging with the local community at Phinda, together with the added constructive criticism and recommendations, could serve as a valuable community engagement framework for private sector tourism companies and private game reserves to involve and work with surrounding communities to ensure more sustainable private game reserves in the future.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

More focused research on local community views and attitudes on participation in management and decision-making for conservation, tourism and social development, is an imperative. In-depth and broader investigations on community perceptions and attitudes on participation in conservation and tourism would provide a much deeper insight into the nature and impact of relationships between conservation and tourism authorities, and local communities, on sustainability. The following recommendations for further research could be applicable to both the industrial and academic sectors:

- Community participation in the management of private game reserves;
- Comparative analysis of community participation: Case studies of private game reserves;

- Active participation of local communities in conservation and tourism: A comparative analysis of success stories;
- Dealing with paradigm shifts on community roles with respect to conservation and tourism;
- Managing socio-economic development programmes as a tool for sustainable conservation and tourism;
- Effective communication strategies between private game reserve operators and local communities and its impact on wildlife and tourism management;
- Conflict resolution and power dynamics in conservation and tourism;
- Power relations in conservation, tourism and social development;
- Governance in private game reserves and surrounding communities;
- Impact of community perceptions and attitudes on sustainability of conservation, tourism and social development;
- Cost- and benefit-sharing management in protected areas.
- Development of an instrument for the determination of the impact tourism and conservation has on the livelihoods of local communities directed at grass root level.
- Development of specific, measurable, medium-to-long term strategies, including curriculum of educational, collaborative and communication strategies, that could be used as a turn-around strategy of the Bending the Curve Model in sustainable conservation, tourism and social development.

7.7 CONCLUSION

A level playing field should be created to enhance good communication among the stakeholders in which the voice of the down-trodden and disadvantaged community members would be heard and understood. &Beyond's vision and philosophy concerning conservation, development and rural community empowerment (Care for the land, its wildlife and its people) is the cornerstone of the successful partnership with rural communities and is a beacon of excellence. Cordial, cooperative and beneficial relationship between Phinda and the local communities is a necessity for the benefit of conservation, tourism and the community. However, issues and concerns expressed by participants, including lack of active participation in decision-making, employment opportunities and equity, education, training, governance and community development should be considered and addressed wherever possible.

The voice of the community occupies a critical space, among the other stakeholders because sustainability of conservation, tourism and social development initiatives cannot be realised without the buy-in of the local residents. This study can be used as a model to examine perceptions of local communities in other parts of the country, for example in Mpumalanga and

Limpopo that are closely tied to private game reserves in the Greater Kruger Region and elsewhere in the world.

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Appendix A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



24 January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam/Name

This letter is to introduce Mr Jones Mudimu Muzirambi, who is a PhD (Environmental Management) candidate in the Department of Environmental Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at the University of South Africa.

He is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis and other publications on the topic: **Perceptions of local community participation in wildlife and tourism management: Phinda Private Game Reserve, Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.** He would like to invite you to assist with this project by agreeing to be involved in interviews; and allowing him access to your community during the research period and providing him with all the necessary help in order to achieve the goals of this study.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions. Since he intends to make a tape recording of the interview, he will seek your consent, on the informed consent form, to record the interview, to use the recording or a transcription in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that your name or identity is not revealed, and to make the recording available to other researchers on the same conditions. It may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistants (or a transcription service) for transcription, in which case you may be assured that such persons will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement, which outlines the requirement that your name or identity not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained.

Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address and contact details given below.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. K. Mearns

Department of Environmental Sciences-College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences-UNISA

Tel: (+27 11) 471-2973

mearnkf@unisa.ac.za

Appendix B

AUTHORISATION FROM PHINDA TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



Phinda Private Game Reserve
Private Bag X6001
Hluhluwe
3960

07 February 2013

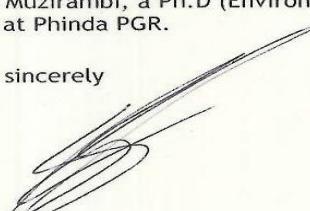
To Whom It May Concern

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH AT PHINDA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

This letter serves to confirm that Phinda Private Game Reserve grants Mr. Jones Muzirambi (Student Number 47725842) permission to conduct research within Phinda Private Game Reserve and the surrounding communities.

Jones Muzirambi, a Ph.D (Environmental Management) at UNISA will conduct the following study at Phinda PGR.

Yours sincerely


Simon Naylor
Conservation Manager
Phinda Private Game Reserve

www.andBeyond.com

Private Bag X27, Benmore, 2010, South Africa | T (+27 11) 809 4300 | F (+27 11) 809 4511

And Beyond South Africa
Travel (Proprietary) Limited
Trading as &BEYOND
Reg. No: 1990/003653/07

DIRECTORS HJA Kent (CEO),
AC Adams, H Coetzee,
N Robinson, RR Powell,
B Wewege

REGIONAL DIRECTORS
R Beumer, JM King,
KJ Pretorius, G. Timms

COMPANY OFFICERS J. Humphries
(Chief Marketing Officer)
COMPANY SECRETARY
JP De Villiers

Appendix C

AUTHORISATION FROM TRIBAL AUTHORITIES TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Makhasa Community

P. O Box 214,
HLUHLOWE
3960.

To whom it may concern

Ref: Consent letter for Jones M. Muzirambi (Student No.: 47725842) to undertake research in our community, entitled "Impact of community participation in wildlife and tourism management: A case study of Phinda Private Game Reserve of Maputaland District in KZN, South Africa".

This letter serves to confirm that:

1. JM Muzirambi, a PhD student at UNISA has been granted approval by the traditional council to conduct his research at MAKHASA COMMUNITY.
2. Approval is also granted to the student to conduct interviews and administer questionnaires and focus group meetings with community members.
3. Access is also granted to all parts of community
4. A copy of the final research findings should be sent to the traditional council.

We will greatly appreciate your co-operation and support during this research.

Kind regards

 P. Mchabela

Name and Designation

Traditional Council Stamp.



Mnqobokazi Community

BOX 295
HLUHLUWE
3960

To whom it may concern

Ref: Consent letter for Jones M. Muzirambi (Student No.: 47725842) to undertake research in our community, entitled "Impact of community participation in wildlife and tourism management: A case study of Phinda Private Game Reserve of Maputaland District in KZN, South Africa".

This letter serves to confirm that:

1. JM Muzirambi, a PhD student at UNISA has been granted approval by the traditional council to conduct his research at MNQOBOKAZI TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
2. Approval is also granted to the student to conduct interviews and administer questionnaires and focus group meetings with community members.
3. Access is also granted to all parts of community
4. A copy of the final research findings should be sent to the traditional council.

We will greatly appreciate your co-operation and support during this research.

Kind regards

N.G NGOBESI - Secretary

Name and Designation

Traditional Council Stamp,



Appendix D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM



Consent Form

IRB Nr.: 2013/CAES/066

Title of Research Project:

Perceptions of Local Community Participation in Wildlife and Tourism Management: Phinda Private Game Reserve, Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Dear Mr/Ms/Rev/Dr _____ Date _____ 2014

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The effectiveness of local community participation in ecotourism management and benefit-sharing may be perceived in diverse ways, depending on the power dynamics within the protected areas. The priorities of local community, their attitudes, opinions, levels of literacy and their new roles as owners of land, require a clear understanding of their perceptions about their role in both management and benefit-sharing processes in these protected areas.

The purpose of this research is to establish the nature and extent of local community participation in, and assess its impact on, wildlife and ecotourism management and benefit-sharing at Phinda Private Game Reserve. The study aims, among others, are to investigate attitudes and perceptions of the local community on their participation in wildlife and ecotourism management and planning, and also in socio-economic development issues.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The study requires your participation in the following manner:

Data collection is made up of three sessions, each of which will be 4 weeks long.

- **30** Voluntary respondents from each of the five communities around Phinda Game Reserve will be required. The expected time commitment for each respondent will be around 30 minute.
- Respondents may be representative of any ethnic group, social group, age or gender.
- A briefing session will be held where volunteers will be requested to take part in the study.
- Basic demographic information will be required from you, such as age group, occupation, gender.

Respondents will be provided with a questionnaire which has a variety of questions. They are requested to read each question carefully and respond in the space provided, as honestly and accurately as possible.

Some questions give options from which you have to choose the answer that best demonstrates your knowledge/perception/feelings. Others give you room to express yourself in the best manner possible.

Participants will also be asked a set of questions by the researcher to which they have to answer as truthfully as possible, for the benefit of the research study. The interview may be recorded in order to capture all the information you are providing and to ensure that there is no misrepresentation of the facts.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The comments or opinions of the focus group are viewed as strictly confidential, and only members of the research team will have access to the information. No data published in dissertations and journals will contain any information through which focus group members may be identified. Your anonymity is therefore ensured. The following will be undertaken, among others:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all researcher notes and documents.
- Notes, interview transcriptions and transcribed notes and any other identifying participant information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher. Materials will be destroyed when they are no longer needed.
- The researcher and the members of the researcher's committee will review the researcher's collected data. Information from this research will be used solely for the purpose of this study. Any final publication will contain the names of the public figures that have consented to participate in this study (unless a public figure has asked for anonymity). All other participants taking part in this study will not be identified and their anonymity will be maintained.
- Each participant has the opportunity to obtain a transcribed copy of their interview. Participants should indicate to the researcher if they desire a copy of the interview.

WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE

I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I therefore participate voluntarily until such time as I request otherwise.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

- The study seeks to provide a deeper insight into community participation in protected area governance, especially with respect to private game reserves. It intends to expose options available to successfully engage local communities in both wildlife and ecotourism management and at the same time taking into account the need for effective social development.
- The study serves as a vehicle to raise awareness among local communities of their rights and responsibilities with regard to biodiversity conservation, ecotourism management and sustainable development through knowledge-sharing.
- It also aims to sensitise private tourism operators and other stakeholders about challenges, concerns, views and expectations of the local communities and possible ways to close the gaps.

- The study intends also to identify and expose some knowledge gaps and grey areas that may exist on the local community participation in wildlife and ecotourism management, which need further exploration.

INFORMATION

If I have any questions concerning the study, I may contact the supervisor, Prof. K. Mearns, at the Department of Environmental Sciences, Florida Campus, UNISA. Tel: 011 471 2973.

CONSENT

I, the undersigned, (full name) have read the above information relating to the project and have also heard the verbal version, and declare that I understand it. I have been afforded the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the project with the project leaders, and hereby declare that I agree voluntarily to participate in the project.

I indemnify UNISA and any employee or student of UNISA against any liability that I may incur during the course of the project. I further undertake to make no claim against UNISA in respect of damages to my person or reputation that may be incurred as a result of the project/trial or through the fault of other participants, unless resulting from negligence on the part of UNISA, its employees or students. A copy of this consent form can be obtained from the researchers.

Signature of participant:

Signed at on
Date

WITNESSES

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Appendix E

INSTRUMENT FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Community participation in wildlife and tourism management at Phinda Private Game Reserve, Maputaland District, KZN, South Africa

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF PHINDA

You are kindly requested to respond to the following questions. Your sincerity will enhance the successful achievement of the goals of this project.

This study aims to establish the nature and extent of local community participation in, and assessing the impact on, wildlife and ecotourism management, benefit-sharing and social development at Phinda Private Game Reserve. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses will be anonymous and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It is up to you to decide whether or not take part in the study. Should you choose to participate, you are kindly requested to complete a consent form before you freely participate and contribute in the interview.

However, you are free to withdraw from the research at any time and without giving any explanation. Even if you decide now to take part in the study, you are free not to answer any question or questions if you choose to do so.

Interview Question Guide for COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. What do you understand by the restitution of land rights programme?
2. What were your expectations of the restitution of rights to your land within Phinda?
3. How did the community participate in the negotiation process of restitution of land rights?
4. Did you receive any form of education and training on the process of restitution of land rights, your roles, rights and responsibilities?
5. As a community, do you feel that your expectations, interests and aspirations were considered in your negotiations with Phinda?
6. As a community, do you feel that you are participating as equal partners in decision-making and management of
 - a) tourism?
 - b) wildlife conservation?
 - c) cost- and benefit-sharing?
 - d) social development.
7. Please explain your role as a community, for example, through your leadership?
8. After the restitution of land rights process and agreement with Phinda, do you feel that your expectations, wishes or aspirations, as a community have been or are being achieved? Please explain?

9. Do you, as a community have any say in the distribution of benefits coming from wildlife conservation and tourism management? Explain.
10. Are there any plans or programmes in place, to prepare the young generation of your community that in the future, they become part of management and decision-making team in such enterprises, like Phinda?
11. Please explain further, including the role played by Phinda in achieving this goal.
12. If you were given another chance to look at the agreements of restitution of land rights and those with Phinda and you are allowed to make any changes you so wish, what changes are you going to suggest, i.e. what would you want to add, remove, change or re-negotiate within the current agreements?

Interview guide for MANAGEMENT of Phinda and the Africa Foundation

You are kindly requested to respond to the following questions. Your sincerity will go a long way in the successful achievement of the goals of this project.

This study aims to establish the nature and extent of local community participation in, and assessing the impact on, wildlife and ecotourism management, benefit-sharing and social development at Phinda Private Game Reserve. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses will be anonymous and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It is up to you to decide whether or not take part in the study. Should you choose to participate, you are kindly requested to complete a consent form before you freely participate and contribute in the interview.

However, you are free to withdraw from the research at any time and without giving any explanation. Even if you decide now to take part in the study, you are free not to answer any question or questions if you choose to do so.

1. What were the expectations of the community in the negotiation processes of both the restitution of land rights and business with Phinda?
2. Do you feel Phinda is meeting these expectations? Highlight measures which have been taken and challenges which still exist.
3. In which way(s) were the local communities prepared for the negotiation processes? Was there any training in terms of the process, their roles, rights and responsibilities, issues of partnership, etc.?

Do you feel the community are participating as equal partners in decision-making and management of:

- a) tourism management?
 - b) wildlife conservation?
 - c) cost and benefit sharing?
 - d) social development?
- 4a) In your view, does the local community have a role to play in decision-making processes?

- 4b) What can be done to instil a sense of ownership which would ensure 100% community support in the business?
5. Are there any plans or programmes in place, to prepare the young generation of the local community that in the future, they become part of management and decision-making team in such enterprises, like Phinda?
- 6a) What is your staff compliment in your section?
- 6b) Describe briefly the organogram of the lodge section/game reserve section at Phinda.
7. How many of your staff at each level of the organogram are from the local communities (Makhasa, Mnqobokazi, Nibela)?
8. Briefly discuss your staff capacity-building programmes from the last three years to today.

Appendix F

ADAPTED NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE GUIDE

Description of issue statement

Ngubane and Diab (2005) observes that the drive towards wildlife conservation and, hence, tourism development is hampered by the conflict between local communities and nature conservation and tourism authorities. For sustainable tourism planning and conservation it is necessary to seriously consider the needs and aspirations of local communities, as well as those of other stakeholders, hence, the importance of consultation (Balint, 2006; Mutandwa & Gadzirayi, 2007; Hottola, 2009).

It is critical for the voice of the community itself to express their opinions, views, perceptions and even concerns of the local people with respect to their participation in decision-making and management and benefit-sharing.

In this workshop, you are requested to engage, brainstorm and examine the following:

1. To investigate the success of active community participation in *nature conservation* at Phinda.
 - What is working?
 - What is not working?
 - What can Phinda do to improve this?
 - What can the local community do to improve this?
2. To investigate the success of active community participation in *tourism and lodge management* at Phinda:
 - What is working?
 - What is not working?
 - What can Phinda do to improve this?
 - What can the local community do to improve this?
3. To investigate the success of active community participation in *social development* at Phinda:
 - What is working?
 - What is not working?
 - What can Phinda do to improve this?
 - What can the local community do to improve this?
4. To investigate the success of active community participation in *benefit-sharing* at Phinda:
 - What is working?
 - What is not working?
 - What can Phinda do to improve this?
 - What can the local community do to improve this?

ACTIVITIES

Day One

1. Generation of themes by each focus group.

- The silent nominal phase - A brain-storming session which encourages the participants to produce thoughts and feelings individually.
 - You are provided with, several clean index cards and pens. Write your feeling and/or thoughts on the theme provided on a separate card, either as a word or a sentence.
2. Affinity clarification and grouping (individually and in silence) and introduce coding.
 - On the flip charts, according to their meanings, group members will stick together the pooled cards with similar meanings into sets.
 3. As a group brainstorm and generate names or titles, for the affinity sets.
 - Be more specific in deducting the title, which is most representable for the sets.
 4. Writing of paragraphs:
 - Discuss all the ideas in the allocated theme. Clarify with group members what each word or sentence on the cards mean. Make a group summary for title generated.
 - Researcher composes a paragraph on the discussions.
 5. Groups swap themes and start all over again from step 1 to step 4.
 6. Analysis of the focus group summary discussion by researcher.
 7. Type the results.