

*Ethnotourism at Blouberg in the Limpopo Province: A quest for sustainability, 2006*

ETHNOTOURISM AT BLOUBERG IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE,  
SOUTH AFRICA: A QUEST FOR SUSTAINABILITY

BY

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Blouberg is situated in the Limpopo Province, west of the Soutpansberg, in the Republic of South Africa. The majestic Blouberg Mountain is a 2000-meter high prominence inhabited by a Sotho-speaking community whom live in relative isolation. The area is rich with a diverse range of natural elements: tree species, birds, animals and geographic features as well as cultural heritage. The camp, which is located on top of Blouberg, is a prime example of government-initiated community development. This tourist camp was established on the mountain with the objective that the local community would manage it for their own benefit. The community on Blouberg has strong cultural beliefs and heritage resources, which proves to have immense potential for ethnotourism development.

However, cultural heritage and natural resources are also extremely vulnerable to over-exploitation and over-development, which consequently creates a need for sustainable management.

The aim of this study is to conduct a systematic analysis of sustainable ethnotourism on Blouberg in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. It acknowledges the multidisciplinary limitations and challenges that sustainable ethnotourism development presents, especially in rural communities such as the Hananwa at Blouberg. With regard to contemporary tourism development in the Limpopo Province, there seems to be a sense of expectation amongst local communities. This study investigates whether the full potential of the Blouberg camp is being achieved and whether the need for sustainable management exists. A sustainable management plan requires accurate research, evaluation of resources and the analysis of potential opportunities.

Although there is limited information available regarding the opportunities, threats, impacts and effects of ethnotourism in South Africa, it is possible to integrate existing literature with principles of sustainable development to create a valuable framework to evaluate ethnotourism on Blouberg.

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This dissertation is organised around three broad themes of analysis: sustainable development, ethnotourism and the tourist camp at Blouberg (*en route the African Ivory Route.*)

The first theme concerns the assessment of the three cornerstones of sustainable development: social justice, economic efficiency and environmental integrity. Secondly, the analysis of ethnotourism involves the evaluation of complex relationships between the tourism industry, environmental sciences, human sciences and business practices. This theme also examines how a destination such as Blouberg can present itself to tourists through its own distinctive cultural and heritage resources; these unique resources (including arts, handcrafts, language, gastronomy, religious beliefs, architecture and dress) constitute the foundation of sustainable ethnotourism.

The third theme focuses on the cultural camp situated on top of Blouberg, which forms an integrated part of the *African Ivory Route* in the Limpopo Province. Butler and Hinch (1996: 5) claim that indigenous communities have a competitive tourism advantage because of their unique cultural and natural resources. Thus, the third theme examines the government-initiated tourism scheme implemented in the area of the Hananwa community on Blouberg. The research explores examples of cultural and natural resources in the community that have the potential of being used for sustainable ethnotourism development. The challenge in the quest for sustainable ethnotourism at Blouberg is neither isolated nor straightforward; it is a collection of different arguments and perspectives from various disciplines in order to identify the optimum strategy for sustainable ethnotourism development on Blouberg.

This dissertation contemplates the following key question: ***Can ethnotourism at Blouberg be developed in a sustainable manner?***

In investigating the research question, the following questions are also considered. These questions determine a systematic analysis of ethnotourism at Blouberg.

- What constitutes sustainable development in the context of ethnotourism?
- What resources are available for tourism development on Blouberg?
- Can cultural or natural resources on Blouberg be used as socially and environmentally acceptable tourism products/services, and will it be economically viable for the local community?

The objectives of this study are based on the analytical questions listed above. Thus, the objectives are:

- to provide an outline of theoretical concepts relating to ethnotourism, sustainable development and legislative requirements for the development of ethnotourism in South Africa;
- to describe and assess potential markets and specimens of cultural and natural resources on Blouberg for sustainable ethnotourism development;
- to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism development at Blouberg and identify its potential impacts;
- to provide strategies, guidelines and constructive recommendations regarding impending sustainable ethnotourism development at Blouberg;
- to compile a report with applicable maps, figures and tables that illustrates the current and progressive state of tourism at Blouberg; and
- to conclude and justify the researcher's findings in response to the research question.

The next section presents the relevant literature that demonstrates an awareness of key texts and central concepts relevant to the proposed study.



## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Due to the multidisciplinary and varied nature of sustainable ethnotourism development, the literature review is based on the integration of various fields and disciplines. A major challenge in the analysis of sustainable ethnotourism is the fact that perspectives in this multidisciplinary field (economics, geography, anthropology, etc) differ immensely, which consequently leads to a conflict of perspectives.

Whilst conducting the literature survey, it was found that the perspective of an environmentalist on sustainable development might differ completely from an economist's; an anthropologist's view may differ from a businessman; a geographer's perspective from a biologist's. In many cases, sustainability has been treated as the optimal trade-off between economic, environmental and social elements. For the purpose of this dissertation, an integrated approach has been adopted to establish a balanced foundation for the strategic analysis for sustainable ethnotourism.

According to Keyser (2004) and DEAT (2003), *economic* benefits of tourism have been reiterated in various reports and governments of developing countries consider tourism as a desirable strategy towards sustainable development. The economic impacts of tourism are often assessed according to the multiplier effect of the industry – measuring the benefits of tourism in terms of, amongst others, increased employment, visitor imports, tourism capital investment, tourist expenditure and tourism-related government revenue (Briassoulos, 1991; WTO, 1993).

*Environmental* elements of tourism are considered interdependent – relying on each other for sustainable development and survival. According to the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a fundamental element of tourism development. Briassoulos (1991) explains that EIAs should consider the negative effects of tourism such as water pollution, air pollution, environmental degradation, erosion, congestions, disruption of fauna and depletion of natural resources, amongst others.

Tourism can also have positive effects on the environment: contributions to conservation, ecological protection, and documentation of archaeological sites as well as promoting environmental education (WTO, 1995; DEAT, 2003).

Whilst considering economic and environmental perspectives found in tourism literature, it is essential to focus on the cultural and natural elements of heritage. Richards (1996) states that cultural (ethno-) tourism is a term that is widely used but regularly misunderstood. Policy-makers and academics rapidly start labelling this sector as the fastest growing industry, without considering the limits of this multidisciplinary field such as conflicts and inequality between the profitable private industries versus the socially sensitive public sector.

Boniface (1999) reiterates the complexity of cultural elements in the tourism industry by pointing out that different disciplines have different ways of interpreting the benefits of ethnotourism. Cultural or ethnotourism is often seen as the *solution* that brings benefits of tourism to local communities (ATLAS, 2002). The ability of tourism to generate foreign exchange revenue, create employment and alleviate poverty has provided it with a political and social legitimacy in the developing world (Boniface, 1999: 1).

Ramchander (2004) considers the incorporation of contrasting concepts of economic development (capitalism) and environmental conservation (preservation) through sustainable development. The reality of the situation is that tourism development is not always as simple and straightforward as it seems and the implementation of ethnotourism is not always the best option for development.

Boniface (1995) and Swarbrook (1999) examine the effects of overpopulated tourist areas as well as inefficient management and planning. The problems caused by improper tourist development proved to be unfavourable for local environments and communities. Richards (1999) explains the implications of idealistic illusions relating to 'tourism benefits' by stating that if you build an attraction (such as the tourist camp on Blouberg); the tourist will not necessarily arrive inadvertently - he calls this the "Field of Dreams" Philosophy. The literature has revealed that numerous cultural, or ethnotourism, developments have been product-led, causing undesirable consequences to the local socio-economic environment.

Product-led tourism at Blouberg caused a sense of expectation amongst local community members (*Personal comment*, Kgomotso, 2004) and a minimal number of visitors produced minimal revenue for the community (Sebata, 2006). Due to a lack of funds and revenue, there are no financial resources to repair vital infrastructure for the camp situated on top of Blouberg (*Personal comment*, Boonzaaier, 2006).

The development on Blouberg was claimed to present a pioneering example of sustainable ethnotourism development, which forms the focus of the dissertation. Based on the Hananwa community on Blouberg in the Limpopo Province, the study intends to bridge a gap in the multidimensional approach to sustainable tourism development by assessing various aspects of sustainable ethnotourism development.

The integration of various perspectives in the tourism literature reviews offers a comprehensive and balanced strategy for ethnotourism development in South Africa. Throughout this dissertation, sustainable development will therefore be focused primarily on ethnotourism development in rural areas in South Africa, specifically Blouberg.

Although *sustainable* (to maintain) *development* (to improve) is a fusion of two contradictory concepts, the approach includes both responsibility and sensitivity, which subsequently proves to be a potential option for the development of ethnotourism. Due to the interdependence of the tourism industry on the environment, it has a logical interest in sustainability. The term 'sustainable development' was adopted by the Brundtland Commission as the key concept behind the 1987 report: *Our Common Future*. It defines sustainable development as development "...that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs..." (Brundtland Report, 1987)

To appreciate the diversity of the concept of sustainable development in South Africa, the recent publication "The Enviropaedia" (Parry-Davies, 2004) was of great importance to this dissertation. Contemporary publications and journals, such as the *Enviropaedia* and *Progress Magazine* (a sustainable development journal), form part of the global dialogue on sustainable development.

The United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, 2002) had discussions and debates on sustainable tourism development and community-based resource management, which forms the basis of sustainable ethnotourism in developing countries and regions such as Blouberg.

According to Butler and Hinch (1996: 6), most academic publications on tourism were formerly written in the context of mass tourism. Mass tourism is usually market-led and packaged for large groups of foreign or local tourists (Keyser, 2004: 364).

Publications focusing on the development, trends and complexity of the tourism industry include titles such as: *Tourism Development* (Keyser, 2004), *Tourism: Principles, practices, philosophies*. (McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie: 1995), *Tourism development and Growth* (Wahad and Pigram, 2000) and *Tourism Management* (Ryan and Page, 2000), amongst other recent publications.

These publications are of collective value in this dissertation and support the comprehensive approach towards tourism and position the sub-categories of tourism as an integrated part of the entire industry. Due to the contemporary nature of this research topic, the Internet is considered a vital tool for up-to-date research. All references obtained from the World Wide Web have been recorded and documented – they can be located in the bibliography of this study.

Contemporary tourism develops into alternative tourism, producing specialised forms of tourism, for example: health tourism, coastal tourism and ethnotourism. Ethnotourism – in particular – is a celebration of what is unique and beautiful, representing a community's most valued inheritance. (World Bank, 2000: i) It allows the tourist to experience the unique cultural activities of a specific region. (Slabbert and Saayman, 2000: 5) Ethnotourism in South Africa is very different from cultural or ethnotourism in Europe or North America. Literature reviews have proven that Africa's distinctively vibrant heritage is unlike the rich built environments of first world countries (ATLAS, 2002; Richards, 1999).

The trends and impacts of ethnotourism in a specific area is said to be site specific, depending on the demographical status, geographical proximity, ecological sensitivity and socio- economic standards of the specific region (Boniface, 1999: 2 – 5). The local community, the Hananwa, which is the object of study in this dissertation, is situated on top of the Blouberg Mountain in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. According to Van Schalkwyk (1995), the Hananwa tribe established themselves in the Blouberg region approximately 180 years ago. It is believed that the Hananwa people are descendents of the greater Tswana-speaking tribes (*Hurutse*) from Botswana and northern South Africa.

Although limited information is available on the Blouberg community, a few authors published historical-, war- and missionary-related material about Blouberg, such as T.J. Makhura (1996), S.M. Moifatswane (1991), Lize Kriel (1994 - 2000), N.C. Weidemann (1964) and J. Bergh (1999), amongst others. From a linguistic perspective, A.E. Kotzè (1987) compiled a study on the phonologic system of the Hananwa: *Die fonologiese sisteem van Hananwa*. G.H Franz (1896 – 1956) produced heartening reading material based on the lifestyle and folklore of the Hananwa.

From an environmental perspective, J.A. Bumby (2000) produced a document on the geological aspects of the Blouberg formation and its surroundings; this provides the reader with sufficient knowledge on the location and altitude of the holistic Blouberg environment.

### **3. METHODOLOGY.**

This study is centred on extensive primary research, data gathering, secondary literature reviews, observations and random scientific sampling. Primary data gathering was conducted through systematic field observation, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, psychological observation, random scientific sampling and narrative analysis. The participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approach was also used due to its inclusion of visualization methods and semi-structured/informal interviews. A combination of qualitative (field and research notes) and quantitative (surveys and numeric data) methods was included in selected phases.

Analytical questions focus on the evaluation of the camp on top of Blouberg with regard to its initial purpose, natural and cultural resources, potential tourism products and activities, tourist market and consumers as well as current statistical revelations.

The dissertation was conducted in 3 phases.

### **Phase 1: Research**

During this phase, a wide range of primary and secondary resources was consulted. As formerly mentioned in the dissertation, literature reviews focus on the integration of sustainable development, tourism management and ethnotourism in a specific locality such as Blouberg in the Limpopo Province. This phase therefore included the study of research material from libraries, annals, documents, records and journals related to aforementioned topics. The internet was also used as a tool to obtain recent and relevant information on the study area. This phase was initiated in early 2004 and continued up to the submission of this dissertation in 2006.

Continuous research and exploration of relevant information ensured that the focus remained on the evolution of contemporary sustainable ethnotourism development in the context of Blouberg throughout the study.

### **Phase 2: Fieldwork**

The second phase included physical site visits and consultation with stakeholders such as *African Ivory Route* staff (Morata, P. and Sebata, C), Project Manager of the *African Ivory Route* (Boonzaaier, N), cultural tourism specialist (Boonzaaier, C.C), etc. Fieldwork was conducted from 15 August – 21 August 2005 to gain understanding of the progression of sustainable tourism development in the *African Ivory Route*. Site visits to the Blouberg camp allowed the researcher to communicate with local residents and observe the socio-economic condition in the area.

During site visits, cultural and natural resources were documented to serve as examples of ethnotourism products.

Field observation and sampling methods were used to document the potential resources that can be used for tourism at Blouberg. Mathieson and Wall (1993: 159) and Naude (2000: 47 – 57) isolate approximately eleven elements of culture that attract tourists to a particular destination namely: handicrafts, gastronomy, art, music and dance, history and visual reminders, language, educational systems, religion and beliefs, dress, socio-economic activities (work and technology), architecture and distinctive design, and leisure activities. A selection of cultural elements (i.e. handicrafts, gastronomy, leisure activities, art, language, music, dance, dress, religion, architecture and medicinal uses of plants) forms the foundation of the resource analysis process.

In the course of the study, key stakeholder consultation unveiled further information related to oral history and the locality and significance of cultural and natural heritage resources. Relevant stakeholders – including the Project Manager of the *African Ivory Route*, Mr. Boonzaaier and assistant staff at the head office in Polokwane (Pietersburg) – were consulted to gain an understanding of the planning, development and management of the *African Ivory Route* throughout the study.

### **Phase 3: Report writing**

This phase involved the collation of all information gathered in phase 1 and 2 into a comprehensive thesis, called *Ethnotourism at Blouberg in the Limpopo Province: A quest for sustainability*. The dissertation includes the following information:

- Definitions, legislation, policies, standards, and criteria;
- Literature review and methodology;
- Situation analysis and resource assessment;
- Constructive recommendation and strategy analysis; and
- Plans, maps, and figures.



As integrated elements in the study, the situation analysis and resource assessment of cultural and natural assets on Blouberg form a crucial element in this dissertation. The resource assessment is conducted according to the integrated approach illustrated in Table 1.

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
Phase 1 identifies the phenomenon in terms of Mathieson and Wall's (1993: 159) elements of culture that attract tourists to a particular destination.	Phase 2 identifies the potential resource's role and responsibility within the <b>socio-cultural</b> context, in other words, analyse its function in social/community life.	Phase 3 determines the resource's viability in the <b>tourism</b> industry, considering its economic value and feasibility as a potential tourism product/service.	Phase 4 determines the <b>sustainability</b> of the resource and its capability to be conserved within its socio-cultural context, as well as responsibly utilized as a tourism product/service, without relinquishing the environment.

Figure 1: **Resource Analysis on Blouberg**

In essence, the methodology of this study embraces a combination of research methods that create a sequential format where actions (practical application) can be guided by informative data (constructive recommendations).

#### **4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:**

According to the Brundtland Commission's globally-accepted publication: *Our Common Future*, 'sustainable development' is "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs..." (DEAT, 2006: 18) The concept 'sustainability' started out as an environmental protection framework in the early 1980s, which gradually evolved into a holistic plan to conserve both social and environmental factors. (Parry-Davies, 2004: 189; Nash, 1996: 120 – 121)

The National Framework for Sustainable Development (DEAT, 2006: 18) states that South Africa's definition of 'Sustainable Development' is based on the definition of the Brundtland Commission. The 'sustainability' concept is embedded in the National Constitution (Section 24 (b) (ii)), which guarantees all citizens the right to have "...the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development." South Africa has formalised its definition of 'sustainable development' by including it in the law. The definition of 'sustainable development' in the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) is:

*"...Sustainable development means the integration of social, economic and environmental factors into planning, implementation and decision-making so as to ensure that development serves present and future generations..."*

In many cases, sustainability has been treated as the optimal trade-off between economic, environmental and social development. The Johannesburg Stock Exchange Social Responsibility Index has recently referred to the triangular framework created between economic, environmental and social elements as the 'triple-bottom-line approach' (JSE Report, 2003: 2). The paradigm shift from sustainability's role in the financial sector to the tourism industry proves to hold immense potential for responsible development in a community.

Tourism is the "...science, art and business of attracting and transporting visitors, accommodating them and graciously catering for their needs and wants..." (McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie, 1995: v). It is a global concept where people travel from one destination to another for a purpose: be it leisure, business, education or sport. Due to the interdependent nature of the tourism industry, it has a logical interest in sustainability.

The long-term viability of the tourism industry at any destination therefore lies in the preservation and maintenance of its natural and cultural resources. (UNESCO Website, 2004) Stakeholders and participants in the tourism industry now realise that this industry must be carefully planned and managed in order to conserve the world's fragile cultural and ecological areas.

Tourism has the potential to sell environmental resources, both cultural and natural, as its products – making it fully dependent on the immediate environment and the society. Although *sustainable* (to maintain) *development* (to change) is a fusion of two contradictory concepts, the approach includes both responsibility and sensitivity, which subsequently proves to be a potential option for tourism development in South Africa. According to Myburgh & Saayman (1999: 18), sustainability embodies the interdependence between social, environmental and economic issues. Indeed, sustainability is also about integrated balance and is rarely analysed in isolation. In 1995, the World Tourism Organisation stated that sustainable development in tourism can be defined as “...tourism development that meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future...”

Globally, the concept of ‘sustainable tourism development’ has been gaining momentum since the 1992 United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. Stakeholders and participants in tourism realised that the industry must be properly planned and managed in order to preserve the world's fragile ecological and cultural resources. (UNESCO, 2004: 10) According to authors such as Diggins (1998), sustainable tourism a goal or ideal to which all types of tourism should aspire. Tourism destinations, where principles of sustainable tourism have been implemented, prove to be more inclined to protect the environment and ensure the destination's continued success in the future (Diggins, 1998:2).

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For the purpose of this dissertation, the concept of sustainable development is integrated into ethnotourism strategies to create a viable industry for communities in South Africa. This requires the analysis of legislation and relevant regulations that also emphasises the aim and purpose of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and related legal requirements. According to South Africa's EIA regulations (as promulgated by the Government in July 2006), a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is of crucial importance for any development.

This chapter reviews the relevant legal requirements and the EIAs that have been completed for the tourist development on Blouberg in 2002.



4.1. Legislation and relevant authorities:

There are a number of legislative requirements, laws and regulations applicable to sustainable tourism development in South Africa. These include policy frameworks, legislation and regulations affecting tourism operations in South Africa, such as:

- White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa 1996;
- The White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological Diversity, 1997 (<http://www.gov.za/whitepaper/1997/conservation.htm>)
- National Forests Act, No. 84 of 1998 (Department of Water Affairs & Forestry, [www.dwaf.gov.za](http://www.dwaf.gov.za), 2006);
- Water Services Act, No. 108 of 1997 and the National Water Act, No. 36 of 1998;
- National Veld and Forest Fire Act, No. 101 of 1998;
- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), No. 107 of 1998;
- World Heritage Convention Act, No. 49 of 1999;
- National Heritage Resources (NHRA) Act, No. 25 of 1999.
- Tourism Amendment Act No 8 of 2000;
- Tourism Second Amendment Act No. 70 of 2000;
- White Paper on Sustainable Coastal Development, 2000;
- White Paper on Integrated Pollution and Waste Management for South Africa, 2000 (DEAT, [www.environment.gov.za](http://www.environment.gov.za), 2006); and
- Provisional Declaration of Types of Heritage Objects, Notice 630, 2000 (Department of Arts, Science, Culture and Technology, [www.dacst.gov.za](http://www.dacst.gov.za), 2006).

Due to the sensitive cultural and environmental nature of the study area, the National Heritage Resource Act (No. 25 of 1999) and implementation of an Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are two of the most important regulations to consider. The NHRA (No. 25 of 1999) determines that no alterations may be made to any structure older than 60 years or to an archaeological or palaeontological site without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Once all the requirements for the development application (which may include an EIA and granting of a heritage permit) have been fulfilled, the relevant planning authority will issue permission for the proposed development. (Baumann and Winter, 2005)

The EIA conducted by Terblanche and Associates (2002) is an assessment of the (potential) impacts that may result from tourism development on the environment, which is described in more detail in the following chapter. However, the EIA (Terblanche, 2002) does not state what impact the consequential tourism industry might have on the integrated environment and its inhabitants as well as the area's cultural and natural heritage. South African legislation considers heritage assessments and management plans as an integral part of the greater environmental management plan laid down for any major development or existing operation. With the proclamation of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), this process has been clearly delineated and refined. The NHRA aims to underpin existing legislation and gives guidance to developers and existing industries about the management of their heritage resources.

The South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) is a statutory organisation under the NHRA (No. 25 of 1999) that serves as the official governing body overseeing the protection of South Africa's cultural heritage. Its mission is to raise awareness of South African heritage and promote involvement in the identification, assessment, recording and management of heritage resources.

SAHRA is responsible for national regulations, which is usually supported by local and provincial authorities who manage heritage resources as part of their planning and development processes.

According to the NHRA (No. 25 of 1999), a heritage impact assessment (HIA) must include:

- a. the identification and mapping of all heritage resources in the area affected;
- b. an assessment of the significance of such resources in terms of the heritage assessment criteria set out in section 6(2) or prescribed under section 7;
- c. an assessment of the impact of the development on such heritage resources;
- d. an evaluation of the impact of the development on heritage resources relative to the sustainable social and economic benefits to be derived from the development;
- e. the results of consultation with communities affected by the proposed development and other interested parties regarding the impact of the development on heritage resources;
- f. if heritage resources will be adversely affected by the proposed development, the consideration of alternatives;
- g. plans for mitigation of any adverse effects during and after the completion of the proposed development; and
- h. the report must be considered timeously by responsible heritage organizations

In order to identify and map all heritage resources in the area on Blouberg, a comprehensive heritage assessment needs to be implemented.

Combined with the EIA (2002), the HIA will be able to assess the potential impact of tourism on natural and cultural heritage. An integrated impact assessment is essential in the strategic development of sustainable tourism development.

Sustainable development entails the simultaneous consideration of economic, social and environmental processes. These elements need to be developed in a responsible manner and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) are tools for improving the decision making process to promote sustainable tourism development.

#### 4.2. Environmental Impact Assessments

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) can be defined as "...the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made..." (Parry-Davies, 2004: 83). EIAs are governed by regulations promulgated in terms of the Environmental Conservancy Act of 1989 and the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) of 1998 provides the overarching legislative framework for environmental governance in South Africa. The EIA and Record of Decision (ROD) as well as all existing planning documents for the tourist development on Blouberg were obtained from the office of the Project Manager: *African Ivory Route*.

I.W Terblanche & Associates, Environmental and Agricultural Consultants conducted the EIA for the tourism initiative on Blouberg in November 2001 (published in 2002), as requested by the Blouberg Community Tourism Association in terms of the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Pretoria. The report contains the results of on-site investigations for the development of a cultural village to serve as overnight accommodation for hikers on Blouberg Mountain.



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The EIA Scoping Report (2002) presented the state of the environment, assessed the potential occurrence of rare and endangered species, identified potential impacts on archaeological and cultural heritage resources, considered the potential impacts on ecological, social and economic elements and highlighted recommendations for the elimination or mitigation of negative impacts. (Terblanche, 2002: 2) No major concerns were identified in terms of environmental, social or economic impacts on the host region. 'R&R Cultural Resource Development Consultants' inspected the project area in November 2001; they confirmed that the site was clear of any archaeological or cultural resources that may be affected negatively by the development (Terblanche, 2002: 6).

The EIA was conducted in November 2001 and reported that great care had been taken to locate the development in an area where any disturbance of archaeological or cultural locations would be avoided.

A copy of the application for authorisation, a letter of submission for the EIA Scoping Report, letter of environmental authorisation and the Record of Decision (ROD) is included in Appendix B. Terblanche and Associates (2002) concluded that proper measures were implemented to obtain the authorisation from the relevant stakeholders for the tourism development on Blouberg. The report also stated that there were no pressing environmental constraints that should prohibit the development and that the project was intended to supply income and employment opportunities in a rural area where unemployment was widespread.

The tourism initiative is therefore considered satisfactory from an environmental (biophysical and socio-economic) perspective and it was recommended that the development be approved by the Department of Finance, Economic Affairs, Tourism and Environment – provided that the recommendations for mitigation of the environmental impact in the report be adhered to.

## **5. SUSTAINABLE ETHNOTOURISM:**

Tourism is a growing phenomenon in both the national and international sphere. Former Minister of Environmental affairs and Tourism in South Africa, Mr. Valli Moosa, stated that "...in South Africa, the tourism sector achieved growth of 20.1% in overseas arrivals during 2002, and currently accounts for one in every eight jobs..." (DEAT, 2003: 3) Subsequently, the growth of tourism has placed a heavy burden on local economies, cultures and environments, which accentuates the need for responsible development and sustainable management.

Similar to any industry in South Africa, the business of tourism encompasses the manufacturing and management of products and services in a trading environment. The business of tourism can also be described as a geographical activity that is activated by the forces of supply and demand. (Keyser, 2004: 23)

Sustainable tourism generally involves social responsibility, environmental integrity, economic efficiency and the incorporation of local communities into regional tourism planning and development. According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Earth Council, sustainable tourism is summarised in the following definition:

"...Sustainable Tourism Development meets the needs of present tourists, host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.

Sustainable tourism products are products which are operated in harmony with the local environment, community and cultures so that these become the beneficiaries not the victims of tourism development..."  
([http://www.biodiversity.ru/coastlearn/tourism-eng/con\\_tourism.html](http://www.biodiversity.ru/coastlearn/tourism-eng/con_tourism.html), 2006)

Ethnotourism is an expanding and innovative phenomenon in the growing world of tourism. As a sub-category in the macro-environment of tourism, the business of ethnotourism therefore includes the manufacturing and management of products and services, driven by supply and demand. The primary focus of ethnotourism is tourism development of natural and cultural heritage resources in a sustainable approach. Natural and cultural heritage resources include various elements such as fauna, flora, artefacts, geographical landmarks and expressions of culture. The term 'ethnotourism' also relates to community-based ecotourism and local development in pristine regions. This type of tourism also includes natural- and cultural-related tourism, which encompasses all aspects of the environment including biodiversity, archaeological aspects, natural heritage, cultural heritage, scenic beauty and other integrated elements of the environment.

The theoretical exposition of ethnotourism can be elucidated by considering the distinctive natural and cultural heritage elements of a specific group of people. An ethnic group can be defined as a collective entity within a larger society that has some sort of common ancestry, memories of a shared historic past and cultural focus on symbolic elements (Reminick, 1983:11). These elements may include a common geographic origin, culture, physical features, religion, language, values and/or customs. Cultural and Heritage resources create a foundation for the growth of tourism by presenting innovative products and services for potential development. (World Bank Website, 2004: i) In addition, the tourism industry has the power to generate funds and customer profiles that make cultural and heritage conservation possible. There is thus a feeling of mutual dependence that exists between tourism, culture and heritage resources.

*Culture* is a dynamic phenomenon that manifests itself in patterns of language, behaviour and forms of activity. According to Naude (2000: 42) 'culture' includes numerous universal systems that fit into society in a systematic manner. These systems include religion, politics, education, language, art, philosophy, technology, economy, society, judiciary and a system of play.

The Reader's Digest Dictionary defines culture as "... the total range of social and artistic expression characteristic of a community or population ... the artistic, intellectual and social pursuits valued by society..." (Grobbelaar, 1987: 782)

Another definition of culture is described by Myburgh & Saayman (1999: 161) as "...conditioned elements of behaviour and the product of that behaviour..."

*Heritage*, on the other hand, is an irreplaceable phenomenon that has been handed down by generations or legacies. Natural and cultural heritage resources are unique physical features, both man-made and existing, which are associated with human activities. (Naude, 2000: 47 – 57) Therefore, the interdependent nature of tourism, culture and heritage promotes the growing trend of cross-cultural appreciation and increased human interaction. McIntosh, Goeldner & Ritchie (1995: 191) identifies this as tourism that covers all aspects of travel whereby persons learn about each other's way of life and thought. This approach also sets the foundation for the evaluation of the concept 'ethnotourism'.

Ethnotourism is the concept of bringing the people, their customs, traditions, beliefs and their history into primary focus for the tourist to appreciate and admire that local heritage. It is part of a paradigm shift in the tourism industry, focusing on the natural and cultural heritage of local communities and pristine environments. (Elliott, 2004) In essence, the goal of sustainable development in ethnotourism is to provide for the needs of tourists whilst respecting the local community, considering their requirements and contributing towards heritage conservation. UNESCO describes the heritage of people as "...all moveable cultural property as defined by the relevant conventions of UNESCO; all kinds of literary and artistic works such as music, dance, song, ceremonies, symbols and designs, narratives and poetry, all kinds of scientific, agricultural, technical and ecological knowledge, including cultigens, medicines and the rational use of flora and fauna; human remains; immovable cultural property such as sacred sites, sites of historical significance, and burials and documentation of indigenous peoples heritage on film, photographs, video..." (June 1995:1)

According to the IFC Performance Standard (Guidance Note 8, 2006), 'heritage' refers to resources having archaeological (prehistoric), palaeontological, historical, cultural, artistic, and religious values, as well as unique natural environmental features that embody cultural values, such as sacred groves and forests, amongst others. The following list of heritage resources describes various elements of cultural and natural significance that could be sustainably utilised for tourism development. (IFC Performance Standard, Guidance Note 8, 2006: 9 – 10)

- *Archaeological Site*: Concentrated and patterned physical remains of past human activity, especially human settlement. A site may include artefacts, plant and animal remains, structural remains or soil features. It may be a large ancient city completely or partially buried by surface soils or other sediment or the ephemeral and superficial remains of a temporary nomad camp. Sites may be underwater, including shipwrecks and flooded habitation sites. Although all sites, as well as isolated (off site) finds, are a record of human activity, the importance of an archaeological site may vary widely according to site type and condition. While sites may be identified by surface remains or suggestive topography, the characteristics of a site and its cultural or scientific importance cannot be identified based on surface examination alone.
  
- *Historic Structure*: Also referred to as historic monuments, this category includes above-ground architectural features (e.g., house, temple, market place, church) that have reached a designated age or have other characteristics, such as association with an important event or person, that make them 'historic' and therefore worthy of consideration as a heritage resource. As with archaeological sites, the importance of an historic structure will vary widely according to the age, type and condition of the structure. Some historic structures may have associated archaeological deposits thereby making them both historic structures and archaeological resources. An historic structure may be abandoned or occupied.

- *Historic District:* This is a contiguous assemblage of historic structures and associated landscape features that constitute a heritage resource extending over a larger area than any single structure. Integrity and thematic interest are the key considerations for defining and determining the importance of an historic district. Temple precincts, graveyards, urban neighbourhoods, and occasionally, entire villages or towns can be classified as historic districts. Historic districts may contain thematically un-related or 'non-contributing' structures that may or may not merit protection in their own right. Historic structures and districts may require protection from direct physical impacts but should also be considered in their visual dimension.
- *Historic or Cultural Landscape:* An area where traditional land-use patterns have produced and maintained landscape features that reflect a particular culture, way of life, or historical time period which merits consideration as a heritage resource. An historic landscape may also include historic monuments and archaeological sites. Integrity and uniqueness are most relevant for judging the importance of this type of resource. While an historic landscape may share aspects of an historic district, the term typically refers to a non-urban area with heritage value. This resource type may also include culturally important natural features such as sacred lakes, waterfalls and forests – such as the sacred forest on top of Blouberg where access is denied to all visitors.
- *Artefact:* A movable object that is created by past human activity and becomes part of an archaeological site or isolated archaeological find. Most archaeological artefacts lose substantial cultural and scientific value when removed from their 'context' in the ground. Archaeological artefacts, in context or not, are most regularly classified as the property of the national government. Their scientific collection and use is controlled through a permitting process administered by national heritage authorities such as the SAHRA. (IFC Performance Standard, Guidance Note 8, 2006: 9 – 10)

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Ethnotourism is an interdependent interdisciplinary concept, concerning various stakeholders and strategies for development. To put this complex concept into perspective, it needs to be explained according to the relevant actors, objectives and strategies. The following table categorizes initial aims (missions) and objectives of phenomena relating to ethnotourism and evaluates the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders. The integration of these elements forms the foundation for sustainable ethnotourism development.



**Figure 2:** Stakeholders and strategies in ethnotourism

1. Subject	2. Actors	3. Objectives	4. Strategies
<i>Cultural and Natural Heritage Sciences</i>	Anthropologists, Archaeologists, Palaeontologists, Conservationists, Historians, Sociologists, Ecologists etc.	To preserve, protect & promote cultural and natural heritage.	Through intensive research, impact assessments, policy implementation, regulation, identification, evaluation, representation and interpretation.
<i>Tourism Industry</i>	Transport and airline industries, Regional developers, Tour operators, Travel agencies, Service and Accommodation sectors.	To optimise economic performance, create tourist facilities, infrastructure and satisfy consumer needs.	Through proper planning, business management, financial assessments, market research, feasibility studies, economic indications, strategic organisation, corporate governance and monitoring of business performance.
<i>Ethnological Sciences and Society</i>	Community members, Local residents, Traditional leaders, community organisations, Local Government, Cultural Heritage groups etc.	To be integrated into tourism decision-making, planning, developing and management, to reap benefits — of — both cultural heritage preservation and the tourism industry as well as be empowered to achieve independent business status.	Through the integration of multidisciplinary tourism strategies as well as through local training and education, integration of traditional structures, government regulation implementation, community consultation and local representation on all levels of tourism management.
<i>Ethno-tourism Industry</i>	Entire public, private and government sectors, including Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), local development organization, community forums etc., Private Sector (businesses and agencies), Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and local Community members	To create a balance between the tourism industry and the heritage (natural and cultural) sector, to protect and conserve natural and cultural heritage resources and to strive towards a shared vision of sustainability.	Through an integrated approach towards planning, development and management of financial, human and physical resources, as well as inter- and intra-organisational cooperation, communication, sustainable management, interactive evaluation, impact assessments, information exchange between stakeholders, interdisciplinary support, continuous feedback, monitoring and reporting, triple bottom line evaluation and active participation of all parties concerned.



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Evidently, the ethnotourism industry is a multifaceted and multidimensional subject that embraces various stakeholders and strategies. Although this concept is still in its infancy in South Africa, the percentage of culturally and ecologically motivated tourists has risen from 6% in 1990 to 21% in 1996 and is currently one of the fastest growing industries in the country.

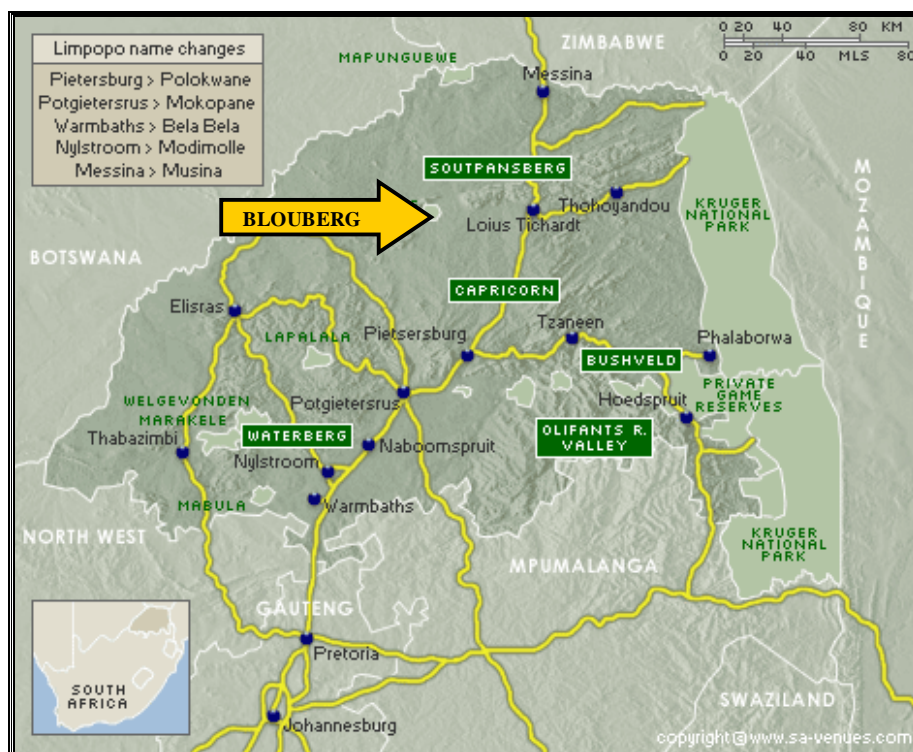
Due to the distinctive characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africa, rich cultural attractions and pristine environmental heritage, South Africa has the potential to significantly increase its ethnotourism and compete in a highly competitive tourism market (ATLAS, 2002).



## 6. BASELINE STUDY:

### 6.1. National and regional setting

Limpopo is the northernmost province of South Africa that was formed from the northern region of the Transvaal province in 1994, and initially named Northern Transvaal. The following year, it was renamed Northern Province, which remained until the name of the province was formally changed to Limpopo – the name of the river on the border with Zimbabwe (Limpopo River) in June 2003.



**Map 1:** Geographical location of Blouberg in the Limpopo Province (<http://www.sa-venues.com/maps/limpopo-relief.htm>, 2006)

Polokwane (formerly known as Pietersburg) is the capital of the Limpopo Province, which was founded in 1884 and named after General-Commandant Piet Joubert. Limpopo Province shares international borders with three countries: Botswana to the west and northwest Zimbabwe to the north, and Mozambique to the east.

Limpopo Province has excellent road, rail, and air links, which make it easily accessible to visitors and travellers. The N1 route from Johannesburg extends the length of the province; it is also the busiest overland route in Africa in terms of cross-border trade in raw materials and commodities. The province offers a wide variety of products, services and experiences to the tourist industry, including scenic beauty, abundant wildlife and cultural heritage sites. (Steenberg, 2006/2007: 6)

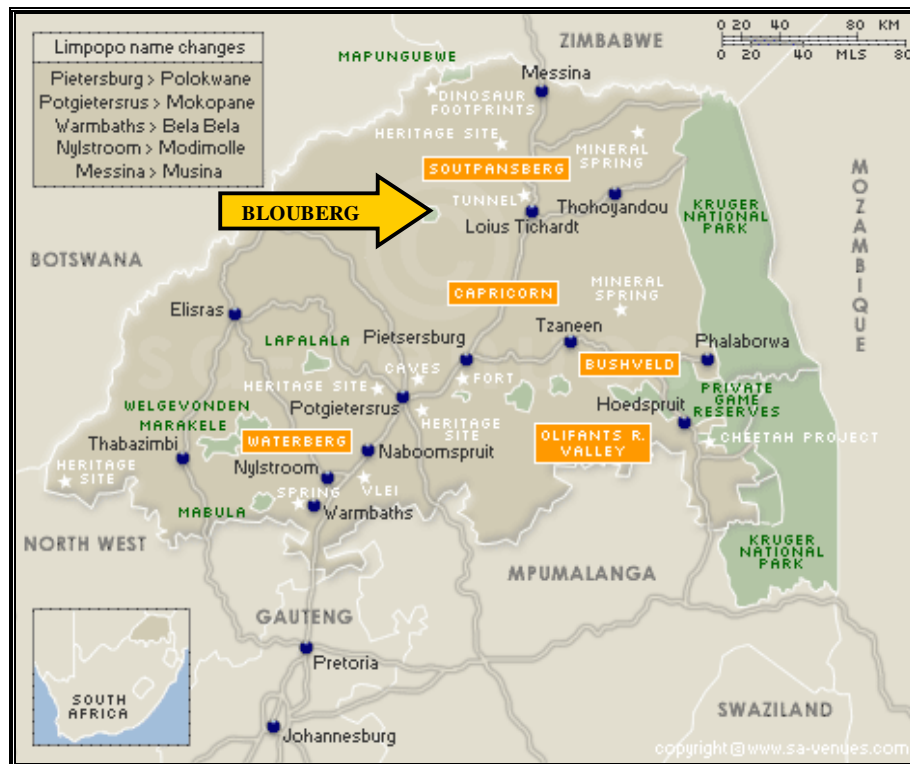
Mapungubwe is a World Heritage Site of archaeological significance in the northern region where the remnants of an ancient civilisation that utilised gold was discovered in the Province. It is based on the rich biodiversity of the Vhembe District, rich in cultural and natural heritage.

The demographic composition of Limpopo Province's population consists of several ethnic groups distinguished by culture, language and race. Statistically, 97.3% of the population is Black, 2.4% is White, 0.2% is Coloured, and 0.1% is Indian/Asian. The most common spoken languages are Tsonga, Northern Sotho, Venda and Afrikaans. The Northern Sotho (Sepedi) make up the largest number of spoken languages (being nearly 57%), Afrikaans (2.6%) and English (0.5%) make up the smallest amount of spoken languages in the Limpopo Province.

The province has immense tourism potential; it consists of a combination of highveld and lowveld, but is mostly covered in savannah. (Else, 2000: 628) A large part of the Kruger National Park lies in the Limpopo Province, which is surrounded by a number of luxurious private game reserves. The Limpopo Province supports a growing tourism industry, which sets a firm foundation for local and regional development in the larger context of South Africa's increasing tourist industry.

## 6.2. Blouberg municipal area

The camp on top of Blouberg falls within the boundaries of the greater Blouberg Municipal area, which is associated with various tourism initiatives, such as the *African Ivory Route* and the Soutpansberg birding route.



Map 2: Tourist attractions around Blouberg in the Limpopo Province (<http://www.sa-venues.com/maps/limpopo-relief.htm>, 2006)

The Blouberg Municipal area covers an area of approximately 5054 sq km and is situated approximately 95km from *Polokwane*, extending right up to the Botswana border. The Limpopo Province and Capricorn District are territories characterized by high levels of unemployment and persistent degrees of poverty. The Blouberg area falls within the category of the lowest income levels in the country. The region has 117 settlements with a population estimated at 161 322 inhabitants (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006). The inhabitants of the area are mostly the Hananwa (Bahananwa) people, Batlokwa people and a small portion of Vha-Venda speaking people as well as other minority groups.

Climatically, annual rainfall varies between 380 and 550mm with most rainfall occurring during the summer months. Evapo-transpiration during the rainy season is high, enhancing the risks of extreme droughts that could have adverse effects on the local economy. The only perennial river is the Mogalakwena River, which feeds the Glen-Alpine dam, which is the only source of pipeline water in the area.

The following statistics were taken from the Blouberg IDP document (2005/2006) to illustrate the demographic statistics, water supply status, waste removals, illiteracy rates, employment figures, energy supply and sanitation figures, amongst others. It should be noted that figures are not static and could have changed due to developments in the Blouberg municipal area.

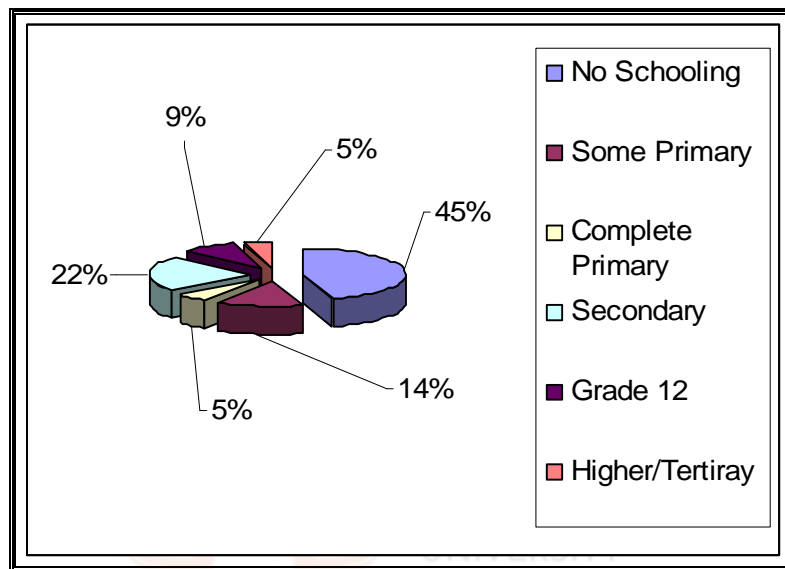
### **6.2.1. Population figures**

According to Statistics SA (census 2001), the total population of the Blouberg municipal area is estimated at 161 322. The dominant group within the municipality is that of African people (approximately 99% of the total population). A large percentage of the population is still under 21 years of age. In order to support the ever-increasing number of entrants to the job market, Blouberg Municipality needs to address the challenges of increased employment, education and training.

Due to the high number of youth who represent the majority of unemployment figures, the dependency ratio in Blouberg Municipal area is very high. Poverty levels in the Blouberg area are also very high. This results in a number of social factors. A large number of households survive with an annual income below R18 000-00. One of the biggest problems is the migrant labour system. In the past, women headed a substantial number of households as men had to make a living elsewhere, particularly in Gauteng. The current trend is that households are headed by children, as women also tend to go after their husbands. This has had a negative impact on the social behaviour and trends of contemporary society.

### 6.2.2. Education

The majority of people in Blouberg is illiterate. This large number of people comprises primarily of children, as they constitute a large percentage of the population. The figures below depict the level of education at Blouberg in 2001.



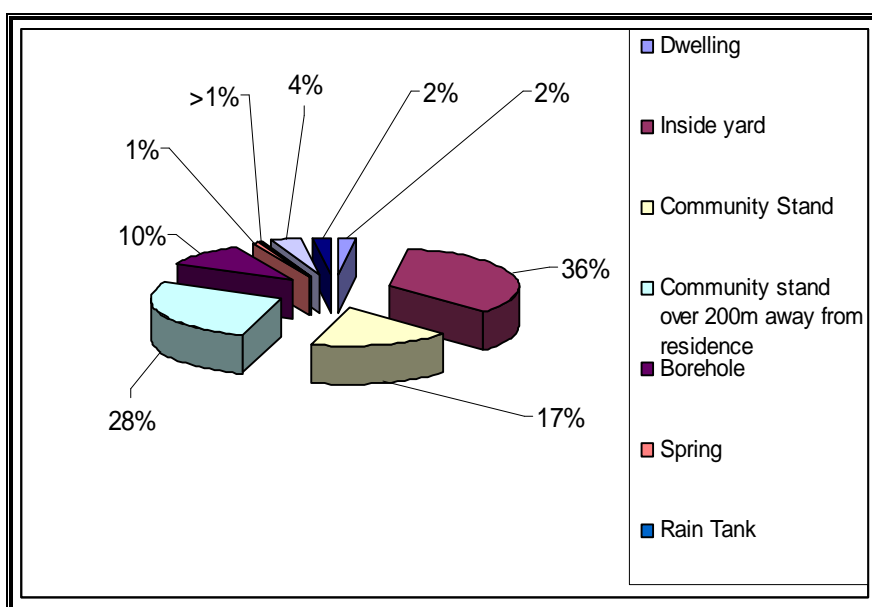
**Figure 3** Education levels in the Blouberg Municipal area (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)

There are many areas that are still in dire need of new schools and additional classrooms in the Blouberg region, such as Ga-Mamadi, Makgabeng Ga-Manaka, Marobjane and Mons, amongst others. The lack of education infrastructure and facilities in the area results in learners having to travel long distances to their schools. Adult Basic Education is another requirement that requires attention – most of the adults in Blouberg are illiterate. There is one Further Education and Training (FET) institution in the entire Blouberg Municipal area. The institution is called the Capricorn FET College (Senwabarwana Campus), which was formed by the merger of Pietersburg Technical College and Northern Province Community College.

A special school for the physically challenged (Helena Franz) and a school for the mentally challenged have been constructed at Senwabarwana adjacent to the FET. Another Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) called Bostec School for Mathematics and Science has been officially opened at Burgericht. It is of great importance that the Blouberg Municipality engages with the Department of Education to address the need for proper education and training. The municipality attempts to attract investment and raise awareness amongst local communities to improve on the levels of literacy.

### 6.2.3. Infrastructure

Although there are various sources of water in the Blouberg area, the majority of people do not have access to clean water.



**Figure 4:** Sources of water in the Blouberg Municipal area (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)

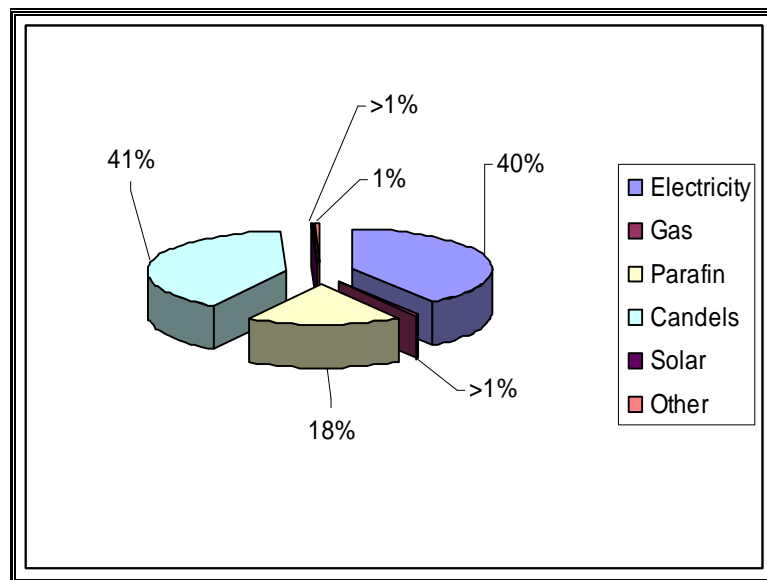
With regard to sources of water and communal water usage, a large number of people are below Rural Development Program (RDP) standards. The majority of people obtain their water from natural and unspecified sources. There are chronic water shortages in other areas such as Gemark, Old Longsight, Driekoppies and Raditshaba, amongst others.

The poor quality of water in areas such as Kibi, Sadu, and Swarts is not adequate for human consumption as it is very salty. The following figures indicate water usage in the municipality in 2001.

With regard to sanitation in the Blouberg municipal area, a large number of people are below RDP standards. Pit latrines are commonly used, as some people have no sanitation at all. Flush toilets are only used in areas such as Senwabarwana and Alldays. It should also be noted that a large number of settlements are rural villages, such as the Hananwa households on top of the Blouberg Mountain. As most people still receive their water from natural sources, waterborne diseases are a major concern. (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)

A large number of people still use candles for lighting and wood for fire as their primary sources of energy. These forms of energy are hazardous and can also lead to deforestation and soil erosion. Electricity remains a primary need for the people even though in some areas it is not utilised to its full potential.

The following figure depicts energy use in the Municipality in 2001:



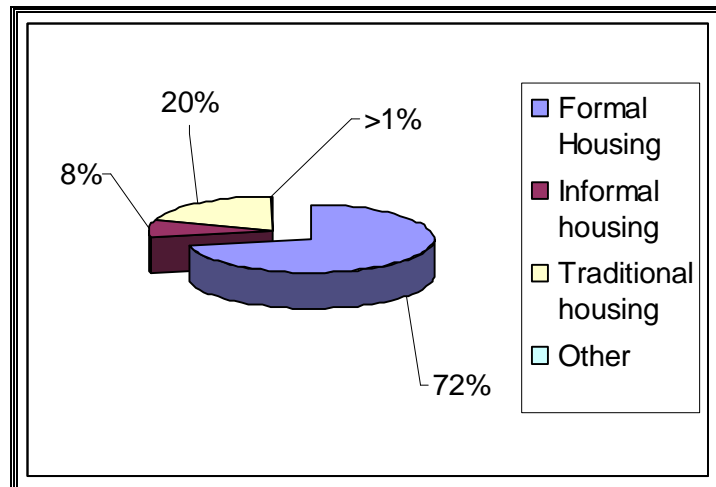
**Figure 5:** Energy usage in the Blouberg Municipal area (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)



It is evident that the backlog in terms of electricity provision is a significant apprehension that needs to be addressed. The Blouberg municipality has been granted an electricity license and it should address the energy needs as soon as possible.

#### 6.2.4. Housing

The majority of the population in the Blouberg municipal area lives in formal, informal or traditional housing with a small proportion being homeless. In 2000, the floods destroyed a number of houses and this has aggravated the lack of proper housing in the area. There is a need for low- cost housing across the municipality. (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)



**Figure 6:** Housing in the Blouberg Municipal area (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)

The high number of informal and traditional housing indicates that the majority of the people in the Blouberg municipal area reside in rural areas and do not have access to formal refuse removal systems. The Blouberg IDP report (2005/2006) states that currently there is no plan to manage the waste generated in these areas. The municipality requires a Waste Management Plan (WMP), especially in rural areas like villages on the mountain where a lot of waste is generated and residents have to dispose of their own waste.

Sewerage dams at Senwabarwana are a serious health hazard for both animals and humans. There is also lack of education in terms of the importance of refuse and waste management issues amongst the local people, aggravating the problem of poor waste management and pollution.

#### **6.2.5. Roads and public transport**

Roads and infrastructure in the Blouberg municipal area are generally in poor condition. The rainstorms and floods of 2000 contributed to the situation and the road to recovery has been slow. Inadequate levels of education, lack of facilities and professional services, municipality (human and technical) resource constraints hamper the municipality from re-gravelling and upgrading the existing access roads.

The majority of residents in the Blouberg Municipality area depend on taxis for public transport. The shortage of public bus services is a problem – affecting a number of commuters, as they are forced to pay escalating taxi prices. It is imperative that the bus routes be revived for the benefit of the commuters. Tourists also depend on an effective and efficient transport system, emphasising the need to improve accessibility in the Blouberg area.

#### **6.2.6. Communication**

Most of the people in Blouberg do not have access to public telephones. In areas where telephones have been installed, they are dysfunctional. Although a large number of people have access to mobile phones, 95% of the settlements in Blouberg do not have landline telephones connected to dwellings. There are three service providers for telecommunications in the Blouberg municipal area: Cell C, Vodacom and MTN. (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006: 23) However, mobile phone reception and coverage is not sufficient in the area and there is neither a community radio station nor local media publications to disseminate information.

### **6.2.7. Summary of municipal region**

According to the Blouberg IDP report (2005/2006), a major challenge to the municipality is that 85% of the population resides in rural villages with no potential for significant socio-economic growth in these regions. This results in service backlogs that require massive infrastructure investment and leadership at administrative level.

A brief synopsis of problem areas demanding attention in the greater Blouberg municipal area is listed below:

- *WATER: Lack of access to water and sanitation*

Water and sanitation is a problem in the municipal area, as numerous villages do not have access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities. Some of those that have access to clean water are not according to the RDP standards. Sanitation is also a critical element due to the groundwater being polluted by human and animal waste, which threatens the health of humans and animals obtaining drinking water from this natural source.

- *ENERGY: Lack of access to Grid Energy*

Grid energy is generated by Eskom in a majority of settlements in the municipality. In areas that are not electrified, people use alternative sources of energy such as paraffin, coal, wood, candles and gas, which are hazardous both socially and environmentally.

- *ROADS AND TRANSPORT: Lack of Roads and access to Public Transport.*

The roads in the municipality are in bad condition; most of the main roads and access roads are a problem and some villages (including the villages on top of Blouberg Mountain) do not have access roads but only footpaths.

- *SERVICES: Lack of Emergency Services, Posts and Communications.*

There are a large number of people who do not have access to communication services. There are also no postal services in certain villages. The network coverage of network operators is very poor in some areas and Telkom has not been able to expand its service to a large portion of the municipal area. A local publication and radio station needs to be established to ensure that community members have access to the latest news and information.

- *ECONOMIY: Economic Development and Employment Creation*

Financial stability and economic development depend on significant capital investment and strategic management. The shortage of employment opportunities in the Blouberg area leads to a high unemployment rate. The full potential of the Blouberg area needs to be accessed and utilised accordingly.

Tourism development in pristine natural areas or villages, such as Blouberg, is an example of utilising the existing potential of the area. A number of Local Economic Development (LED) projects should be embarked upon in order to create employment opportunities and economic growth.

- *GOVERNMENT: Institutional Arrangements.*

The government needs to implement realistic strategies to ensure effective and efficient local socio-economic development. Various office buildings and envisaged satellite offices should be constructed in the municipal area to accommodate staff and they should offer related services to the community such as computer training, adult based education programmes and skills development.

- *HOUSING: Lack of Land and Housing*

The floods in 2000 compounded the lack of land and housing currently found in the area and many people live in damaged houses. Land should also be allocated for industrial, business and residential purposes – this is critical in areas classified as economic hubs.

- *ENVIRONMENT: Environmental Awareness*

One of the major problems confronting this area is the lack of awareness in the community concerning environmental issues such as pollution, waste management and water management. The uncontrolled wood cutting, poaching, pollution and soil erosion is the direct consequence of this phenomenon. Natural assets such as veld-types, ecosystems and wetlands should be protected and preserved through the implementation of conservation strategies and environmental awareness programmes.

- *HEALTH SERVICES: Access to Health and Welfare facilities*

In some areas people do not have access to health and welfare facilities or services. Existing medical facilities are also under strain and the available health facilities cannot deal with issues related to HIV/AIDS effectively. The health situation in most areas of the municipality does not conform to the nation's norms and standards.

- *SPORT AND RECREATION: Access to Sports and Recreational Facilities*

This aspect is linked to social problems such as crime and social disruption. Given the high unemployment rate amongst the youth, it is important that they have facilities where they may participate in sports and other activities for personal achievement and relaxation; sports facilities in the municipal area need upgrading. (Some areas have no facilities whatsoever.)

- *EDUCATION: Access to Educational Facilities*

Generally, children travel long distances to school. This is exacerbated by a lack of public transport and escalating private transport costs. Some areas have no schools and others have a lack of classrooms or adequate infrastructure.

- *SAFETY & SECURITY: Insufficient Safety and Inadequate Security*

There are only three police stations in the entire municipality and there are no satellite police stations. It has been reported that crime is escalating in the Blouberg region. (Blouberg IDP, 2005/2006)

It is evident that the entire Blouberg municipal area requires socio-economic upliftment and infrastructural improvement. A safe and secure environment with adequate facilities and accessible amenities would benefit both the local inhabitants and tourists by making the region more accessible and pleasant to visit. Although tourist-demands differ from one market to another, tourists require basic services and infrastructure such as water, safety and reliable transport services. A lack of regional development and service provision could therefore restrict the potential of tourism development in the Blouberg region.

6.3. Location of study area on Blouberg

The project area is situated on top of the Blouberg Mountain in the Limpopo Province where the Hananwa community lives in relative isolation.

The project area has been carefully selected to avoid damaging significant natural and/or cultural heritage. Infrastructure and facilities were established in an area formerly cultivated, therefore, no trees or rare and endangered species were disturbed as result of development. (Terblanche, 2002: 8) To enhance the indigenous vegetation of the area, indigenous trees were planted to provide shade and appeal to the project area.

### **6.3.1. Geography, topography and climate**

The mountain is an exceptional topographical feature that forms part of the western outline of the Soutpansberg, covering an area of approximately 13 000 hectares. Basal is found beneath the plains component of the area and belongs to the *Sibasa* Formation. According to the EIA Scoping report (Terblanche, 2002: 7), there are no mining activities in the surrounding area that could possibly cause geological instability. Due to the absence of water-soluble rocks (dolomite or limestone), the area does not reflect any risk of sinkholes or related geological phenomena.

Surface soils in the study area are sandy and susceptible to erosion; however, no significant erosion is evident in the region. This is mainly due to the fact that no slope within the boundaries of the study area exceeds 15 degrees and the topography on top of the mountain is predominantly flats. (Refer to *Illustration 1* in Appendix C). The mountain is located at the north end of the Pietersburg plain (23 S, 29 E) with the highest peak estimated at 2 051 meters above sea level. Due to the geographical isolation of the mountain, it is of high ecological and conservation significance (Boonzaaier, 2001: 1).

The project area falls within the summer rainfall region, with the rainy season lasting from October to March. (Terblanche, 2002: 7) Rainfall occurs as conventional thunderstorms with an annual precipitation of 1 000mm.

### **6.3.2. Biophysical and socio-economic features**

Blouberg is notorious for its richness in bird life and butterflies. Terblanche (2002: 8) stated that it is unlikely to find significant wildlife in the proposed development area, probably as result of increased human activities and expansion of settlements leading to emigration of wildlife. There is a large breeding colony of endangered *Cape Vultures* nesting on the south facing cliffs to the east of the dominant peaks.

The development site lies between two high mountain outcrops located on the farm *The Grange* and consists of natural vegetation classified as *Sour Bushveld* (Terblanche, 2002: 7). The mountain is also an important water-catchment area and accommodates a wide variety of rare floral species such as *Pepper bark* trees and *Yellowwood* trees, which grow abundantly in the high-forest along the eastern slopes. Generally, the region is renowned for its rich biodiversity ranging from typical fynbos to Motane forest. Dense clumps of the alien species *Agave Americana* (Agave, Garingboom) occur abundantly around the development site. Ecological resources are traditionally used by the local community for medicinal purposes, adding value to the tourism potential of natural heritage in the study area.

Culturally, Blouberg is the traditional home of the Hananwa tribe under the chieftainship of Maleboch (Boonzaaier, 2001: 1 – 2). A small portion of the population resides on top of the mountain, maintaining a lifestyle based primarily on subsistence farming. Due to the lack of roads and accessibility to the top of the mountain, the community remains largely traditional and committed to their unique cultural customs, values, identities, designs and decorations. (Refer to *Illustration 2* in Appendix C). The Boer fortifications is the 1894 war between the *Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek* and the predecessor of Maleboch is of one of the last major conflicts in South Africa between white settlers and African inhabitants. There is evidently an abundance of cultural and natural resources in the Blouberg region, which could be developed and promoted for sustainable tourism.

## **7. SITUATION ANALYSIS:**

The objective of the tourism initiative on Blouberg is to ensure the sustainable and responsible development and utilisation of resources on Blouberg, as well as the establishment of a community-owned and operated tourism development that benefits the local community. This chapter evaluates initial development plans for Blouberg against its actual progress.



Based on this assessment, it will be evident whether objectives were achieved and reveal progressive development over the past few years. This chapter will identify the benefits, issues, opportunities and problems of the development in the following areas:

- Strategic planning and implementation;
- Location and infrastructure;
- Tourism products and services;
- Market and industry analysis;
- Resource analysis;
- Potential impact assessment; and
- Recent progress reports.

Resource assessment on top of the mountain emphasizes the prosperity of natural and cultural heritage resources at Blouberg. The potential impact assessment categorises possible impacts that should be considered during prospective ethnotourism management plans and developments. The recent progress report concludes the retrospective evaluation of past and present assessments and reflects on the situation analysis and comparative evaluation. Consequently, this chapter will ultimately lead to constructive recommendation for the implementation of sustainable ethnotourism on Blouberg.

### 7.1. Strategic planning and implementation

Retracing the steps of planning and development strategies for the camp on top of Blouberg, Boonzaaier (2006) stated that the development was initiated and conceptualised by the Limpopo Tourism Directorate (LTD) at the beginning of the millennium. According to the Community Ecotourism Development Association's (CEDAs) development and management plan, the Department of Trade, Industry and Tourism (DTIT) aimed at implementing proper legislative requirements for the proposed development on Blouberg. (CEDA Report, 2002)

CEDA stated that, should the development be approved, funds will be provided by the Poverty Alleviation Fund and local labourers will complete the development (CEDA Report, 2002; Terblanche, 2002). The implementation of development by the Government would have included the training of staff and field guides. Furthermore, the CEDA report declared that the *African Ivory Route* would be managed as a group portfolio. CEDA would be responsible for policy formation, community fund-management, lease operations, fundraising, auditing, monitoring and general evaluation of operations.

The Community Tourism Association (CTA) will be responsible for the management of village funds, tourism product identification and site management. Camp operators/field guides would be appointed to be responsible for camp management, housekeeping, water provisions, camp maintenance, inter-organisational communication, feedback, field guiding and staff management. A central office (Marketing and Booking Agency) will perform the functions of marketing, promotion, booking, reservation, quality control, financial management, distribution and portfolio administration.

The LTD applied on behalf of the community for Poverty Relief funding – as the National DEAT funded program was called in 2001 when the project was launched. The tourism initiative on Blouberg was approved by the Pretoria-based Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), under the Poverty Alleviation Programme (as per reference 5/4/1/2/60 dated December 2000).

An amount of R 1 895 000 (*One million, eight hundred and ninety five thousand rand only*) was allocated to the Department of Finance, Economic Affairs, Tourism and Environment in Polokwane (Pietersburg), on behalf of the Blouberg Tourism Association for the development of the abovementioned products, services and facilities.

The directorate-facilitated Limpopo Business Support Agency (LIBSA) acted as the implementing agency, which in turn appointed a project manager (Terblanche & Associates) to implement the development. Crafford & Crafford Architects was appointed to design and construct plans; a local contractor and Makhwiting Building Construction cc. was appointed to perform the actual construction. Labour was acquired from the surrounding villages.

With regard to legal requirements for the development of locations such as at Blouberg, Boonzaaier (2006) stated that it would require the following:

- proof of right to occupy the property on which the business was to be developed;
- approval from both the tribal authority and the local municipality in order to establish the business;
- the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); and
- a record of decision from the Limpopo Chief Directorate of Environment authorising the development.

Boonzaaier (2006) stated that the development of Blouberg was planned and implemented according to the proper legislative requirement in South Africa (national guidelines) and Limpopo Province (provincial regulations).

In short, the business plan contained a proposal to conduct hikes with a local guide for groups of up to 10 people, departing from the *African Ivory Route* camp at the foot of the mountain, and visiting homesteads on top of the mountain, where various aspects of the culture would be observed and experienced.

It was originally also planned that a community-owned and -operated hiking trail would be developed in the summit area of the mountain aimed at developing the area as a prime mountaineering destination. The revenue generated from mountaineering activities would have formed part of the sustainable utilization of the area, contributing to the economic livelihood of the Hananwa community.

The official introduction of mountaineering activities and hiking-trail infrastructure has not yet been implemented due to a lack of financial resources. Boonzaaier (2006) explained that it was envisaged that porters would carry the luggage of visitors to the camp at the top, which would serve as overnight accommodation (normally one or two nights) to experience the natural and cultural heritage of the Blouberg Mountain.

Local women would be available to cater for visitors and the *African Ivory Route* Reservations Office in Polokwane would provide marketing and reservation services. The Blouberg Community Tourism Association, with assistance from the *African Ivory Route*, would manage the progress of these operations.

## 7.2. Location and infrastructure

The camp would be situated on top of Blouberg Mountain in the Limpopo Province, which is part of the Blouberg local municipal area. An illustration of the anticipated locality and layout plans of the tourist camp is provided in Appendix D (Terblanche, 2002). According to the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA 107, 1998), the implementation of an EIA is a prerequisite for any development in South Africa.

The objectives of NEMA (107 of 1998) are: "...to provide for co-operative, environmental governance by establishing principles for decision-making on matters affecting the environment, institutions that will promote cooperative governance and procedures for coordinating environmental functions exercised by organs of state; and to provide for matters connected therewith..."

Section 24:1 in chapter 5 of NEMA (107 of 1998) states that the implementation of an integrated management plan should consider, investigate and assess potential impacts on:

- (a) The environment;
- (b) Socio-economic conditions; and
- (c) Archaeology and cultural heritage.

As previously mentioned, the EIA conducted by Terblanche and Associates (2002) was an assessment of the (potential) tangible impacts that may result from infrastructural development on the environment, without considering what impact the consequential tourism industry might have on the integrated environment and its inhabitants.

The local community is an integrated element in the tourism initiative and a comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has not been implemented yet. The approach implemented for the location and infrastructure on Blouberg is described in the original version of the Community Ecotourism Development Association's (CEDA's) development and management plan (2002). This report states that the camp should capture the unique character of the area and serve as base facility to accommodate leisure/adventure activities. It recommends that the local community, acting as participants and owners in tourism development, must own land.

According to the CEDA report, using either boreholes or solar-powered pumps, water would be provided. No general upgrading of roads would be undertaken because of the adventurous nature of the 4X4 market. No power lines or telephone lines would be required since radio communication would be available to camp operators. Visitors would either be expected to take their refuse with them, or deposit it at a location indicated for that purpose (if available). Chemical toilets or dry sanitation that would not require the building of septic tanks would be erected.

### 7.3. Tourism products and services

The Community Ecotourism Development Association (CEDA) planned for the establishment of seven traditionally-styled huts at the Cultural Camps – five for guests and two for guide/camp operators. Plans also included a kitchen, storage hut, thatched dining area and ablutions in traditional styles. The Cost Structure Report (CSR) stated that both the bottom and the top camp at Blouberg would consist of traditionally-designed huts that could accommodate a number of guests. The top camp would accommodate up to ten guests, in colourfully-decorated ethnic huts consisting of two beds with high-quality mattresses and a washbasin.

Although the large cooking hut contained a selection of facilities, most of the cooking would be done on an open fire in the bonfire area. Due to the sensitive nature of the environment, firewood would not be provided and visitors would be required to provide their own. Visitors could provide and prepare their own food, alternatively, a catering group could be organised for the provision of breakfast, lunch and/or dinner. The primary attraction on Blouberg was classified by CEDA as the vulture colony and Ancient African traditions. Initial plans indicated that tourism features should include yellowwood forests, Boer fortifications and visits to traditional Hananwa homesteads. The *African Ivory Route* website promotes tourism on Blouberg as a unique cultural experience with spectacular scenery. (Boonzaaier, 2006) According to CEDA, the CTA would be responsible for the identification and development of additional potential tourism sites and products.

### 7.4. Marketing overview

As a result of the sensitivity of the environment, the number of visitors would be kept to a minimum (up to ten guests only). CEDA defines the tourist market of the *African Ivory Route* collectively as an 'adventure' market, particularly the emerging 4X4 market. Marketing would be aimed at the ethical adventurous traveller who respects natural and cultural heritage in sensitive environments.

Being an 'ethical' adventurous traveller means to have respect for an understanding of the host community when travelling. Tourists should be aware of their contribution towards the local economy, and ensure that tourism policies are focused on the alleviation of poverty and upliftment of current educational standards. (Eyb, 2004: 97) It is polite to respect local traditions and taboos, as well as learn courtesy phrases and gestures of the local community.

It is recommended that Blouberg implement a comprehensive marketing analysis to define and focus their marketing on the proposed niche market (ethical/adventurous market). Market analysis includes all aspects of marketing including pricing decisions, distribution analysis, promotions, advertising, market research, market segmentation, production and quality control, amongst others. It also includes the implementation of effective and efficient marketing strategies resulting from sound marketing approaches. Most importantly, the market analysis includes the SWOT analysis, which evaluates the initiative's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

#### 7.5. Recent project assessment

After a number of discussions with the project manager of the *African Ivory Route* (AIR), Mr. Klaas Boonzaaier (2006) as well as assistant employees at the head offices in Polokwane (Pietersburg), it was revealed that the camp has not achieved its full potential yet and was not operating at its full capacity. This is mainly as result of damage to infrastructure and the lack of financial resources.

##### *i. General feedback from recent field trip (students):*

The investigational group consisted of eight B.Com students from the University of Pretoria (UP) who visited Blouberg in September 2004. They had little knowledge of the area and its people but were nevertheless eager to embark on this adventure. Because of the lack of tourism reservation systems and/or administrative systems, visitors had to write a full report (diary-style) on their experiences.

Although the camp was still in a developing stage, it was decided to send the group of students (tourists) on a trial-visit to give feedback of the camp and their experiences on Blouberg. These reports presented a subjective evaluation of personal experiences and the recommendations following their visit to Blouberg.

- **Accessibility:** No map was provided and they had difficulty finding direction to the camp. There was little/no signage or directions, which delayed their trip by 1.5 hours. The dirt road on the way to Blouberg was in poor condition – suitable for off-road or 4X4 vehicles only. The route to the top camp proved to be a strenuous and exhausting challenge and a moderate personal fitness level was recommended. The field guide was informative and interesting, which made the return trip more pleasant.
- **Reception:** The group was welcomed at the bottom camp by friendly staff, neatly dressed in *African Ivory Route* uniforms. A number of local community members were introduced as porters (luggage carriers) and the field guides were introduced as Kgomotso and Kavis. The reception at the top camp was less welcoming, as there was no greeting or warm welcome by camp staff. Kgomotso entertained the group with storytelling (traditional Hananwa folklore) around the campfire, which created a pleasant atmosphere.
- **Facilities:** The bathrooms only had one toilet and one shower per gender. Both ladies and gents had no toilet seats and no disposal facilities in the bathroom. The bathrooms were not as clean and hygienic as expected.
- **Facilities (continue):** The kitchen area was neat, clean and sufficiently equipped with relevant supplies. The bonfire area outside the kitchen created a pleasant scene for socialising and relaxing. There was no running water (due to a failure and/or burst water pipe at the time) and the lack of paraffin in the camp caused distress amongst visitors. There were no beds or bedding in the tourist huts, only a thin mattress and a blanket (on request). The layout and design of the hut and its indigenous decorations and interior design impressed the group.



- **Cuisine:** Indigenous cuisine and delicacies (i.e. *Mopani* worms) were not explained to the visitors and were not appreciated by all and no provision was made for visitors with special dietary requirements. Due to the absence of hot, running water, the cutlery was not clean. The extended waiting time resulted in cold food. Lunch was relatively disorganised and comprised of only a sandwich and an apple. General catering on Blouberg needs to be improved in order to achieve customer satisfaction.
- **Hiking trail:** Breathtaking scenery, diverse vegetation and unique heritage resources added value to the hiking trail experience, which was appreciated. The guides were informative on issues relating to fauna, flora and physical features; however, language barriers made communication difficult. Cultural and natural heritage seemed to be the highlight of the trip. Villagers presented interesting insight into traditional Hananwa culture and lifestyles and visitors were given the opportunity to take part in certain activities, which proved to be entertaining and educational. The hiking trail seemed to be relatively long and demanding and only a few male individuals had enough strength to proceed to the Boer fortifications towards the end of the hike. (Refer to Illustration 5 in Appendix C).
- Accommodation and service rates at the camp on Blouberg were reasonable for local and international tourists.
- The group did not appreciate the behaviour conducted by a few of the local porters – this behaviour involved: begging and asking for food, clothing, drinks and cigarettes.
- Safety and security at the camp is not a problem, however, the stopover at Pietersburg caused some anxiety amongst group members.
- *Satis* (local businessman) entertained the group with his excellent personal skills, sense of humour and enthusiasm.

PLEASE NOTE: The aforementioned information was emanated from feedback-reports in September 2004 and may not reflect the actual status of Blouberg. It is a mere reflection of the group's experiences on Blouberg at the time. According to the Project Manager of the *African Ivory Route*, Mr. Boonzaaier (2006), the camp was not operational due to problems with facilities, funding and infrastructure.

ii. Observation and statistics:

A field survey was undertaken by the author in August 2005, which revealed that some operational issues remained, and there is still a lack of running water and beds. Camp staff had to fetch water from a communal water hole located some distance from the camp and the water quality posed health risks. (Refer to Illustration 3 and 4 in Appendix C).

Despite a number of operational and service issues, the huts were tastefully decorated, expressing the unique essence of the Hananwa and the camp staff was friendly and helpful. A small number of donkeys and cattle were peacefully grazing in the area, setting a relaxed atmosphere at the camp. Due to the high altitude of the camp, it created a perfect environment for 'sundowners' with beautiful views. Despite having immense tourist appeal and potential to satisfy tourist demands, visitor statistics on Blouberg remain low and irregular.

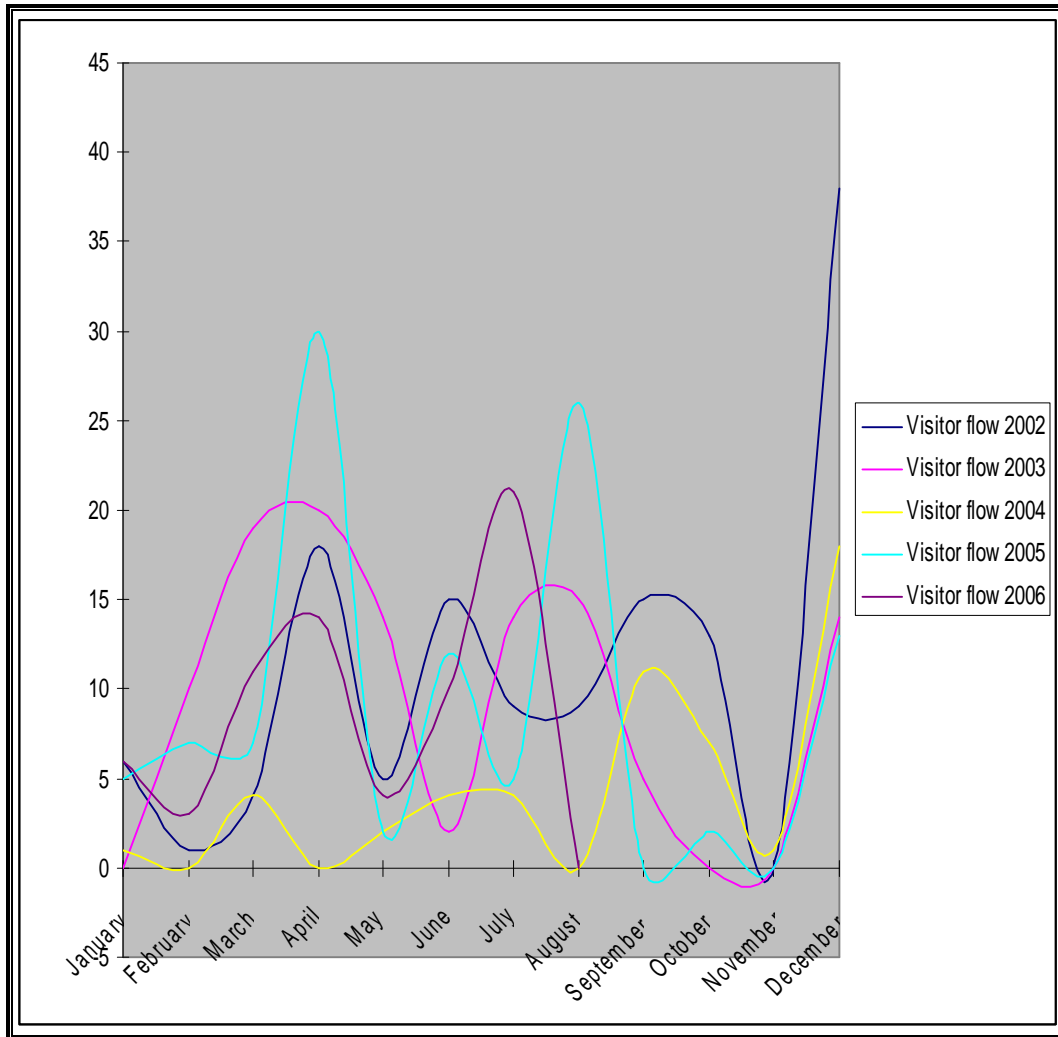
Visitor statistics from 2002 (when the camp was established) until August, 2006 were obtained from the *African Ivory Route* Head Office in Polokwane (Pietersburg).

**Figure 7:** Visitor statistics at camp on Blouberg from 2002 – 2006 (Sebata, 2006)

<b>Months</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
January	6	0	1	5	6
February	1	10	0	7	3
March	4	19	4	7	11
April	18	20	0	30	14
May	5	14	2	2	4
June	15	2	4	12	10
July	9	14	4	5	21
August	9	15	0	26	0
September	15	5	11	0	n/a
October	13	0	7	2	n/a
November	0	0	1	0	n/a
December	38	14	18	13	n/a
<b>Total Annual</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>69</b>

Source: African Ivory Route Head offices in Polokwane (Sebata 2006)

Graphic representations of visitor statistics from 2002 until 2006 in Figure 7 show the sporadic pattern of visitors to Blouberg. In general, the amount of visitors tends to increase during December, April, late July and August, which correlates with most provincial school holidays and certain public holidays.



**Figure 8:** Comparative figure of visitor statistics from 2002 - 2006 Source: *African Ivory Route* Head offices in Polokwane (Sebata 2006)

A steady flow of visitors could support a sustainable tourism industry more effectively than the current fluctuating trend, which would depend on realistic forecasts and efficient planning for the future. A steady influx of revenue would allow more efficient management of finances, subsequently contributing to the maintenance of infrastructure and facilities. Based on feedback obtained from the trial group (2004), participant observation in 2005 and statistical analysis of visitor numbers in 2006, it is evident that a strategic development plan is needed to ensure sustainable tourism on Blouberg.

## 7.6. Resource analysis

Potential resources can be evaluated in the following four phases, contained by three distinctive contexts:

- Phase 1: Identification of prototype
- Phase 2: Socio-cultural Context
- Phase 3: Tourism context
- Phase 4: Sustainability context

### PHASE 1: IDENTIFICATION OF PROTOTYPE

The identification of a prototype depends on the distinctive characteristics of the destination. Blouberg is rich in natural and cultural heritage, consisting of indigenous vegetation, abundance of bird-life, cultural identity and traditional Hananwa lifestyle. The identification process (phase one) was based on the identification of natural and/or cultural resources on the mountain, and evaluated accordingly. The primary focus was placed on the cultural classification system of Mathieson and Wall (1993) and the ethnobotanical use of natural resources by community members (Van Wyk and Gericke, 2000).

### PHASE 2: SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT:

The evaluation process starts with analysing traditional cultural and heritage resources in its physical environment. It considers the feasibility of a product (or service) and places it in the social context of the local community. (Shackley, 2001: 177) The cultural context evaluates the resource from within a specific community structure. This process includes the assessment of the role of the resource, responsibility, value and sense of sacredness within the community.

### PHASE 3: TOURISM CONTEXT

The tourism context assesses the resource potential to serve as a commercial product in the tourism industry. The assessment of resources in the tourism context is market-orientated and requires objective evaluation. Thus, although the tourism context is broad and multi-faceted, this section focuses on the tourism distribution section of marketing. It also focuses on the quality of the resource and the ability to satisfy consumer needs. Guiding questions in this section include:

- Is the product/service attractive, enlightening, educating and entertaining?
- Does the resource satisfy consumer curiosities, interests and desires? (Clarke and Louw, 1991:107)
- What is the level of availability and accessibility of the potential product/service?
- Is it tangible (object/feature) or intangible (performance/service) and can it effectively be marketed as a tourism commodity? (Lubbe, 2000: 10 – 16)

### PHASE 4: SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT:

The context of sustainability requires the triple-bottom-line approach that evaluates economic, social and environmental issues. It analyses the resource's viability to act as a potential product in the ethnotourism industry, and its ability to balance supply with demand. It also evaluates potential impacts on the different levels and sets itself open to reasoning. Sustainability assessments are the third and most important step in resource analysis, as well as in the entire management and monitoring process. South Africa has a rich diversity of cultural and natural heritage; various elements in heritage conservation serve as attractions for tourists. Blouberg is also blessed with an abundance of cultural and natural heritage. As previously mentioned, cultural elements such as music, dance, art, handicrafts, dress and traditional cuisine are the elements that attract visitors to an area.

According to Slabbert & Saayman (2000: 13), there are various methods and techniques to enhance cultural and heritage awareness, which enhance interests and thus results in travel motivations and growing demands in ethnotourism. Resource analysis on Blouberg is therefore an important step towards the creation of a sustainable ethnotourism industry. The following table illustrates four phases of resource analysis that can be utilised to evaluate the viability of natural and cultural resources on Blouberg in sustainable ethnotourism development.

**Figure 9:** Four phases of resource analysis

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
Phase 1 identifies the phenomenon in terms of Mathieson and Wall's (1993: 159) elements of culture that attract tourists to a particular destination.	Phase 3 indicates whether it is tangible or intangible and identifies the potential resource's role and responsibility within the <b>socio-cultural</b> context, thereby analysing its function in social/community life.	Phase 4 determines the resource's viability in the <b>tourism</b> industry, considering its economic value and feasibility as a potential tourism product/service.	Phase 5 determines the <b>sustainability</b> of the resource and its capacity for conservation within its socio-cultural context, as well as responsibly utilised as a tourism product/service, without relinquishing the environment.

*Source: Resource assessment based on Mathieson and Wall (1993), Van Wyk and Gericke (2000), Slabbert & Saayman (2000) and others.*

Prototypes were randomly selected during field surveys on top of the Blouberg Mountain. The trail followed is part of an existing hiking trail, which is used by the local community and tourists alike. (Illustrations of selected resources are listed in Appendix C.)

**Figure 10:** Prototype for handicrafts (Walking stick)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Handicrafts</b></p> <p><i>Prototype:</i> <i>Walking sticks</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally: TANGIBLE, product, Whisks and/or walking sticks made by the local headman. Nduna Samuel Rasiriti produces wooden objects made from indigenous trees. He generally uses wild olive wood (Refer to Illustration 6 in Appendix C).</i></p> <p>It takes one to two hours to make an article and he charges R30-00 for a walking stick when purchased from his homestead. Once a month, he takes it down the mountain to sell it to others for R35-00. Rasiriti also produces elephant bones and 'morari' walking sticks for Ngaka's not commercially available.</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> A whisk or walking stick made by the local Nduna would make a great tourist souvenir or gift. It is good value for money (R30 – R35) and relatively easy to transport.</p> <p>The products are not mass-produced and only limited amounts are made in extended periods of time. These products would be found <i>en route</i> to the tourist camp and its uniqueness makes it an interesting article for satisfying tourist demands.</p>	<p><i>Economically,</i> the object is reasonably priced and viable as a souvenir. Increased revenue will enhance the income of the Rasiriti household. Production expenses are low, thus the producer receives a high turnover.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally,</i> the objects are distinctive and traditionally acceptable. It is unique to the Hananwa community. Sacred products such as bones for a <i>dolos</i> set are not commercially available to tourists.</p> <p><i>Environmentally,</i> these objects are not sustainable. Wild olive wood trees are limited resources that cannot be used for mass production. Increased demand will increase the risk if endangering the vegetation on Blouberg.</p>



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The production of artefacts such as whisks and walking sticks seems viable as a product of sustainable ethnotourism. It enhances cultural admiration, it satisfies tourism demands and it contributes to socio-economic improvement of the household. However, the use of indigenous vegetation cannot be sustained. The producer of the handcraft should be encouraged to use foreign invading trees for tourist products instead of indigenous trees like wild olive wood.

The utilisation of foreign invaders (trees) will rid the area of exotic plants and enhance local conservation, offering the producer an alternative source for his produce. Designs and functions must remain traditionally Hananwa style, not influenced by the preferences of tourists. Increased revenues resulting from the production of souvenirs for tourists could simultaneously increase the socio-economic standards of the homestead, as well as satisfy the needs of tourists.



**Figure 11:** Prototypes for gastronomy (Local cuisine and traditional beer)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Gastronomy</b></p> <p><i>Prototype:</i> <i>Local cuisine</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally: TANGIBLE &amp; INTANGIBLE product/service:</i></p> <p>Mopani worms (<i>masanje</i>), Marog, mielie meal, pumpkin and meat cooked over a fire in the cooking hut at Nico Leboho's homestead. (His wife prepares the meals in the evenings).</p> <p>Nico's wife uses a "moduku" to stomp the mealies until it becomes coarse mielie meal, which is sorted and cooked as porridge. Sometimes the women buy the mielie meal from the shop.</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> The process of mealies converted to mielie meal could be presented to the tourists as an activity.</p> <p>Local women could show tourists how to stomp mielie kernels and give them a chance to try it. The whole group contributes a fixed amount (R50 – R100) for the visit and experience – for the homestead.</p> <p>Local cuisine as a tourist product/service could also be converted into a catering business to cater for the tourists at dinner, lunch or breakfast (R35 – R100 per person).</p>	<p><i>Economically,</i> local cuisine could become a potential profitable business if proper training and management is implemented. Resources are not easily accessible and the turnover may be less than selling souvenirs.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> Traditional cuisine is part of any exotic tourist experience and the Hananwa could present nutritional variations of local dishes. However, special dietary requirements for certain tourists must be catered for.</p> <p><i>Environmentally,</i> local produce is limited on the mountain and fruits are seasonal. Ingredients would be imported from nearby shops. Due to the small scale of the proposed catering business, impacts on the environment are not considered a significant threat to the area.</p>

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PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Leisure activities</b></p> <p><i>Prototype: Beer drinking and socializing</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally: TANGIBLE &amp; INTANGIBLE, product/service:</i></p> <p>Traditionally, men enjoy spending their time in group conversations where the beer flows freely and games like “morufa” or “morabaraba” are played. The traditional beer is called “bjalwa” which is made from a small yellow fruit called “marula” named after the tree it comes from.</p> <p>Women usually make the beer during the summer months when the fruit is in abundance. It takes approximately 3 days to make the beer. The ingredients are sugar, sorghum seeds (finely ground) mixed with the marula fruit and water. It is drunk from a calabash. (Refer to <i>Illustration 7</i> in Appendix C).</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> The beer making and tasting experience could be presented to tourists as a package that satisfies tourist demands for an ‘exotic’ experience in a rural area. It could form part of the itinerary for the day (at a homestead <i>en route</i> on the existing hiking trail), especially in the late afternoon. The women could prepare the beer in advance and explain to the tourist how it is made on arrival. Beer tasting can be combined with a presentation of traditional games such as morabaraba.</p> <p>The tour guide should be responsible for cross-cultural communication, and the visit should take no more than one hour. The homestead should be paid a fixed amount, on behalf of the group as part of the itinerary. The local tourism association should determine the price, which is recommended between R50 – R100 per homestead.</p>	<p><i>Economically:</i> If proceeds from increased tourism are directed to local households, the industry could directly enhance the socio-economic standard of households on Blouberg. The products (beer and games) and services (experience and folklore) are existing elements in traditional Hananwa lifestyles, thus little economic expenditures or physical efforts would be necessary from the host homestead.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> The package contributes to cross-cultural appreciation and awareness. It should be embraced as an ‘inter-culturally shared experience’ not a ‘show to the tourists’. The tourists would have paid a certain amount in advance for the entire trip, thus costs are covered at the beginning and no negotiations should be allowed. The tour guide should pay the household on behalf of the group. The product and service should be managed in a controlled environment, as part of the total itinerary to avoid social distress.</p> <p><i>Environmentally:</i> The fruit is seasonal, thus the beer tasting can only be presented during certain times of the year. A substitute could be considered (such as ethno botanical illustrations) as an alternative in the leisure experience of the Hananwa culture. Due to the small scale of products and services in the leisure category, impacts are expected to be minimal on the environment.</p>

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The gastronomic experience of local cuisine and traditional beer could form part of an exotic experience at a destination. Tourists get the opportunity to 'step inside' the cultural paradigm of the host community and appreciate local tastes and lifestyles. In turn, the community gets the opportunity to engage in activities that create employment and encourages education and training. Cross-cultural communication is a sensitive issue that needs to be managed effectively to avoid unacceptable behaviour that could provoke social distress.

The three cornerstones of sustainable development can therefore be implemented responsibly in the gastronomical category of tourism on Blouberg, on condition that the tour guide performs responsible management and has effective control over activities.



**Figure 12:** Prototype for Art, language, music or dance (Hananwa greetings and/or song)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Art, language, music or dance</b></p> <p><i>Prototype: Traditional song</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally: INTANGIBLE, service/experience:</i></p> <p>Greeting in the Hananwa language is <i>Thobela</i> (greeting for men) and <i>Realotsa</i> (greeting for women). One of the local songs sung by community members at a wedding includes the following lyrics: “Se mo tswere-tswere senatla (X3), Ngwena o tswere ke senata, Heita mapansula julle moenie worry, Ngwens o tswere ke senatla”.</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> The song could be enjoyed around the campfire at night, presented by camp staff. The camp staff would be paid a salary but tourists can contribute at the end of the trip using their discretion. The viability/feasibility of this tourist service cannot be measured in economical terms, yet it contributes to tourist satisfaction and enhances the entire experience. Unique services normally contribute to effective tourism marketing by ‘word of mouth’ advertising, which may have a spin off effect on return visits.</p>	<p><i>Economically:</i> The intangible experience is part of staff responsibilities at the tourist camp. Thus, they would be employed and receive fixed salaries.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> The song could enhance the relationship between camp staff and visitors, building trust and appreciation. This could contribute to overcome cross-cultural limitations. The song could be implemented and perceived as a tool for communication.</p> <p><i>Environmentally:</i> Due to the intangible nature of this service, no environmental impact is anticipated.</p> <p>In terms of the three cornerstones of sustainable development, this intangible service is seen as a viable element in tourism development.</p>

**Figure 13:** Prototype for dress (Dress and/or related products)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Dress</b></p> <p><i>Prototype:</i> Dress and/or related products</p>	<p><i>Culturally:</i> <b>TANGIBLE,</b> <i>product:</i> Modern dresses are bought from stores at the bottom of the mountain.</p> <p>Occasionally, local women buy the fabric and make it themselves. Nico Leboho's wife and elderly family members are willing to show the traditional outfits to tourists. Some of the clothes are used for traditional dancing and celebrations. The dresses are brightly coloured and usually accompanied by a headpiece called "dugwana" (Refer to <i>Illustration 8</i> in Appendix C).</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> Presentations of traditional Hananwa dress is visually stimulating, contributing to tourist satisfaction.</p> <p>Tourism demands for souvenirs are generally high, thus the product could be diversified into selling tablecloths, skirts, headpieces or bandanas made by the local women. The expenditure of the producer should be considered when determining a price. Fabrics are generally imported and local labour is required. The souvenirs should be affordable to the tourist. Production would be on-site and the souvenir should be easily transported.</p>	<p><i>Economically:</i> An affordable product made by local women from the community is a favourable souvenir for tourists. In turn, local women would receive an income from tourist expenditure, contributing to the subsistence of the community.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> Local women would use their own unique style to make clothes. Increased production should not be influenced by tourist demands or preferences. The unique cultural identity of the Hananwa should be reflected in tourist souvenirs, remaining authentic and unique.</p> <p><i>Environmentally:</i> Fabrics are generally imported from stores at the bottom of the mountain and production is performed at the homestead, causing little or no impact on the environment. A combination of high demands for tourist souvenirs, socio-economic benefits of tourist expenditures and low environmental impacts from production make these articles viable products for sustainable tourism development on Blouberg.</p>

**Figure 14:** Prototype for religion and beliefs (Sacred forest)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Religion and beliefs</b></p> <p><i>Prototype: Sacred Forest</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally:</i> TANGIBLE &amp; INTANGIBLE, product/ experience:</p> <p>The view from Nico Lebeho's homestead shows the sacred forest from a distance (Refer to Illustration 9 in Appendix C).</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> Due to the sacredness of the forest, no tourists or locals would be allowed into the forest. Tourists should be informed about the sacred forest and tourists should respect restricted access. Due to its inaccessibility, the forest does not classify as a viable tourism product or service.</p>	<p><i>Economically:</i> No economic benefit would result from this resource.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> Local community members never enter the sacred site (even if their cattle wander into the forest) and tourists should not enter the forest due to its spiritual connection to the community.</p> <p>The area is therefore off-limits to tourists and disqualified as a potential resource for sustainable tourism development.</p> <p><i>Environmentally:</i> The forest benefits by restrictive access, as no physical impacts will result from tourism.</p>

**Figure 15:** Prototype for Architecture and distinctive design (Nico Leboho's homestead)

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
<p><b>Architecture &amp; distinctive design</b></p> <p><i>Prototype: Visit to a homestead i.e. Nico Leboho</i></p>	<p><i>Culturally: TANGIBLE &amp; INTANGIBLE, product/ experience:</i> Each homestead/ household has its own decorative designs. The unique styles generally have no metaphoric meaning, determined only by the artist's preferences. Restoration work is performed every nine to 12 months as old decorations fade. Nico Leboho's homestead is a good example of unique Hananwa architectural designs and decorations. (Refer to Illustration 10 and 11 in Appendix C). The floors are made from a mixture of cow dung, water and mud. In Hananwa traditions, it is bad luck to walk on a wet floor (taboo) and one needs to spit on the floor to avoid bad luck in future.</p>	<p><i>Tourism:</i> This visit should be an integrated element in the hiking trip, packaged as part of the daily itinerary. The women could demonstrate how the floors are made, during which tourists would be allowed to take photos and ask questions. This would contribute to an enlightening experience and satisfy tourist curiosities. The tour guide would be responsible for a small payment to the household (as part of the tourist's package price). Due to the <i>en route</i> location of the homestead, the potential tourist product would be accessible, viable and affordable.</p>	<p><i>Economically:</i> Economic benefits are not significant as the contribution would be minimal. Costs would be included in the tourist package. The homestead would benefit from the revenue created by tourism expenditure.</p> <p><i>Socio-culturally:</i> The unique designs of homesteads create cross-cultural awareness and enhance cultural appreciation. Tourists can gain understanding of the Hananwa culture, which could encourage respect.</p> <p><i>Environmentally:</i> Decorations and architecture are inherited, characteristic and integrated elements in the Hananwa culture. There will be little or no impact on the environment as a result of increased tourism.</p> <p>The overall sustainability of local decorations and architecture is considered a favourable contribution toward sustainable tourism development.</p>



There are various prototypes for the medicinal uses of natural resources (ethnobotany) on the hiking trail at Blouberg. Selected ethnobotanical resources could be discussed and explained by the tour guide on the hiking trail or presented as a demonstration at a selected homestead. (Refer to Illustration 12 in Appendix C). A number of botanic specimens were taken during the dry, winter season of 2004 when flowers and fruits were generally absent. However, traditional healer and chairperson of the Community Tourism Association (CTA), Patrick Morata, accurately described lifecycles of selected specimens through all seasons.

Broadly speaking, ethnobotany is the study of the relationship between plants and people. This concept was coined in 1895 by the American botanist Harshberger, who derived the term from *ethno* (study of people) and *botany* (study of plants). Ethnobotany is considered a branch of ethnobiology and involves the complex relations between plants and cultures. The focus of Ethnobotany is on how plants are or have been used, managed and perceived in human societies and the uses include: for food, medicine, divination, cosmetics, textiles, building, tools, clothing, rituals, social life and music, amongst others (Wikipedia, 2006).

Due to the human dependency on plants for food, clothing, shelter, medicine and rituals, the study of natural resources plays a crucial role in the development of human cultures and society. Consequently, ethnobotany offers profound insight into human trends and behaviour and there are constant intriguing advances in this field of study. (Cotton, 1996)

*Aloe Arborescence* (Asphodelaceae) is an example of an ethnobotanical prototype found on the hiking trail at Blouberg. It is also known as *Segopa* (Bahananwa), *Kransalwyn* (Afrikaans) and *Krantz Aloe* (English). This multi-branched succulent grows on cliffs or rocky slopes. It has a short main stem with narrow, slightly sickle-shaped leaves and measures between 250 – 600 millimetres. The Aloe can grow up to five meters high and produces reddish flower stalks between 20 – 40 millimetres long. (Schmidt, 2002: 60) It is an attractive horticultural species and grows easily in cultivation.

This succulent is widespread across South Africa, occurring from the Western Cape through KwaZulu Natal to the Northern Provinces of the country, including the rocky terrains on Blouberg Mountain.

Morata (2004) explained that the plant is traditionally used to treat the symptoms of Tuberculosis (TB). The leaf is boiled in water to make a medicinal tonic (extract or infusion), which is taken orally. Furthermore, fresh extracts from the leaf (gel) can be used to relieve earache, which is pulped and applied directly onto the affected area (e.g. two drops into the ear). Alternatively, extracts from the succulent can be added to the drinking water of animals, like poultry, which are suspected to have been poisoned.. According to Van Wyk and Gericke (2002: 197) freshly crushed leaves and gel extracts have been widely used to treat burns and wounds. These extracts have been found to have wound-healing, anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer, antibacterial, anti-cancerous and anti-biotic effects.

Hananwa women often use another variation of this species, *Aloe ferox* to end the nursing stage of an infant. When the child is approximately 24 months old, the extracts of an Aloe leaf (gel) is applied to the breasts of nursing mothers. The infant opposes the bitter taste of the Aloe extract, consequently terminating the nursing phase.

Combretum Imberde (*Combretaceae*) – also known as *Moilatsepe* (Bahananwa), *Hardekool* (Afrikaans) and Leadwood (English) – is an exceptionally slow growing tree found on Blouberg, forming hard and heavy wood. Its leaves are small and leathery with a distinctive grayish green colour. The wood of Combretum Imberde burns slowly and forms usable coal, resulting in a high demand for this resource as cooking fuel. The ash is said to have high lime contents and has been used as toothpaste and other decorative purposes, as well as aiding effective digestion. Trees decay slowly and the wood can be used to make cultural artefacts such as the *bila* (finger piano). Due to increasing demands and low production rates of this resource, it is not recommended as a potential resource to be used in tourism development on Blouberg.

Alternatively, a substitute for fuel should be identified; a community project could be initiated to conserve this valuable natural resource for future generations.

A local guide on Blouberg could explain the medicinal uses of natural resources to tourists. This enlightening experience could contribute toward visitor satisfaction and ecological appreciation. Economic turnovers are generally low, yet it enhances the overall tourist experience. Ethnobotanical and natural resources are used in moderation, thereby minimising the negative impacts of increased tourism on the environment.

It is evident that there are a number of cultural and natural resources on Blouberg that could contribute to the sustainable development of tourism. As result of the volatile nature of the tourism industry, the benefits of tourism revenues for the community cannot always be guaranteed. It is therefore imperative that the local community should continue their production in primary economic activities such as agriculture and local produce, mitigating the risk of creating a tourism-dependent community.

### 7.7. Potential impact

In terms of the three cornerstones of sustainable development, the following potential impacts resulting from the tourism development on Blouberg should be considered:

- Environmental impact,
- Economic impact; and
- Socio-cultural impact

If a responsible approach to tourism is not adopted and the industry is not adequately planned, a number of negative impacts could occur. (DEAT, 1006) These include: environmental degradation, biased job creation, seasonal employment and high rates of unemployment during the off-peak-season, leakage of foreign exchange earnings, increased urban/rural polarisation, concentration of wealth and exploitation of local cultures and community groups. According to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), the final decision on the most suitable site for the infrastructure of the camp was made after careful consideration of potential impacts, alternatives and mitigation measures. (Terblanche, 2002: 12)

An EIA is an integrated element of Environmental planning, which is a holistic approach to planning whereby all aspects of the environment are studied and measured against the development requirement. This process enables planners and developers to clearly understand the opportunities and constraints of a site, and often guides the development towards an ecologically sustainable, economically viable and aesthetically acceptable development alternative. Common examples of such work are game parks and resource areas, eco-tourism ventures, recreation and conservation.

*i. Environmental Impact*

The natural environment includes land, air, water, flora and fauna (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 93). Elements and resources found in this environment form the foundation of tourism development. This implies that while the natural environment provides the tourists with resources and attractions, the tourism industry provides funding for conservation and economic enhancement of local features. Due to occasional mismanagement and pollution, the natural environment is often negatively affected by the tourism industry. The risks are generally higher in remote, rural or sensitive environments where the need for sustainable management is more obvious and intense (Keyser, 2004).

Impacts on the environment generally originate from three elements of tourism: transport, accommodation and activities. Van der Duim (2005: 176) state that the effects of these elements on the environment often result in negative impacts such as pollution, degradation, erosion and overcrowding, amongst others. The evaluation of the impact and effect on the natural environment on Blouberg should strive to create a mutually beneficial relationship between tourism demands and supply.

The following section considers potential impacts on the environment (vegetation, water quality, air quality, wildlife and geology) as a result of tourism development.

**Figure 16:** Potential environmental impact on the vegetation

VEGETATION: According to Hunter and Green (1995), the anthropogenic (human) use of vegetation for tourism could create pollution that is hazardous to the ecological system (Keyser, 2004: 319 and Parry-Davies, 2004: 178). Sensitive ecological systems such as rivers and wetlands are at risk from overdevelopment, implying that sustainable development is of crucial importance to avoid/mitigate irreversible impacts on the environment. The relationship between tourist behaviour and the magnitude of physical damage caused to vegetation (e.g. pollution, trampling, fires etc.) depend on various factors (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 101). Recent studies indicate that negative impacts from tourism occur when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope with this use within the acceptable limits of change.

Uncontrolled conventional tourism poses potential threats to many natural areas around the world. It can put enormous pressure on an area and lead to impacts such as soil erosion, increased pollution, discharges into the sea, natural habitat loss, increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It often puts a strain on water resources, and it can force local populations to compete for the use of critical resources. (Sustainable tourism website, 2005/05/10) Although the physical environment naturally changes over time, mechanical damage due to tourist activities increases the speed of environmental degradation, for example:

- Damage to vegetation occurring due to increased (mechanical) use of an area;
- The declination of diversity of species due to continual human interference; and
- Reduction of the reproduction rate of vegetation due to trampling by tourists in certain areas.

Blouberg contains elements of fragile mountain ecosystems, consisting of a unique and diverse range of flora, fauna and physical features. Being equally attractive and ecologically vulnerable, Blouberg raises vital challenges for protection and conservation. The tourist development site is located on an abandoned agricultural field, minimizing the risk of potential impact on surrounding vegetation. The tourist establishment is surrounded by remnants of natural forest to the south, which could be affected by future tourist activities.

An inspection by Terblanche and associates (2002) revealed that a number of large trees had been cut down previously to make way for an agricultural landscape. Firewood is a limited resource and the local community collects firewood from surrounding trees. To mitigate the effect of deforestation, the camp does not use local firewood. Alternatively, it obtains its resources from the *African Ivory Route* camp at the bottom of the mountain. Gas will also be used for cooking to alleviate the dependence on firewood.

If tourists acknowledge their environmental responsibility to respect their host destination, no further damage will be done to any vegetation as a result of increased tourism.

**Figure 17:** Potential environmental impact on the water quality

WATER QUALITY: The relationship between tourism and water is usually focused in marine-ecosystems, rainforests and tourism involving water-related activities. Parry-Davies (2004: 178) states that rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries and coastal areas provide resources for the benefit of tourists and it need a healthy ecosystem in order to survive. Water pollution is one of the main problems associated with tourism (Keyser, 2004: 319), which often result from inadequately treated sewage effluent and/or overdevelopment. Due to the water shortage and sensitivity of the environment on Blouberg, increased tourism can also have significant effects on the quality of water such as:

- The introduction of pathogens or pollutants into the aquatic environment;
- Disruption of nutrient levels in the water;
- Increased demand for water supply (limited resource); and
- Toxicity of soil, groundwater or lakes due to increased use of foreign detergents and/or cosmetics.

Potential negative impacts on water resources are mitigated through restrictive control measures.

Tourists are expected to take drinking water from the *African Ivory Route* base camp up to their camp at the top of the mountain (Terblanche, 2002: 12). Washing is forbidden in rivers or streams and laundry must be taken to the base camp at the bottom of the mountain. Water supply to the establishment is obtained from a natural stream approximately 300 to 400 meters from the site. A small portable solar pump is used to pump water into a storage tank at the tourist camp on top of Blouberg.

Since there is insufficient water available from a reliable source for waste management, pit latrines are used at the tourist camp. The latrines are situated approximately 300 to 400 meters from the nearest open water source to alleviate the risk of water-borne diseases. A French drain system is used for wastewater from the kitchen and bathroom.

During the time of publication of this thesis (2006), there was no running water available to tourists at the tourist camp as result of technical setbacks in the water system.

**Figure 18:** Potential environmental impact on the air quality

AIR QUALITY: As tourism includes travelling (e.g. automobile, bus, airplane, etc) and tourists introduce foreign chemicals to pristine environments (cleaning agents, cosmetics, perfumes etc), the contribution to air-pollution may be of relevance in the relationship between tourism and air quality. Although the tourism industry contributes to air pollution, it is claimed that generally tourism does not pollute the environment nearly as much as other industries (e.g. mining, fuel production, manufacturing etc.) (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 104) Air pollution seems to be a larger problem in developed nations such as France in Europe, where five to seven per cent of greenhouse gas emissions are resultant of the tourism industry (Keyser, 2004: 322).

The tourism industry unknowingly contributes to acid depositions resulting from air pollution, which harms the environment in various ways (Parry-Davies, 2004: 159). Many authors agree that modern technology should be utilised to promote sustainable development in tourism transport and mitigation of air pollution (Van der Duim, 2005: 176)



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Transport by air, road, and rail is continuously increasing in response to the rising number of tourists and their greater mobility. Recent reports indicate that the number of international air passengers worldwide rose from 88 million in 1972 to 344 million in 1994 (Sustainable tourism website, 2005/05/10).

Consequently, the increase in air transport is that tourism now accounts for more than 60% of air travel and is therefore responsible for an important share of air emissions. However, there is only one hiking trail that leads to the top of the mountain and there were no roads or new trails developed for tourist activities.

Therefore, the impact of transport on air quality in Blouberg is not considered as a major threat to the environment. (Terblanche, 2002: 10)



**Figure 19:** Potential environmental impact on the wildlife

**WILDLIFE:** South Africa has always been a popular destination for viewing, photographing and hunting wildlife in pristine environments. Wildlife forms a crucial element in the country's ecological chain and contains intrinsic economic, scientific, recreational medical and aesthetic value (Parry-Davies, 2004: 212). Viewing and experiencing wildlife in their natural surroundings has become a prime attraction to a large number of tourists. Other attractive landscape sites, such as sandy beaches, lakes, riversides, and mountains and slopes, are often transitional zones, characterized by species-rich ecosystems. An ecosystem is a geographic area including all the living organisms (people, plants, animals, and microorganisms), their physical surroundings (such as soil, water, and air), and the natural cycles that sustain them (Sustainable tourism website, 2005/05/10).

Ecosystems most threatened with degradation are ecologically fragile areas such as mountainous regions, rain forests, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs and sea grass beds. The threats to and pressures on these ecosystems are often severe because such places are very attractive to both tourists and developers. The effects of tourism on wildlife can be divided into direct and indirect impact (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 107 – 108, Parry-Davies, 2004: 213 and Keyser, 2004: 323 )

*Direct impact:*

- The disruption of feeding and/or breeding patterns: visiting nests and interrupting natural hunting activities;
- The killing of wild animals: trophy hunting and high-speed road killings; and
- The disruption of predator-prey relationships: increased competition amongst predators due to declining prey numbers.


*Indirect impact:*

- Implementation of controlling measures: culling of elephants in Nature reserves to control numbers;
- Mass out migration: camping areas and human activities scare wildlife away;
- Changes in wildlife behaviour: litter, garbage and human refuse attract wild animals, which disrupts feeding patterns and behaviour; and
- Tourism souvenirs: the capture and killing of wild animals for trading purposes, such as fur, skins, horns, ivory objects, tails, teeth and claws.

Although Blouberg is known for its rich natural resources, tourist activities cause little disturbance to bird populations and wildlife in the area. The tourist establishment is located in an area that is already disturbed and the use of existing trails causes no additional distress to wildlife. Cattle, chickens, donkeys and other domesticated animals roam freely on the mountain, not threatened by any tourist activities or services.

Local communities and governmental departments in rural and pristine areas play vital roles in the conservation, protection and sustainable use of natural resources, especially wildlife. Communities can assist with conservation by helping to create a balance between tourist demand and supply. They can create awareness amongst community members and educate the youth on conservational issues and concerns.

**Figure 20:** Potential environmental impact on the geological formation



GEOLOGY: Information on the effect of tourism on geology has been mainly focused on fossils, minerals and rock collecting. Some areas, like caves, archaeological sites, mountains and rock cliffs, are more vulnerable to geological degradation than others. According to Keyser (2004: 325), some of the major impacts of congestion include the depletion of fossil fuels, depletion of minerals and the risk of landslides and erosion as result of tourism activities.

Soils in the Blouberg area are deemed to be susceptible to erosion, considering the sandy nature of the soils. (Terblanche, 2002: 10) The tourist establishment is not located within or close to any natural drainage features, alleviating the risk of increased erosion. Due to the flat topography of the site and dense grass coverage of the abandoned agricultural field, the soil is relatively protected against erosion. Archaeological and palaeontological sites need to be considered as an integrated element of geological investigations.

ii. Economic Impacts

In the economic environment, tourism is often welcomed as an industry that brings foreign exchange, employment and improved facilities to an area. On the other hand, the introduction of a tourism dependent economy can also lead to the destruction of traditional lifestyles, neo-colonialism, over-dependence on an unreliable industry and unequal capital distribution of revenue. (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 38) Thus, the evaluation and monitoring of the financial situation must take place on a continuous basis to reduce the negative impacts and to optimise the positive beneficial impacts.

In 2002, the World Travel and Tourism Council estimated the economic benefits of South Africa's tourism industry as follows (DEAT 1994 – 2004):

- In 2002, South Africa's travel and tourism industry has generated approximately R108.5 billion;
- The industry's direct impact on the economy is estimated at 492 700 jobs, representing 3% of total employment, and R31.1 billion of the Gross Domestic Product, equal to 3% of the GDP. However, the total contribution of tourism (which has a multiplier effect on the economy) is calculated to be 1 148 000 jobs (6.9%) of total employment and R72.5 billion of GDP (7.1%);
- In addition, the tourism industry supports R43.8 billion in export services and merchandise, representing 12.5% of total exports as well as R17.1 billion of capital investment (10.3% of total investment); and
- Government expenditure on tourism amounts to R920 million a year.

**Figure 21:** Potential benefits and disadvantages of the tourism industry

<p><b>Potential Economic benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The contribution of tourism to foreign exchange earnings;</li> <li>- The generation of direct and indirect income;</li> <li>- The improvement of economic structures; and</li> <li>- The encouragement of entrepreneurial activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential Economic disadvantages</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The danger of over-dependence on tourism;</li> <li>- Increased inflation and land values;</li> <li>- An increased propensity to import; and</li> <li>- The seasonal production and low rate of return on investments.</li> </ul>

As a result of a minimal visitation on Blouberg, subsequent benefits of tourism in the area are still insignificant (Sebata, 2006). An effective strategy to increase sustainable tourism should aim at optimising potential advantages and avoid potential negative impacts of tourism on Blouberg.

iii. Socio-cultural Impact

*Tourism and the community*

In an area such as Blouberg, the local community needs to invest a considerable amount of time, capital, land, labour and personal effort if they are to benefit from the demanding tourism industry. Conflicting situations between the host community and tourists could result from an unplanned or mismanaged industry.

A number of social conflicts and interpersonal relationships are described below:

- Irresponsible behaviour by tourists: e.g. damage to infrastructure (huts, trails and fences made by local community members), vandalism, noise (disturbance of the peaceful and secluded environment on Blouberg) and harassment of livestock (grazing cows, donkeys, goats and free ranging chicken);
- Conflict of access: e.g. tourist passes through restricted areas for scenic attraction or personal satisfaction (Blouberg has sacred venues and places that need to be respected and the violation of community rules may lead to conflict);
- Competition for labour by the tourism industry: e.g. locals sacrifice their usual economic activities for tourism-related employment; and
- Increased erosion in residential areas from the over-exploitation of paths and trails in sensitive areas. .

The trail is an extremely important element in the sustainable development of ethnotourism on Blouberg. It is a vital feature in local guidance and cross-cultural communication. The trail stretches across Blouberg in a circular route, blessed with spectacular landscapes, cultural homesteads and ecological features. The trail allows interaction between tourists and members of the host community. Local participation in ethnotourism could allow the Hananwa community to accept responsibility for their own environment and resources, as well as tourist to gain respect and understanding through cultural awareness.

According to Mathieson and Wall (1993: 133), the socio-cultural impact of tourism include the ways in which tourism contributes to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family relationships, community organization, moral conduct, creative expressions, collective lifestyles and traditional ceremonies. Each situation of tourist-host interaction is unique and depends on external and internal factors.

The tourist-host relationship on Blouberg is unique and may differ during each visit. Mathieson and Wall (1993:162) identifies both positive and negative effects of tourism on culture with specific reference to tourist-host relationships. The positive effects of tourism are promoted through cross-cultural communication and interaction, which could reduce or prevent the negative impacts of tourism. Ramchander (2004) explains that tourists could introduce new habits, styles, customs and communication to a host community that could have positive consequences, or cause degradation of cultures, loss of authenticity (Cohen, 1995; Swarbrook, 1999; Dondolo, 2001) and hostile relationships between host and guests. Local communities should have an opportunity to contribute to a tourism industry which suites their lifestyles, customs and natural resources (Singh, 2003) and simultaneously caters for tourists' needs and requirements.

Authors agree that tourists should respect local traditions and identities of host communities (Ramchander, 2004; Nash & Smith, 1991). The quality of cross-cultural communication is of paramount importance if the interaction between host and guest should lead to a sense of understanding and mutual respect. The quality depends on various factors, including:

- *The type of tourist:* Tourist motivations, tastes, preferences, experiences, magnitude and behaviour;
- *The spatial, temporal and communicative context in which contact takes place:* Length of stay, timeframe of actual contact, physical space shared by interacting groups, linguistic compatibility and the willingness of both groups to share their values, attitudes and experiences; and
- *The role of the cultural broker (tour-guide):* This individual (or individuals) is usually bilingual and innovative in introducing their culture. They often act as mediators between tourists and hosts. Cultural brokers therefore have control over the amount and quality of communication between the interacting groups. (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 163).

Without effective and positive cross-cultural communication the impact of tourism on a culture can be degrading. A number of examples of the gradual erosion of local culture due to increased tourism are identified by Mathieson and Wall (1993) and the global Sustainable Tourism website ([http://www.biodiversity.ru/coastlearn/tourism-eng/why\\_socioimpacts.html](http://www.biodiversity.ru/coastlearn/tourism-eng/why_socioimpacts.html), 2006).

- Commodification or commercialisation of culture, which includes disappearance of traditional designs, quality and appearance of resources to cater for tourist needs, as well as the loss of ceremonial resources' symbolism/sacredness due to mass-production for tourists (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 165 – 170);
- Cultural arrogance such as manipulating traditions and customs of local communities to make tourist experiences more interesting and satisfying and the promotion of 'traditional' images of local cultures on brochures, magazines and decorations to create an 'authentic' feel (Mathieson and Wall, 1993: 172 – 174);
- Commercialisation of local culture. Tourism can turn local culture into commodities when religious traditions, local customs and festivals are reduced to conform to tourist expectations and resulting in what has been called "reconstructed ethnicity"; and
- While destinations risk standardisation in the process of satisfying tourists desires, landscape, accommodation, food and drinks, etc., must meet tourist desires for the new and unfamiliar whilst remaining in the 'comfort' zone of the tourist.

Some traditions are taken very seriously, and it is the tourists' responsibility to respect and conserve these principles. It is primarily the responsibility of the tour-guide/trail manager to communicate the basic principles of 'ethic travelling' to their audiences. In addition, it is the tourists' responsibility to educate themselves in terms of language, geography, behaviour, political stability and society.



Crossing the boundaries between cultures can lead to misunderstanding and misconceptions. P. Lutton (Eyb, 2004: 99) believes that it is best to leave media-based preconceptions and western ideals behind when travelling to remote destinations.

This implies that visitors should be open to experience cross-cultural interaction and enjoy the common sense of humanity. Sharing universal concepts of hardships and delights can promote a sense of understanding and mutual respect between the visitor and the host.

“...In accordance with the tourism vision, a united, sustainable and competitive tourism industry in South Africa will lead global 'best practice' in socially, environmentally and culturally responsible tourism...” (DEAT, 1996) This vision is supported by the following objectives for the South African Tourism industry:

- To develop tourism with dignity - encouraging mutual respect for all cultures and eliminate all forms of discrimination on the basis of language, religion, culture, race, gender, age, wealth and ability;
- To provide tourism education, training, awareness and capacity-building programmes, especially aimed at previously-neglected groups;
- To encourage participation by all South Africans in tourism-planning and policy-formulation;
- To promote pride in the cultural resources of the country;
- To use tourism as a catalyst for human development, focusing on gender equality, career development and the implementation of national labour standards;
- To promote nation-building and peace amongst the people of South Africa as well as internationally and promote greater respect for human life through tourism;

- To encourage the active participation of all South Africans in tourism development, particularly at local level;
- To empower community structures through, for example, involvement in the marketing of cultural experiences and practices to tourists;
- To ensure that all South Africans have equitable access to travel opportunities and tourism attractions;
- To encourage community participation in the planning, development, implementation, management and implementation of tourism projects; and
- To monitor and minimise potential adverse social impacts of tourism.

## **8. TOURIST PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE**

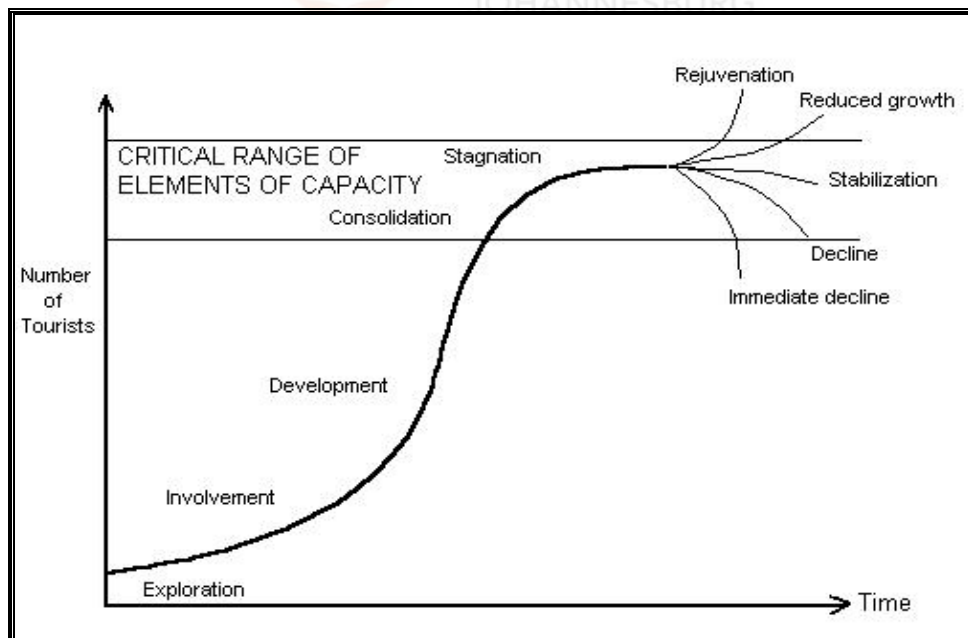
Tourist product lifecycles facilitate predictions of different stages of development in the tourist industry by focusing on the number of tourists visiting a particular region over a period of time. Carmelo, Hernandez, and Gonzalez (2006) conducted a study on the exogenous lifecycle and optimal growth in tourism that analyses the tourist product lifecycle tool.

Carmelo, Hernandez, and Gonzalez (2006) stated that definitions of the tourist product include sets of environmental attributes that are defined within the boundaries of a given territory. Tourism is a dynamic industry that evolves from initial stages of implementation into developed stages. The effects of tourism (both positive and negative) can be valued by tourists and local communities, in the later stages of development.

In the initial stage of development, great innovation is motivated by the appearance of a new development and destination, which leads to increasing growth rates until a second stage in which the industry reaches maturity. During this second stage, the growth rate stabilizes and the product plateaus over a mass market with large numbers of tourist inflows.

In the final stage, the growth rate starts to decline as a result of the degradation of the product, which can be caused by multiple factors, such as consumer satiation, lower quality of services, congestion, and environmental effects. (Carmelo, Hernandez, and Gonzalez, 2006) Eventually, the growth rate can become negative (declination/immediate declination), remain the same (stagnation) or continue growing (reduced growth/rejuvenation) (Keyser, 2004: 376).

Some commentators have noted that as tourism develops in a destination, carrying capacity levels also change. They examine the different stages of the lifecycle and argue that planning and management needs re-assess the optimum capacities continually, rather than allow the resort to slip into decline before acting (Carmelo, Hernandez; Gonzalez, 2006). The carrying capacity is a series of dependent variables that is modified over time by feedback"...which will be responsible for increasing/decreasing the magnitude of acceptable tourist presence..." (Carmelo, Hernandez, and Gonzalez, 2006 and Cooper, 1993: 97)



**Figure 22** The TALC showing the relationship between evolution and capacity

Source: [http://geography.ucsm.ac.uk/rj/sa/sa\\_dest.html](http://geography.ucsm.ac.uk/rj/sa/sa_dest.html), 2006

A recent study in China described ethnic tourism in Yunnan according to Butler's tourist area life cycle (Dong, 2003) According to Butler's model, destinations progress through six stages of development: exploration, involvement, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or rejuvenation. In the exploration stage, the most prevalent visitors are small numbers of explorers that rely on individual travel arrangements and follow irregular visitation patterns. These travellers typically seek unique natural and cultural features and pursue their own enlightenment. In these regions, locals still don't understand the needs of outsiders visiting their region and consequently they do not know how to provide the desired accommodations and entertainment.

The study conducted by Dong (2003) suggests that, despite some limitations, Butler's tourist area lifecycle may be useful in understanding how ethnic tourism development occurs in Yunnan. The "youngest" tourism destinations presented characteristics that fit Butler's exploration and involvement stages (ShangriLa and Lugu Hu). Dali was clearly at the development stage with heaving infrastructure investments and increased control by tour groups and national tourism corporations. Finally, Xishuangbanna and Shi-Lin were clearly at the other end of the continuum with stagnating or declining numbers of visitors and distinctiveness. An important addition to this model is that ethnic tourism in this area expands geographically to ever more remote areas.

Due to the reflection of similar elements in the exploration stage, such as low numbers of visitors on Blouberg, the stagnant stage of development and the lack of tourism management on Blouberg, it seems that the industry is trapped in the *exploration stage*, which is hampering its potential to develop sustainable tourism that benefits stakeholders. Low tourist figures are also as a result of poor accessibility and lack of proper infrastructure and services such as clean water supply and trained/experienced staff. Commercial and profitable activities are low, which restricts the local community's opportunity to enhance household income and living standards.

It is evident that a strategic plan and practical techniques need to be identified to advance tourism development at Blouberg to the next level, the *involvement stage*. (Keyser, 2004: 377). Sustainable guidelines and constructive recommendation is required to boost local business initiatives. In turn, the implementation and monitoring of sustainable strategies could result in a properly managed tourism industry on Blouberg to create a steady flow of visitors.

The *involvement stage* reflects increased participation of the local community in commercial tourism activities, products and services. This stage generally displays a high level of interest and sympathy with local life, which also supports the local economy and tourism initiatives. The first step towards sustainable ethnotourism on Blouberg is therefore embedded in the success of its strategic evolution from the exploration stage to the involvement, development, consolidation and other stages based on constructive recommendations and implementation of strategic management plans.



## **9. CONSTRUCTIVE RECOMMENDATION:**

### **9.1. The need for reconstructive strategies**

The tourist camp on top of Blouberg has been carefully constructed, with little impact on the environment (Terblanche, 2002). The existing hiking trail as well as the area surrounding the development proves to be rich in natural and cultural heritage. Based on the three cornerstones of sustainable development, a resource assessment confirmed that certain products and services are eligible for sustainable ethnotourism.

Conversely, the existing camp is not functional due to a lack of resources for repairs and upgrading of the infrastructure. Education levels in the community are low and tourism training remains largely absent. It becomes evident that the maximum potential of the proposed tourism initiative on Blouberg has not been achieved and the need for a counteractive strategy is crucial for future development.

Tourism on Blouberg can be developed in a responsible manner if sustainable measures are implemented, monitored and managed. This can be achieved by implementing a strategic plan for prospective development on Blouberg.

A strategic development plan can assist in the determination of future actions and direction for sustainable management. It can serve as a foundation for plans, goals and objectives and guide the development of required facilities, events, programmes and initiatives. (AOT, 2001: 1). Furthermore, the strategic plan could provide a framework for implementing, evaluating and monitoring of proposed plans and actions on a regular basis.

Previous chapters of this study identified the need for reconstructive strategies to implement a sustainable tourism development on Blouberg. The strategic plan should be focused on prospective planning and sustainable development of Blouberg. Communication between stakeholders such as *African Ivory Route* officials and managers, local tourism representatives (Blouberg Tourism

Association), camp staff and camp managers, community members and representatives, as well as provincial and regional government, are of crucial importance to ensure regular feedback and progress monitoring.

A strategic action plan involves the compilation of a detailed resource analysis to evaluate existing and potential resources for tourism development. A detailed resource assessment may include an assessment of existing attractions, activities, accommodation, food services, transportation, accessibility, infrastructure and facilities. It will also be necessary to conduct a socio-economic baseline study to determine the current socio-economic status of the community. A preliminary assessment of the tourism market needs to be conducted to assess the profile of current and prospective visitors.

Although an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has previously been conducted (Terblanche & Associates, 2002), it is recommended that the report be updated and/or reviewed according to the new EIA regulations that were promulgated by the South African government on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2006.

Therefore, it is also recommended that a Basic Assessment (BA) or a full assessment (EIA) be undertaken according to the new EIA regulations in terms of chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) 1998, Section 23 (2) for any additional developments and extensions to existing development on Blouberg, for example, a hiking trail. In essence, a newly revised action plan needs to be generated to ensure that sustainable ethnotourism on Blouberg can be implemented. The new vision and action plan should be followed by the establishment of a system to evaluate, manage and continuously monitor. The new vision, action plan, management and monitoring system for Blouberg could form a foundation that enables stakeholders to foresee potential issues that may have a negative impact on the industry, and establish the necessary mitigation measures.

## 9.2. Recommendations

Studies conducted by USAID (June, 2005) indicated that lessons learned through trial and error in the field become the foundation for sustainable future projects. Valuable insights can be gained by comparing the original design and intention of a project with the actual outcome. The USAID portfolio on Sustainable Tourism states that poorly planned tourism can be extremely destructive to its surrounding environment, cultures and economies (USAID, June 2004).

Over-dependence on any industry is risky to a local economy, potentially leading to marked seasonal fluctuations and longer-term downturns. Tourism's multifaceted attributes can be woven to support many different agency programs and objectives if managed according to effective and efficient strategies.

Based upon lessons learned from previous projects undertaken by USAID and other development assistance agencies, a shortlist of recommendations for tourism development is presented below (USAID, 2004):

- Clarify the specific goal(s) to be achieved by a tourism-related intervention. Often, goals that are vague or multi-focused are not achievable or measurable for replication, and/or can lead to unintended results;
- Have realistic expectations regarding the funding and time allocation to achieve the proposed intervention. A well-designed project could fail if either of these is underestimated. Private initiative must drive investments;
- Prior to implementation, undertake a rigorous feasibility study, with input from the tourism sector (consultant and operator). This ensures that the intervention is financially feasible and is demand (not supply) driven;
- Select the most applicable performance indicators to assess the intervention. With an intervention that is designed to address poverty reduction, for example, one of the indicators selected might be the number of additional tourism industry jobs created;



*Ethnotourism at Blouberg in the Limpopo Province: A quest for sustainability, 2006*

- Wherever feasible, utilise an integrated, destination-management approach that implements integrated planning. This approach incorporates sensitive land use planning and management, relating to the type and location of tourism and supporting infrastructure, to maximise community benefit and minimize environmental degradation and damage from extreme natural events;
- Ensure effective communication between stakeholders, including the affected community, private sector, NGOs, and host government at all levels. Each will have a unique perspective, agenda and contribution that must be taken into consideration for project success;
- Ensure that the intervention receives the necessary support at various public and private sector levels;
- Build human resource to ensure on-going benefits. Community involvement alone is insufficient. Training is needed to provide the necessary skills, and education is necessary in order to protect the environment;
- Learn from the mistakes of others. Literally thousands of tourism-related projects have been undertaken by USAID and other entities within the international development community alone. One of the most promising recent actions in the international tourism arena was the call for co-operation (made at the October 2004 World Tourism Organisation Sustainable Tourism Policy Forum) by USAID, several European development assistance agencies, World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, to comprehensively share their respective development experiences, as well as work closely together in the field. This level of collaboration conceivably holds significant promise to produce the most effective results, from limited resources, to the benefit of all.

**Examples of two successful case studies in southern Africa are described below:**

*Nyani Tribal village:* Nyani Tribal village is a Shangaan cultural village situated in the Limpopo Province. In 1994, Axon Khosa and his family started to reconstruct the village in the traditional Shangaan style and officially opened for tourists in 1996. The village stands on Khosa's grandfather's land and operates as a family business, managed and run by Khosa himself. He employs a number of family members some of whom live there permanently.

Nyani Tribal Village offers a personal experience focused on cultural enlightenment and appreciation. It encourages low impact tourism and only a small number of tourist operators (such as Wagon Trails and Bundu Bus) operate in this area. Tourist operators cater for small groups consisting of 8-15 people who want to experience a down-to-earth African experience with a guided tour, a traditional Shangaan dinner, dancing and an overnight stay in one of the huts.



**Figure 23:** Two examples of cultural and natural heritage resources being used for tourism at Nyani Tribal Village; a set of Shangaan drums (left) and a sacred tree in the village (right). *Source: Martin, 2000*

A brief description of the Nyani experience, (extract from <http://hdgc.epp.cmu.edu/misc/-Nyani>, 2006) is described below:

*“...The village is not only a tourism business but also a village built by Shangaan people for Shangaan people and anyone interested in their culture. It is a project to encourage people from rural townships to remember their roots, culture and old values while they adapt to a modern lifestyle. Axon Khosa and his family created a place where traditional Shangaan life can be practiced and experienced by everybody. Children from the surrounding villages and schools, at times as many as 40 - 50 at a time, come to the Shangaan village for weekends to be educated about Shangaan culture. According to Axon Khosa this is done free of charge and is financed through tourism.*

*He states that through diminishing culture, traditional values, like the respect towards elders, is lost. He also sees this as a result of the increasing incidence of begging and crime in South Africa. The decay of traditional family structures and the value of family bonds are also important issues. Nowadays, young men are less likely to take responsibility if their girlfriend becomes pregnant. As a result, many children grow up without their fathers and end up living on the streets and begging for food.*

*At Nyani Tribal Village, the children practise Shangaan traditions and gain cultural knowledge to pass on to younger generations – they learn through practice. The main goal is to support the children as they are the future of this culture and also of South Africa. The children and the people who are working there meet people from various countries and are able to learn about other cultures and the world around them. Therefore the project and the cultural village are widely accepted in the surrounding communities...”*

It is evident that Nyani Tribal Village operates according to principles of sustainability that is economically, socially and environmentally beneficial to the local community. Nyani Village is one of few cultural villages in southern Africa where local people benefit directly through ethnotourism.

Community-owned tourism could benefit the Hananwa community directly. However, training and education is an important element in running a successful business, especially in sustainable tourism development. The perceptions of tourism on Blouberg are ambiguous, as they are not familiar with the tourist industry. The employees at Nyani Tribal Village are supported by other tourist organisations (over landing travel companies) and run their own business successfully. Nyani Village is more accessible to visitors than the tourist camp on Blouberg, which limits the opportunities for joint development and marketing for the Hananwa.

*A Multiple-Win Project in Namibia:* Namibia's 'Living in a Finite Environment' (LIFE) Project is not only improving livelihoods and strengthening local governance, but is directly benefiting the environment. Two-thirds of the country's 1.8 million people live in impoverished rural areas and are dependent upon natural resources for their economic well-being. Severe droughts and heavy poaching in the 1980s caused a dramatic decline in wildlife numbers, adversely impacting tourism enterprises and ecosystem stability.

In 1993, with support from USAID and the World Wildlife Fund, new legislation allowed communities' rights over wildlife provided that community members could meet the standards to register as a conservancy (a type of community-based management institution). Once a conservancy was established, the community received assistance in adopting effective game management practices, negotiating with the private sector, and benefiting from tourism revenues. As a result, wildlife figures have increased significantly, and many communities derive income from handicraft sales, trophy hunting contracts and game meat distribution. More than 80 communal area conservancies – covering close to eight million hectares of land – currently exist or are in various stages of formation. Wildlife tourism continues to be a central means to diversify the country's economy, and has become Namibia's third highest contributor to GDP. (USAID, 2004)

*Intabazwe Route and Harrismith Tourist Office:* Another notable successful project is the Intabazwe Route and Harrismith Tourist Office established by DEAT (DEAT, 1994 – 2004). The town's tourist office was renovated and a route was developed through the township, focussing on aspects of the township's history. An exceptional woman by the name of Joyce Muhle Mthembu initiated and drove these projects. The office received income from a history book she wrote which is sold to the tourists and the public. Other income is generated through advertising, enquiries and bookings. It has become a popular route, attracting numerous tourists to the physical location and its website. Unemployed women were trained through the project in the art of beadwork and their Christmas decorations were sold to the public. Joyce Mthembu attended the Tourism Indaba in 2003 and was awarded the Tourist Development Award. She also won an AA award for her participation in Tourism (DEAT, 1994 – 2004)



### **9.2.1. Proposed strategies**

According to Keyser (2004: 387), sustainable tourism development needs to be interpreted in terms of what destinations and the tourism industry can *do* to implement and initiate operational sustainable tourism development. Strategies intended for sustainable tourism development on Blouberg need to be considered and embraced by destinations, tourists and tourism businesses.

A strategic plan for future progress to achieve sustainable ethnotourism development on Blouberg is required; a recommended approach is briefly illustrated in the following 6 steps:

**Step 1:** Select a dynamic management team on Blouberg to take control of strategic planning, implementation and progression. The management team must also be able to implement objectives, set goals, monitor improvement, interpret tourist lifecycle models, make concrete decisions, regulate meetings between stakeholders and ensure that the strategic plan is implemented in a sustainable manner.

**Step 2:** Liaise with the local Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Manager and relevant governmental officials to identify potential opportunities, co-operation and funds for the upgrading of infrastructure and facilities on Blouberg. Goals and objectives for tourism development are listed in the IDP report for the Blouberg Municipality. (Appendix A, Blouberg Municipality 2005/2006 IDP)

**Step 3:** Liaise with private and public organisations for potential partnerships in community-based ecotourism development, which could provide an opportunity for equally-distributed mutual benefits (E.g. establishment of community trust funds, skills development, training and education, tour packages, procurement plans and local business development)

**Step 4:** Together with the *African Ivory Route*, create a tourism network and monitoring system that allows continuous feedback and progress communication between stakeholders. Ensure that regular meetings are held between stakeholders.

**Step 5:** Should it be required, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Strategic Business Plan (SBP) must be compiled and implemented. A Basic Environmental Impact Assessment (including a preliminary Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)) must be conducted for developments, upgrades and extensions according to new EIA regulations (2006).

Due to the similar nature of heritage management in the Strategic Management Plan of Cape Peninsula National Park (CPNP) for 2000 – 2004, it proved to be a viable example for future actions in ethnotourism on Blouberg. (CPNP, 2003: 8) It complements Blouberg's goal to facilitate the conservation and sustainable use of heritage resources. The CPNP Strategic Management Plan also recognizes the challenge of sustainability, which implies the balancing of social, economic and environmental perspectives.

The following strategic management actions and strategies can be applied to future development management plans of ethnotourism on Blouberg (Figure 24).

**Figure 24:** Strategic Management actions

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS ON BLOUBERG</b>
<p>I. Identify, research and document information on tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources associated with Blouberg and the Hananwa community</p>	<p>i. Establish a cultural heritage working group                      ii. Audit tangible and intangible heritage resources                      iii. Collect and document oral information                      iv. Develop a framework for interpretation                      v. Facilitate research programs                      vi. Compile a comprehensive spatial and non-spatial database on cultural heritage resources</p>
<p>II. Manage tangible and intangible cultural resources</p>	<p>i. Audit tangible and intangible resources                      ii. Take steps to manage impacts on tangible cultural resources                      iii. Identify priorities for restoration, stabilisation and rehabilitation (also integrate with local planning)                      iv. Restore priority sites</p>
<p>III. Develop materials, methods and facilities that develop an appreciation and respect for the local culture and spiritual (sacred) significance associated with Blouberg.</p>	<p>i. Identify and prioritise the development of education and training facilities and materials                      ii. Develop educational and training materials and facilities</p>

The CPNP Strategic Management Plan (2000 – 2004) aims to promote sustainable planning, development and management on all levels of tourism development. It also recognises the importance of education, training, local involvement and community-based management. Local management forms a crucial part in the successful implementation of ethnotourism.



### **9.2.2. Community based management and ownership**

In order for tourism development to be sustainable at Blouberg, the aforementioned strategies for sustainable development need to be combined with community-based resource management and local involvement. The implementation of sustainable community-based or community-controlled tourism begins with local ownership and management of significant aspects in the industry. Hall & Lew (1998: 75) lists four important features that need to be implemented in sustainable resource management.

- *Spatial Control*: The community must control the entry to areas of cultural or social significance such as homelands and sacred sites, by setting limits.
- *Activity Control*: The community must establish preferred or permitted activities, as well as set limits on behaviour and appearance.
- *Temporal Control*: The community must indicate appropriate times for tourist access and use of resources and facilities.
- *Cultural Control*: The community must set limits to the access of indigenous knowledge, cultural heritage, rituals, folklore and traditions.

The implementations of such control measures will not only ensure the conservation of physical features, but also of local values, morals and traditions. Intangible cultural and heritage elements are often difficult to quantify or measure in terms of sustainable limitations. Community-control can assist locals to build physical barriers around community values and local identity, which can establish a stable sense of pride and respects amongst its members.

### **9.2.3. National strategy for sustainable development**

The final recommendation is aimed at the implementation of the National Framework for sustainable development in South Africa, which has not been finalised at the time of printing (DEAT, 2006). Once Blouberg has identified its potential resources for tourism, it needs to implement the guidelines in the national framework for sustainable development. Implementation demands decision-making and input from various stakeholders and authorities. In order to achieve a "...sustainable, economically prosperous and self-reliant..." tourism industry on Blouberg, it needs to follow the following steps:

Step one: Create an effective institutional framework;

Step two: Implement an efficient action plan according to priority listings; and

Step three: Establish ongoing communication and consultation on the national vision and strategy in achieving it; and

Step four: Develop an appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems, which will include principles and indicators to monitor and evaluate performance. The feedback system would determine success or failure and to determine what corrective or adaptive measures are needed. (DEAT, 2006)

## 10. **CONCLUSION**

The implementation of ethnotourism in an area is often seen as a solution that brings benefits to local communities automatically (ATLAS, 2002). Literature review and intensive research showed that the political and social legitimacy of tourism was based on its perceived ability to generate foreign revenue, create employment and alleviate poverty (Boniface, 1999: 1). However, the reality is that tourism development is not always as straightforward as it seems and the implementation of ethnotourism is not always the best option for development. Richards' (1999) "Field of Dreams" philosophy proves the illusion of tourism benefits by stating that if you build an attraction, the tourist will not necessarily arrive. It was proven that numerous cultural or ethnotourism developments have been product-led, and only a selective number of initiatives attested a successful outcome. The tourism initiative on Blouberg is an example of an idealistic perspective of 'product-led' tourism development.

This study presented an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities of and threats to ethnotourism in South Africa, with specific focus on Blouberg in Limpopo Province. It also created an interest and awareness amongst readers about the multi-dimensional nature of ethnotourism, whether their interest lies in economics, science, biology or academics. The importance of a sustainable foundation was emphasised throughout the dissertation to create a sound basis for strategic planning, development and management.

The quest for sustainable tourism on Blouberg enhanced the understanding of challenges in the tourism industry and address current issues and concerns of tourism on Blouberg such as low numbers of visitors, water shortages and low educational levels of community members. It also provided constructive recommendations for sustainable development strategies and guidelines for future implementation.

Furthermore, this study dedicated itself to the creation of a logical framework for future development and research on ethnotourism. However, this study should not be regarded as a precise or postulated set of policies, principles or projects. It is merely an operational framework (or recommended method) to direct towards ethnotourism management.

This study creates an outline for creative and logical thinking in sustainable ethnotourism management. Due to the interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional nature of ethnotourism, further research in this field is imperative. Given the potential benefits and opportunities of sustainable ethnotourism, strategies should also be applied to other communities in South Africa. In order to promote further progress in the field of ethnotourism, it is important to incorporate research results into practical applications. Although mistakes are inevitable in ethnotourism, it can serve as learning opportunities to other communities.

Mistakes and failures must be avoided, mitigated or managed in a controlled environment to prevent or minimise irreversible impacts. It is evident that tourism a sustainable tourism development strategy at Blouberg has not been implemented, operated and managed as anticipated by CEDA and related authorities. This indicates that the need for sustainable management remains undeveloped.

The original research question can therefore be reiterated in a more informed context:

**Can ethnotourism at Blouberg be developed in a sustainable manner?**

It is in the researchers' opinion that ethnotourism on Blouberg *can* be developed in a sustainable manner if future tourism planning and development is governed according to strategic and sustainable principles. Furthermore, strategies to improve education and training in the tourism industry on the mountain – such as strategic business management, marketing, tour guiding and general literacy – need to be applied for effective tourism development.

Evidently, substantial investment needs to be made to ensure that tourism on Blouberg is developed in a responsible, profitable and mutually-beneficial manner.



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