

*Full Length Research Paper*

# The contribution of a mega-event to the sustainable development of South African tourism

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The objectives of the study were to determine the relevance and the management of the drivers that underlie the hosting of a mega-event aimed at promoting sustainable tourism development, in this case, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup™ that was held in South Africa in 2010. A web-based survey was constructed and 217 international academic and industry experts were invited to participate in a survey that was conducted six weeks prior to the commencement of the World Cup and one that was conducted six weeks after the ending of the event. A 24% response rate was received to the first survey and an 18% response rate to the second. Respondents regarded the strategic drivers contained within the constructs of socio-cultural, economic and environmental as relevant for the evaluation of the contribution of a mega-event to sustainable tourism development. In addition, a fourth construct viz. a managerial construct was also deemed valid in this regard. Performance related to this managerial construct indicated significant improvements against anticipated outcomes in the areas of managerial capacity development, learning optimisation, media management and achieved standards of safety and security.

**Key words:** Responsible tourism, mega-event management, developing economies.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2010, South Africa, as a developing economy, hosted the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup™. In its bid for the hosting of this event, a strong developmental agenda was promoted, intended to ensure that the event would positively impact the lives of the majority of the population who had previously been disadvantaged by the policies and practices of *apartheid* (Cornellisen, 2007; Rogerson, 2009). The contribution of this mega-event to the process of transformation in the country and, in particular, to the development of small tourism enterprises was emphasised (Rogerson, 2008). Under the ambit of tourism, mega-events are broadly considered to be large-scale affairs marked by global publicity, substantial international visitation and major economic, social and environmental impacts (Jago et al., 2010).

## Problem statement, objectives of the study and research question

In the wake of the 2009 economic recession, ample evidence of managerial deficits across economic sectors became evident. The tourism industry did not escape scrutiny in this regard (World Economic Forum, 2009). While the tourism industry can contribute to the growth of the economy, the business of tourism, including the management of mega-events, requires the establishment of clear goals and priorities according to which resources can be apportioned, results measured and obsolete practices eliminated. Such management is all the more important if the hosting of a mega-event is to promote advancement in the tourism industry in developing economies.

However, there appears to be limited documentation on organisational learning regarding the critical set of strategic drivers that can influence the success of a mega-event, including the contribution of the event to the socio-economic and ecological development of the host

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destination (Lockstone and Baum, 2008). Therefore, a critical reflection of the strategic drivers that underlie the management of mega-events as well as the perceived anticipated and actual impacts of the management of such drivers for the sustainable development of local tourism systems holds valuable lessons for future organising committees involved in the planning of mega-events. Accordingly, the objectives of the present study were twofold:

- i. To test the relevance of the drivers underlying the management of a mega-event in promoting sustainable tourism development in a country located within a developing context;
- ii. To ascertain how successfully the drivers of a mega-event, in this case, the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, served to promote sustainable tourism development in South Africa.

In this regard, the overall research question against which the study is contextualised is: How relevant are the drivers of mega-event management for sustainable tourism development and how well were they managed during the World Cup in terms of achieving this objective?

The unique contribution of this study is found in its report of expert insights into the contribution of a mega-event to the sustainable development of tourism in a host country located within a developing context. Such insights may provide guidelines for future developing economies wishing to host mega-events and, accordingly, potential pitfalls may be avoided. In addition, a new construct was developed viz. a managerial construct, which can be added to the generally accepted constructs of economic, socio-cultural and environment when considering how a mega-event can be evaluated in terms of its contribution to sustainable tourism development in developing economies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Sustainable development

Leke et al. (2010) highlight the growth of the African economy over the past ten years with real GDP rising by 4.9% each year, more than twice the pace witnessed in the previous two decades. It is predicted that, in the medium term, Africa, after the Asian Pacific region, will soon record the second fastest economic growth of world regions, with South Africa being Africa's largest contributor to such growth (Euromonitor International, 2011). April (2009) however highlights the historical poor economic growth and political instability that scars the region. In this vein, Engelbrecht (2007) reports that while sub-Saharan Africa has received more than US\$ 1 trillion in international aid over the past 50 years, many African countries evidence greater poverty today than they did

prior to the receipt of such aid, including South Africa, where almost half of the country's people live in poverty.

The challenges faced by developing economies are numerous and include alleviating poverty, eradicating hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing mortality, improving health and ensuring environmental sustainability (Leke et al., 2010). Additional issues, specific to South Africa, include addressing health problems such as HIV/AIDS, attending to land redistribution, improving governance and government capacity to manage development processes, ensuring adequate housing and promoting access to credit (De Jongh, 2004; Visser et al., 2005). Jenkins (2005: 529) reports on a "decline in confidence" in the role of governments to promote needed development. A conclusion reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, was that the involvement of business being key to and inseparable from the advancement of sustainable development in developing economies (Blyth, 2002).

While there are several definitions of sustainable development, Ciegis et al. (2009) note that none provide a perfect understanding of this complex concept. All things considered, the definition of sustainable development, as proposed by the Brundtland Commission, appears to be the one most commonly used (Basiago, 1999) viz. "development that satisfies the needs of the current time period without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs" (Ciegis et al., 2009: 34). Furrer (2002: 2) adds that sustainable development is "a path of socio-economic development that is financially balanced, socially equitable, ethically responsible, and adequately integrated in the long-term ecological balance of the environment".

When evaluating whether an initiative has contributed to the sustainable development of a country, Valentin and Spangenberg (2000: 381) emphasise that simple indicators must be delineated that are limited in number, are "directionally clear" and ones that can be transparently evaluated to indicate progress in promoting sustainable development or the absence of such progress. Similarly, the Brundtland Commission outlines four principles that underlie sustainable development: holistic planning and strategic decision-making, preservation of essential ecological processes, protection of human heritage and biodiversity, and growth that can continue over the long-term (Ciegis et al., 2009).

### Sustainable development in tourism

The last 30 years has seen a rise in the tourism, hospitality and sports industries, with tourism being widely recognised as the sector that can anchor global economic recovery following the 2009 recession (The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2009). Global tourism creates approximately 77 million

direct industry jobs (2.7% of total employment) and a total of 220 million indirect jobs in addition to generating 30% of global export services and 45% of the total export of services of developing economies (UNWTO, 2009). Of particular importance, and in keeping with the sentiment of absorbing marginalised groups into the economy, tourism effectively integrates youth and women from urban and rural communities into the workforce. Tourism generates a relatively low share (5%) of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when compared to the manufacturing and construction sectors (13%) (UNWTO, 2009). In South Africa, tourism has grown over the past 16 years and now contributes 3% of GDP and 4.4% to overall employment (Republic of South Africa, 2011).

Developed economies have appreciated the evolution of tourism as a strategic contributor. Whitford and Ruhanen (2010) have established tourism systems to attract foreign currency and to create employment. In particular, when considering South Africa as a developing economy, Rogerson (2004) notes how the tourism industry is an important driver of economic growth and a means to develop entrepreneurship, human resources, equity and ownership amongst previously disadvantaged individuals and communities in the country.

The term 'responsible tourism' was endorsed in South Africa in 1996 and is regarded as an approach by tourism industry partners to proactively and responsibly develop, market and manage tourism industry, thereby creating competitive advantage (Republic of South Africa, 1996). This term and the principles that underlie it have come to resonate internationally in government policy documents and economic strategies as well as in the programmes of donor agencies and non-governmental organisations (Spenceley, 2008).

The South African National Tourism Sector Strategy (Republic of South Africa, 2011) highlights the need for tourism in the country to promote sustainable development and notes that responsible tourism will advance community involvement in and benefit from tourism programmes and projects. In addition, such responsible tourism can be expected to contribute to the achievement of economic growth, ecological sustainability and social responsibility within the country. These 'triple bottom-line' concepts are reiterated in the guidelines for national responsible tourism in South Africa (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2002). Accordingly, Booyesen (2010: 276) advocates that the impacts of tourism development should be spread "across time and space" with care being taken to ensure that such tourism development does not harm host communities and the local environment. Put another way, George and Frey (2010) advance that responsible tourism involves minimising the negative impact on the social, economic and environmental facets of society while, at the same time, maximising the benefit that development in tourism can afford. Accordingly, the concept of sustainable development has now become central to any consideration of tourism practices (Gössling et al., 2008). Dávid (2011)

adds that the link between responsible tourism and sustainable tourism development occurs when tourism contributes to both the tourism ecology and the tourism economy.

### **Contribution of mega-events to sustainable development**

Lim and Lee (2006: 408) define mega-events as "events so large that they affect the entire economies and reverberate in the global media". Earlier, Roche (1994: 1) noted mega-events to be "short-term events with long-term consequences". Mega-events also provide an international stage upon which host countries can showcase themselves as future tourism destinations (Chung and Woo, 2011; Majumdar, 2011). In this regard, Dansero and Puttilli (2010: 321) note that mega-events can afford great opportunities to host countries to leave "both tangible and intangible legacies".

While the hosting of mega-events in developing economies is not a solution to all social and economic problems, bidding for and hosting mega-events has spawned fierce competition, driven by the numerous tourism-related advantages for the host destination, many of which can contribute to the sustainable development (Clark, 2010). Such advantages include changed global perceptions about the host destination, improved infrastructure, support services and supply chain management, increased accommodation capacity and enhanced national pride (Baade et al., 2010; Tien et al., 2011). In particular, for developing economies, the advantages of hosting a mega-event have been noted to include economic impact estimated in billions (Parent, 2008) and the positive effect on relational systems or the "networks that connect individual and institutional actors within a field" (Glynn, 2008: 1118). In addition, other business opportunities can be leveraged from the event (Asheeke, 2010). Such contribution to the sustainable development of a host location can be measured in terms of the success of the event itself, the impact that the event has on the host country or city and whether or not the host location is left 'better off' than it was prior to the event (Clark, 2008).

However, the staging of such events has not been without criticism. Mixed findings have been reported of the contribution of mega-events to the host country's economy (Leeds, 2008). Barclay (2009: 65) refers to such events as "political theatre" or "a favourable excuse to legitimise additional public spending that would not otherwise pass through the political process". Tien et al. (2011), in a nine-year longitudinal study, found that the Olympic Games (24 summer and winter games) did not produce any long-term economic impact to host countries but did influence GDP and unemployment in the short-term. Hede (2005) notes the artificial and temporary spike in demand for accommodation and related services during the actual staging of the event. Again Barclay

(2009) warns of the hidden costs that remain after the event as well as the social costs that may go unrecognised where less affluent members of the host cities may benefit least from such events.

Some mega-events have actively worked against sustainable development through non-delivery on initial expectations, under-achievement of employment targets, high levels of post-event debt, a tarnished destination brand and relegation of social development to the lower end of the priority list (Baade et al., 2010). In addition, such events have seen investment of host taxpayers' money in infrastructure leaking from the host economy, sometimes immediately after the first round of spending (Du Plessis and Maennig, 2010).

When mega-events fail to deliver against sustainable development agendas, the following factors appear to be present: a focus on short term economic gains that ignore associated costs (Baade et al., 2008), a lack of strategic planning (Deffner and Labrianidis, 2005), excessive influence of the external owner or promoter of the event at the expense of the long-term benefits for ordinary citizens of the host city or country (Nadvi, 2008; Pillay and Bass, 2008), political interference that promotes a short-lived marketing effect with inequitable benefits to host citizens (Del Olmo, 2004), underestimation of the dynamics involved in managing a mega-event on the part of local organising committees, politicians and corporate leaders (Tien et al., 2011), a lack discipline in the execution of event deadlines by local organising committees and failure of government departments to collaborate effectively (Jago et al., 2010), as well as the lack of development of a knowledge base, lodged in lessons learned from the management of past mega-events (Turco et al., 2010).

Recognising the role that tourism and mega-events can play in contributing to tourism development in host countries, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2009) introduced a set of strategic guidelines that focuses on three interconnected areas: economic resilience, stimulation of growth and employment opportunities, and transformation towards a green economy. In the planning that attends mega-events such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, these imperatives are now required to be directly addressed.

In reviewing the dynamics of mega-event management, Van Lill (2010) notes 12 strategic drivers that require consideration in order to ensure that hosting a mega-event contributes specifically to sustainable tourism development. These drivers are: leveraging opportunities to unite people across historical racial or political divides, engaging with the community, leveraging other business opportunities from the event, ensuring long-term business planning, developing partnerships and sharing costs among developing economies, balancing the power dynamics between government, local communities and external owners/promoters of the event, optimising learning, developing managerial capacity, managing the media, promoting sustainable practices, optimising

technology and ensuring safety and security. Six of the above-mentioned drivers do not appear to be contained within the three constructs commonly used to contextualise and evaluate the contribution of an event to sustainable development in tourism viz. economic, socio-cultural and ecological. These drivers are: balancing power among stakeholders, optimising learning from the management of the mega-event, developing managerial capacity, managing the media, applying advanced technological innovation and achieving safety and security standards.

## METHODOLOGY

The population comprised the 217 delegates from 35 countries who attended the 2010 International Summit on Tourism, Sport and Mega-events co-hosted by the UNWTO, the South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the University of Johannesburg's School of Tourism and Hospitality and the Christel Dehaan Institute for Travel and Tourism Research at Nottingham University, UK. Members of this population included senior academics and tourism industry executives, from both the private and public sectors, who were purposefully selected for their expertise in this field (Veal, 2006). In this way, an attempt was made to capture the perceptions of individuals familiar with mega-event dynamics. All 217 members of the population were requested to complete both a pre-World Cup and a post-World Cup on-line survey conducted six weeks before and six weeks after the staging of the 2010 World Cup. In this way an attempt was made to account for a possible change in pre- and post-event perceptions regarding the management of the drivers that influence the contribution of a mega-event to sustainable tourism development. Fifty-two respondents replied to the pre-World Cup survey, reflecting a 24% response rate that included 25 senior academics and 27 executive managers or chief executive officers, with 85% of the respondents being South African. Forty responses were received for the post-World Cup survey, an 18% response rate that included 16 senior academics and 24 executive managers or chief executive officers, of whom 70% were South African.

Both surveys contained the same 20 statements organised according to the three constructs of sustainability (socio-cultural, economic, ecological) and a fourth construct proposed by Van Lill (2010) (managerial). Each statement represented a strategic driver and prompted two responses on a 7-point Likert-type scale. In the first survey, respondents rated the relevance of each driver for the promotion of sustainable tourism development through the mega-event (1 = not at all relevant; 7 = extremely relevant). They then rated whether they believed that South Africa will manage each driver successfully to achieve this end (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

Each statement was accompanied descriptors for clarification. For example for the statement, "optimism regarding the host destination is boosted", an accompanying descriptor was: "the global community views South Africa more positively". In the second survey, again, respondents rated the relevance of each driver for the promotion of sustainable tourism development through the mega-event and then rated their perceptions of how these drivers had actually been managed during the event.

The final data set in both surveys also contained a self-rating of level of familiarity of respondents with mega-event dynamics on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all familiar; 7 = very familiar).

The perceived relevance of the mega-event success drivers were determined for both the pre- and post-event phases by calculating an average rating for each driver as furnished by respondents. In addition, the possibility of a significant shift in perceived relevance

from the pre- to the post-event phases was ascertained for each driver by applying a *t*-test for independent samples.

The perceptions of respondents regarding how successfully the strategic drivers were managed with regard to contribution to sustainable tourism development in the country, were calculated by means of the following formula:

$$\text{Success (\%)} = \frac{\text{Respondent's Relevance Rating} \times (\text{Respondent's Performance Rating})}{(\text{Average Relevance Rating}) \times (\text{Max Performance Rating})} \times 100$$

A *t*-test for independent samples was conducted to compare the scores for pre- and post-event responses for each strategic driver. The statistical package SPSS Version 18.3 (SPSS, 2010) was used for all statistical analyses.

Respondents were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary. As responses were collated electronically through the web surveys, all responses were anonymous and the views of individual respondents could not be identified.

## RESULTS

### Level of expertise of respondents

Respondents to both surveys consistently rated their expertise in mega-event management as relatively high. The score for pre-event self-rated expertise averaged 5.88 with a standard deviation of 0.75 where a maximum rating of 7 ('very familiar') could be attained. Self-rating of expertise by respondents who completed the post-event survey averaged 5.83 with a standard deviation of 0.68.

### The relevance of strategic drivers to promote sustainable tourism development

The perceived relevance of the key success drivers employed in the present study ranged from an average 5.40 to 6.31 for the pre-event survey, and from 5.23 to 6.70 for the post-event survey as noted in Table 1.

When comparing pre- to post-event relevance ratings, three significant changes are noted. Within the economic construct, post-event ratings of 'planning leads to short-term GDP growth' became less relevant (difference = 0.66;  $p = 0.01$ ), whereas within the managerial construct 'managerial capacity is developed' became more relevant (difference = 0.35;  $p = 0.05$ ) as did 'safety and security standards are achieved' (difference = 0.43;  $p = 0.01$ ). No other significant changes in respondent perceptions of the relevance of strategic drivers from pre-survey to post-survey were evident.

### The management of strategic drivers to promote sustainable tourism development

Post-event perceptions of how successfully the strategic drivers were managed during the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, as a means of promoting sustainable tourism development, are noted in Table 2. In addition, significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes in the perceptions of respondents from pre- to post event phases are

highlighted in Table 2.

Overall, the contribution of mega-event strategic drivers to sustainable tourism development was rated 68% by respondents in response to the post-event survey. Significantly, perceived success regarding the management of the event grew by 14% over the 12-week period between the pre- and the post-event surveys.

The achievement of socio-cultural imperatives during the 2010 FIFA World Cup was considered to be 73% successful. Within this construct, post-event success ratings varied from a relatively low 60% for continuous community engagement to a high 86% reflecting that optimism regarding South Africa as a host destination was boosted. While no significant pre- and post-event differences were observed within the socio-cultural construct as a whole, significant differences were reported for three drivers within this construct. Improved perceptions were noted with regard to inter-regional collaboration (+13%) and optimism regarding the host destination (+9%). A decrease of 2% was recorded for communication of the advantages of the mega-event to the public.

The achievement of economic imperatives was rated at 71%. Post-event success ratings varied from a low rating of 60% in responding to short and long term market needs, with higher ratings being accorded to the drivers related to the promotion of short-term growth in GDP (71%), disciplined leadership in hosting the event (77%) and the boost in mainstream infrastructural programmes (79%). No significant differences between pre- and post-event scores were noted for this construct overall.

The achievement of ecological imperatives performed the weakest of the four constructs (52%). The management of waste (51%), energy (52%) and water (52%) in both the pre- and post event surveys were consistently rated as poor with no significant differences between pre- and post-event scores being recorded for this construct or the drivers within it.

Overall, management of the managerial construct was rated as performing significantly best (76%) over the four sustainability constructs. Of interest is the low score (54%) respondents accorded to the balance of power among stakeholders. In contrast, developing managerial capacity (73%) and enhanced organisational learning (77%) through hosting the mega-event were ranked highly by respondents. Exceptionally high ratings were noted with regard to the drivers of advancing technology (80%), managing the media (81%) and achieving safety and security standards (90%). Examination of the significant differences between pre- and post-event perceptions revealed an overall improvement rating of 9% within the managerial construct, with significant elevated post-event ratings for the development of managerial capacity (+12%), the optimisation of organisational learning (+10%), the management of the media (+10%) and the achievement of safety and security (+16%).

**Table 1.** Relevance of mega-event drivers.

<b>Mega-event drivers</b>	<b>Pre-event rating (n=52)</b>	<b>Post-event rating (n=40)</b>	<b>Significance of pre- and post-event differences (<i>p</i>)</b>	<b>Average</b>
<b>Socio-cultural construct</b>				
The management of the mega-event is well communicated to the public	6.17	6.10	0.35	6.14
Optimism regarding the host destination is boosted	6.17	6.30	0.19	6.24
Communities are continuously engaged	5.69	5.73	0.45	5.71
Inter-regional collaboration strengthened	5.40	5.80	0.06	5.60
Partnerships with first world economies are well managed	5.65	5.58	0.37	5.62
<b>Economic construct</b>				
Disciplined leadership is evident in delivering the mega-event	6.06	5.90	0.23	5.98
Market demands are understood and are responsive to short- and long-term prospects	6.23	6.33	0.29	6.28
Planning leads to short-term GDP growth	5.94	5.28	0.01	5.61
Planning leads to long-term GDP growth	6.13	6.33	0.17	6.23
Employment is boosted	6.04	5.80	0.19	5.92
Mainstream tourism infrastructure programmes are boosted	6.31	6.10	0.10	6.21
<b>Ecological construct</b>				
Appropriate energy conservation choices are implemented	5.67	5.25	0.07	5.46
Appropriate water conservation choices are implemented	5.60	5.23	0.10	5.42
Appropriate waste management choices are implemented	5.67	5.38	0.14	5.53
<b>Managerial construct</b>				
The power play of stakeholders appears balanced	5.67	5.40	0.17	5.54
Learning about mega-event management is optimized	5.85	6.05	0.17	5.95
Managerial capacity is developed	5.85	6.20	0.05	6.03
The media is well-managed	6.21	6.38	0.25	6.30
Innovations in advanced technology are applied	5.96	5.75	0.21	5.86
Safety and security standards are achieved	6.27	6.70	0.01	6.49

$p \leq 0.05$

## DISCUSSION

Whilst it must be acknowledged that self-rating can be subjective, respondents who completed both the pre- and the post-event surveys generally rated themselves as having expertise in the management of mega-events and related issues that accompany the hosting of mega-events. This high level of expertise was expected as respondents in both surveys emanated from a pool of experts who attended a high-level international summit

on tourism, sport and mega-events. As such, it can be argued that their input to the surveys constituted the views of international thinkers on the topic and thus, that the findings can be considered to have been derived from a sound and knowledgeable base. The objectives of the study were to:

i. To test the relevance of the drivers underlying the management of a mega-event in promoting sustainable tourism development in a country located within a

**Table 2.** Pre- and post event perceptions regarding the management of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Construct	Pre-event (%)	Post-event (%)	Difference	(p)
<b>Socio-cultural construct</b>	69	73	4	0.10
The advantages of the mega-event legacy are well communicated to the public	75	73	-2	0.03
Optimism regarding the host destination is boosted	77	86	9	0.01
Communities are continuously engaged	63	60	-3	0.27
Inter-regional collaboration strengthened	64	77	13	0.01
Partnerships with first world economies are well-managed	68	72	3	0.21
<b>Economic construct</b>	71	71	-1	0.17
Disciplined leadership in conceptualising and delivering the mega-event is demonstrated	72	77	5	0.11
Market demands are understood and responsive to short and long term prospects	66	60	-6	0.40
Planning leads to short-term GDP growth	70	71	2	0.23
Planning leads to long-term GDP growth	72	69	-4	0.45
Employment is boosted	68	68	0	0.35
Mainstream tourism infrastructure programmes are boosted	80	79	-2	0.34
<b>Ecological construct</b>	53	52	-1	0.34
Appropriate energy conservation choices are implemented	54	52	-2	0.36
Appropriate water conservation choices are implemented	52	52	0	0.50
Appropriate waste management choices are implemented	53	51	-2	0.36
<b>Managerial construct</b>	66	76	9	0.00
The power play of stakeholders appears balanced	50	54	4	0.23
Learning about mega-event management is optimised	67	77	10	0.03
Managerial capacity is developed	61	73	12	0.00
The media is well-managed	71	81	10	0.03
Innovations in advanced technology are applied	77	80	3	0.30
Safety and security standards are achieved	74	90	16	0.00
Performance over all constructs	54	68	14	0.00

p ≤ 0.05

developing context;

ii. To ascertain how successfully the drivers of a mega-event, in this case, the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, served to promote sustainable tourism development in South Africa.

The discussion of the findings is organised according to the earlier-stated objectives.

### Relevance of the drivers underlying the success of a mega-event in promoting sustainable tourism development

Responses indicated that from both pre- and post- event perspectives, all four constructs – socio-cultural, economic, ecological and managerial – were perceived

as being relevant when considering that the lowest rating of 5.23 well exceeded the 3.50 midpoint of the rating scale. Moreover, this finding suggests that the drivers informing the four constructs can be used to indicate those issues that need to be managed to ensure that a mega-event, such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, promotes sustainable tourism development in the host country. The usual constructs employed to assess the management of mega-events to promote sustainable tourism development are socio-cultural, economic and environmental (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2002; Lockstone and Baum, 2008). Generally, the managerial construct has not been used. Accordingly, the support afforded by respondents for the relevance of this construct and its inclusion for assessing the success of a mega-event in contributing to sustainable tourism indicates that this construct could serve as a valuable

addition to the other three.

Significant changes in perception of relevance were noted in three drivers: one within the economic construct and two within the managerial construct. Respondents, after the event, were less certain of the relevance of the economic driver that relates to short-term GDP growth through event planning, echoing the disappointment expressed in several studies of the economic impact of such events (cf. Barclay, 2009; Leeds, 2008). However, such concern is usually directed at the contribution of the mega-event to long-term, not short-term, economic growth (Hede, 2005; Tien et al., 2011). Within the managerial construct, respondents perceived the development of managerial capacity and the achievement of safety and security standards as being more relevant drivers after the event than originally anticipated. This finding is encouraging, in that it appears to indicate awareness of the need to address such management issues (Turco et al., 2010) and the plea by Jago et al. (2010) for sound management of mega-events to ensure that they promote sustainable tourism development in the host country.

The ecological construct was considered by respondents in both the pre- and post-surveys to be the least relevant of the four constructs. In addition, the three strategic drivers within this construct were also rated by respondents as being of lesser relevance compared to those drivers contained in the other three constructs. Accordingly, it is somewhat alarming that respondents, as experts in the field, rated this construct least relevant among the four constructs, possibly indicating that even international experts do not fully appreciate the benefits of responsible tourism as noted earlier (Booyesen, 2010; Dávid, 2011; George and Frey, 2010; Gössling et al., 2008).

### **Promoting sustainable tourism development through the successful management of strategic drivers**

Respondents rated their perceptions of the management of the event prior to the actual event and thereafter. Performance over the four constructs was rated at 68%, with performance relating to the managerial construct rated highest at 76%, followed by performance relating to the socio-cultural construct at 73% and performance relating to the economic construct at 71%. Similar to the perceived lesser relevance accorded the ecological construct, respondents rated overall performance on this construct at 52%. It is suggested that an overall rating of 68% is acceptable for the management of a mega-event to promote sustainable tourism in a developing economy within which access to financial and human resources is perhaps not as readily available as within developed economies. What does stand out, however, is that significantly improved performance against expectation was reported with regard to the strengthening of inter-regional collaboration and the boosting of optimism about

the country (both contained within the socio-cultural construct) through the management of the event. In this regard, the respective findings of Tien et al. (2011) and Glynn (2008) are supported. However, within this construct, the driver relating to the communication of the management of the mega-event to the public was rated significantly lower upon post-event reflection than was initially anticipated by respondents.

Within the managerial construct, significant improvement from anticipated to actual performance was noted overall, with significant improvement indicated for four of the six drivers viz. the development of managerial capacity, the optimisation of learning from the mega-event, the management of the media and the achievement of safety and security standards. Such feedback bodes well when assessing the contribution by the event to sustainable tourism in South Africa. These findings support the views of Turco et al. (2010) and Van Lill (2010) who emphasise that the hosting of mega-events must increase managerial capacity within the industry of the host country and that learning from the event must be captured and used as a future resource. Similarly, the finding that the media was better managed than anticipated is encouraging and in line with Matheson's (2006) exhortation for media coverage to be well managed. With regard to the optimal use of the media, Fleischer and Felsenstein (2002) propose that the increased use of event live sites with large screens in the host destination away from the stadia and, indeed, at remote destinations, can greatly increase the size of the audience that feels engaged in the event.

Prior to the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, concerns about safety and security, in a country noted to have a high crime rate, were expressed. The driver relating to safety and security was perceived to increase significantly in relevance along with that which related to the development of managerial capacity. The rating of the successful management of both these drivers also increased significantly from the pre-event stage (anticipation) to the post-event stage (actual experience). While a significantly positive shift in perception about the sound management of the media was found, the significant negative shift in perception of how well the advantages of the event were communicated to the public is of concern. The possibility exists that the media had been well utilised in publicising the event itself, but fell short in communicating about the benefits of such an event. The positive changes in perception relating to strengthened inter-regional collaboration, greater optimism about the host destination, enhanced managerial capacity, optimised learning and achieved standards of safety and security, may have been better communicated to the public had the media been used to its full. In this regard, members of the public and indigenous communities may not fully appreciate the potential of such an event to contribute substantially to the development of tourism in their country.

In summary, the four constructs and their drivers were perceived by respondents as being relevant for assessing the contribution of a mega-event, in this case the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, to the development of sustainable tourism in South Africa. A new managerial construct was introduced to assist with such assessment. In addition, the overall management of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ appears to have been positively executed with regard to its promotion of sustainable tourism in the country. The greatest concern, however, is that the relevance and the management of drivers relating to the ecological construct appear to be lagging and seem to be regarded as being of lesser importance than the other constructs.

Inherent in the study are the following limitations that must be recognised should the findings be considered more broadly: the sample size in both pre-and post-surveys was small and the study deals with the perceptions of respondents. The contribution of local and international experts, however, is deemed to address these issues in that considered input, borne out of a combination of academic study and industry experience, has provided relevant and current insights into a contemporary problem. A second limitation is that the study was conducted in relation to a mega-event that occurred in South Africa. Different values, nuances and cultural norms can all impact on the management of a mega-event and while the study has sought to provide some pointers to assist in evaluating the contribution of mega-events to sustainable tourism development, it is recognised that such insights must be generalised with caution.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The success in hosting a mega-event cannot be judged only in monetary terms without consideration of the values of the society in question (Lockstone and Baum, 2008) as well as the contribution that the event makes to sustainable development. Successful mega-event strategies vary according to the set of unique circumstances influencing the developmental goals of the host city or country. Hosting a mega-event requires strategists to look deeply into the future of a country or city in order to create the event vision and then to contrast this vision against current realities. Examining this gap enables event managers to plan how the event will serve as a catalyst for improved infrastructure, business opportunities and environmental innovations from which ordinary citizens will continue to benefit. In this regard, the findings of the present study serve to inform organisers about drivers to consider when shaping the mega-event as a central contributor to sustainable development in tourism. In addition, the drivers contained within each construct can provide an objective way of evaluating the success of the event as well as any management deficiencies that may have emerged.

In order to capitalise on the mega-event, organisers

should pay particular attention to fully utilising the media as a means of disseminating the positive impacts of such an event. Such an approach may assist in overcoming the low level of optimism that was witnessed in the country prior to the event, and which, indeed appears to be a common occurrence in other countries where similar events have been hosted (Leeds, 2008).

The hosting of a mega-event should not be an end in itself but rather a step in the path to community engagement and regional development. The study portrayed the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ as an inspiring experience and most importantly, reinforces that South Africans can achieve success when applying local resourcefulness within the strategic framework of a clear and shared vision, mission and performance goals, supported by appropriate monitor and control functions. Host destinations need to reflect and learn from the performance of other mega-events, take ownership of the event management process and contribute a substantial voice during the preparation phase. As part of the learning from the event, policies and plans need to be devised to steer future events within the tourism imperatives of the destination.

This study confirmed that mega-events can capture hearts and minds as a means to position a nation as a worthy competitor on the global stage. South Africa has also experienced that ensuring the success of a mega-event over the long-term requires a fine balance of dreaming about advanced stature and growth with attention to managing risk. This study has, like other studies, shown that the magnitude of intense project activities surrounding mega-events tend to blur the realisation of long-term strategic objectives, notably in the environmental sustainability construct, and adds a further voice arguing for a disciplined approach when hosting such events. One element of such discipline is to monitor whether the critical drivers of success are being realised. This retrospective study demonstrated that the inclusion of a managerial construct to the traditional 'triple bottom-line' approach indeed deepens insight into whether progress is heading in the right direction.

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