



**ASSESSING THE MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS OF THE  
FREE STATE SECTION OF THE MALOTI DRAKENSBERG ROUTE**

**By**

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## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

I, Eben Proos, ID number [REDACTED] and student number [REDACTED] do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Central University of Technology, Free State, for the degree MAGISTER TECHNOLOGIAE: TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT, is my own independent work and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as with other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Central University of Technology, Free State; and has not been submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment (or partial fulfilment) of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.

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**DATE**

Tourism has the potential to have a positive impact on economic growth and development. Tourism should also benefit small towns and rural areas, hence the increased emphasis on the development of tourism routes. The concept of 'route tourism' refers to an initiative designed to link together a group of tourism activities and attractions under a unified theme and to promote local tourism (Rogerson, 2007:50).

Most tourism routes are managed by forums that are responsible for managing and marketing the route. South Africa has a number of prominent tourism routes of which the Maloti Drakensberg Route (MDR) is among the longest and most well-known. As a substantial section of the MDR runs through the Free State Province (stretching from Harrismith to Zastron), much-needed tourists are being brought to smaller Free State towns. The aim of this investigation was to assess the marketing and management effectiveness of the Maloti Drakensberg Route Forum (MDRF), specifically for the Free State section of the MDR.

This study incorporated both a qualitative and a quantitative research approach. A questionnaire was administered to 51 tourists and 27 product owners on the Free State section of the MDR. The findings indicated that the overall marketing and management activities of the MDRF were not effective. One of the main shortcomings was effective communication between the MDRF and the product owners, which resulted in many management- and marketing-related frustrations. Other issues raised by both product owners and tourists included inadequate infrastructure such as roads, signage and rest stops along the MDR.



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

The beginnings of travel can be traced far back in human history. Even before the Common Era (the era after the birth of Jesus Christ) (Macmillan Dictionary, 2015:Online), people began travelling for commercial and trade reasons, religious pilgrimages, leisure, and government administration purposes (Ivanovic, Khunou, Reynish, Pawson, Tseane & Wassung, 2009:13). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), travel and tourism relate to the activity of travellers. A traveller is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration. A visitor is a particular type of traveller and, consequently, tourism is a subset of travel (UNWTO, S.a.:Online).

Tourism has the potential to have a positive impact on economic growth. Signs of economic growth include increased wealth, lower numbers of poor and unemployed people, increased foreign earnings, and lower interest rates and inflation. The UNWTO continuously calls on governments to enhance the economic potential of tourism by improving information technology and developing the human resources thereof (Ivanovic *et al.*, 2009:271). Tourism is becoming increasingly important for stimulating the economic sector in developing countries (Lourens, 2007a:9). According to Pro-poor Tourism in Practice (2004:Online), the absolute tourism earnings of developing countries grew by 133% between 1990 and 2000. In least developed countries (LDC), it grew by 154%, and in European Union (EU) countries by 49% (Lourens, 2007a:9).

The tourism industry is the world's largest employer, with direct employment estimated at four million people and indirect employment at 200 million people worldwide. Tourism is also a major source of export earnings for the 49 poorest world countries or LDC. Tourism as an export category represents around 6% of the total value of worldwide exports of goods and services, and ranks fourth after fuels, chemicals and automotive products (Ivanovic *et al.*, 2009:40). In the past 50 years, world tourism grew from a mere 25 million international arrivals in 1950, to 903 million in 2007. Europe and the Americas were the main tourist-receiving regions

between 1950 and 2007. The UNWTO forecasts that world tourism will grow from 565 million international tourist arrivals in 1995 to 1 006 million in 2010, with over 1561 million arrivals in 2020 (Ivanovic *et al.*, 2009:41).

The development of the tourism sector is dependent on related sectors, specifically construction and agriculture. Construction is responsible for infrastructure development, which includes the development and maintenance of airports, roads, water and sewerage facilities, telecommunications and other public utilities (Keyser, 2010:306). Agriculture, on the other hand, supplies food and other amenities to the tourism sector. In general, smaller towns do not have the capacity to attract a large number of tourists compared to large cities, hence the increased emphasis on route tourism.

With an increased emphasis on route tourism it is imperative that product owners familiarise themselves with the aspects that constitute effective route tourism. The Free State province is located in central South Africa. Although it has spectacular natural beauty and many scenic spots to visit, it is not a major tourist destination. Route tourism development can particularly benefit the Free State, which experiences extremely high levels of unemployment – estimated to be as high as 37% (Ons Stad, 2013:4). Against this background, this investigation focused on one of South Africa's most prominent routes – the Maloti Drakensberg Route (MDR).

The MDR is the longest tourism route in South Africa and spans the mountainous border between South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho which rubs shoulders with some of the most scenic parts of the Eastern Free State, the Eastern Cape and the KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg (MDR, 2015:Online). The route is managed by the Maloti Drakensberg Route Forum (MDRF) that oversees the marketing and management of the route. As a section of the route runs through the Free State (from Harrismith to Zastron), this investigation will not only benefit tourism research in the province, but also provide the MDRF with valuable information on effectively marketing and managing the route.

## **1.2 Statement of the research problem**

Tourism is an important economic driver because it has the potential to create sustainable employment and enhance the economic development of local areas. This could be done in a variety of ways – from the development of local infrastructure to offering tourists a memorable experience. A method that can especially benefit rural areas and small towns is the development of route tourism. Route tourism has the potential to bring tourists to areas they would not normally visit, and rural areas especially can benefit from a constant influx of tourists.

Most tourism routes are managed by forums that are responsible for managing and marketing the route. South Africa has a number of tourism routes of which the MDR is among the longest and most well-known. As a substantial section of the MDR runs through the Free State (stretching from Harrismith to Zastron) it brings much-needed tourists to smaller Free State towns. The aim of this investigation was to assess how effectively the MDRF markets and manages the Free State section of the route.

## **1.3 Research objectives**

### **Main objective:**

The main research objective of this study was to assess the marketing and the management effectiveness of the Free State section of the MDR.

### **Co-objectives:**

1. To ascertain the effectiveness of the marketing strategies used by the MDRF on the Free State section of the MDR.
2. To determine the level of cooperation between the MDRF and product owners on the Free State section of the MDR.
3. To determine the level of communication between MDRF, product owners and the public on the Free State section of the MDR.

4. To establish the current status quo of tourism infrastructure including roads, signage, ablution facilities, accommodation, restaurants, rest stops and attractions.
5. To determine the overall management effectiveness of the MDRF on the Free State section of the MDR.
6. To determine the reasons why tourists visit the Free State section of the MDR.
7. To make recommendations on improving marketing and management of the Free State section of the MDR.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

The following research questions apply to this investigation:

1. What is the effectiveness of the marketing strategies used by the MDRF on the Free State section of the MDR?
2. What is the level of cooperation between the MDRF and the product owners on the Free State section of the MDR?
3. What is the level of communication between the MDRF, the product owners and the public on the Free State section of the MDR?
4. What is the current status quo of tourism infrastructure including roads, signage, ablution facilities, accommodation, restaurants, rest stops and attractions on the Free State section of the MDR?
5. What is the level of the overall management effectiveness of the MDRF on the Free State section of the MDR?
6. Why do tourists visit the Free State section of the MDR?

## **1.5 Research methodology**

The general approach in carrying out a research project is known as the research methodology. The particular tools the researcher selects for the research are also dictated by the research methodology. General tools of research include the library and its sources, the computer and its software, measurement techniques, statistics, the human mind and language (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12).

This study incorporated both a qualitative and a quantitative research approach. In quantitative research, data are presented by numbers and statistics. In qualitative research, the researcher collects numerous forms of data and examines them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:135). Two structured questionnaires were used for data gathering in this study. One was administered to product owners and one to tourists on the Free State section of the MDR.

### **1.5.1 Data analysis**

Responses were captured on an Excel spreadsheet and both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to extract information relevant to the research endeavour. Descriptive statistics was used to describe and summarise the data, whereas inferential statistics was applied to draw conclusions from the data and make reasonable inferences about the population (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:231)

### **1.5.2 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations of the study included the following:

- Research needs to be designed, conducted and reported in accordance with recognised standards of scientific competence and ethical research.
- The possibility of producing misleading results should be minimised.

- Appropriate consent must be obtained from the human subjects.
- The identities and interests of those involved must be protected.
- The rights and welfare of humans must be appropriately protected.
- Permission for administering questionnaires needs to be obtained from the relevant parties (Bak, 2004:28). In this study, the researcher obtained permission from all the identified establishments on the Free State section of the route for requesting tourists to complete the questionnaire.

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

A major limitation of the study was the willingness of respondents (both the product owners and tourists) to complete the questionnaires.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

This study will provide the MDRF with valuable information regarding its marketing and management of the MDR. Not only will this study increase the MDRF's understanding as to why tourists choose to visit the MDR region, but it will indicate the aspects that the MDRF can improve to ensure that growth of the Free State section of the MDR takes place.

### **1.8 Layout of the study**

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter provided the background to the study. The aim, objectives and research questions of the study were set out, the research methodology that the study adopted was outlined, and the limitations and the significance of the study were stated.

## **Chapter 2: Route tourism – Setting the scene**

This chapter outlines the concept of 'route tourism' and the types of route tourism that exist worldwide.

## **Chapter 3: International and national examples of route tourism**

Chapter 3 deals with international and national examples of route tourism today.

## **Chapter 4: The Eastern Free State and the Maloti Drakensberg Route**

Chapter 4 gives relevant background and information on the MDR and the Eastern Free State, as well as the conceptual framework of the research study.

## **Chapter 5: Research methodology**

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the methodology that was adopted in the study with regard to the questionnaire design, population, data collection methods and data capturing and analysis.

## **Chapter 6: Analysis of findings**

This chapter analyses and discusses the main findings of the study.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations**

Chapter 7 draws conclusions based on the analysis of the findings and makes appropriate recommendations to the MDRF.



## CHAPTER 2: ROUTE TOURISM – SETTING THE SCENE

### 2.1 Introduction

Route tourism refers broadly to a designated route that links a variety of small towns and attractions. Route tourism is a good development opportunity for less mature areas with high cultural resources to attract special-interest tourists. Special-interest tourists often not only stay longer, but also spend more money to pursue their particular interest (Meyer, 2004:5). The 'route tourism' concept is seen as an effective method of tourism distribution (Lourens, 2007a:7). It is thus not surprising that route tourism has emerged as a significant element for the promotion of tourism, especially in small towns and rural areas (Rogerson, 2007:49).

South Africa, with its rich history and scenic beauty, has plenty to offer with regard to travel and tourism. The popularity of route tourism in the South African context has increased over the past few years and several route tourism initiatives currently exist. Some of the major routes include the Magaliesberg Route Initiative, the Midlands Meander, Route 62, the Friendly N6 Route and the Garden Route (South African Tourism, 2015e:Online).

The two most well-researched routes in the South African context are the Midlands Meander in KwaZulu-Natal (Lourens, 2007a) and the Highlands Meander in Mpumalanga (Rogerson, 2002). Other research in the South African context includes that of Meyer (2004:14), who focused on key issues in the development of tourism routes and gateways with relation to pro-poor tourism, and Lourens, (2007a) who investigated the underpinnings of successful route tourism development in South Africa. Research in the international context on route tourism includes Hayes and MacLeod's study (2008) on the significance of trails.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the concept 'route tourism,' the route tourism themes, and the value and importance of route tourism for a specific destination. The promotion of route tourism will also be discussed, as well as the different routes and trails that can form part of route tourism.

## 2.2 What is route tourism?

Evolving tourism trends since the 1990s have led to a shift from standardised mass tourism to more individualistic patterns in which greater flexibility and more meaningful experience have gained prominence (Hummelbrunner & Miglbauer, 1994:41; Lourens, 2007a:10). The reason behind this is that contemporary approaches to tourism offer important dispersal and product development opportunities which fall in line with visitors' increasing desire for new experiences (Meyer, 2004:5).

The developed world has realised the potential of tourism routes long ago. The Council of Europe established a working group as far back as 1964 with the idea of establishing a series of cultural routes in Europe (Lourens, 2007a:10). The main objective was to raise awareness of European culture through travelling (Meyer, 2004:5). Although there is no real origin of route tourism in the world, many countries make use of it to ensure economic development and growth. The idea of themed routes as tourist attractions has gained prominence in recent years (Rogerson, 2007:49).

The concept of 'route tourism' refers to an initiative designed to link together a group of tourism activities and attractions under a unified theme and to promote local tourism by encouraging visitors to travel from one location to the next (Rogerson, 2007:50).

The terminology used to describe route tourism varies in different parts of the world, with the use of words such as 'themed routes' and/or 'trails'. A themed route is a route where everything (accommodation, catering services and shopping) is built around a certain theme (e.g. wine, food, arts and crafts). A 'route' is distinguished from a 'trail' in that the latter usually refers to a route that is geographically smaller, meaning visitors can engage with the attraction on foot, bicycle or horseback (Rogerson, 2007:50). A 'route' is usually communicated to an individual by means of a printed map, which can be displayed on a board and/or website (Clark, 2005:92; Rogerson, 2007:54).

'Drive tourism,' where tourists drive the route using their own or a rented vehicle, is used to encourage visitation to attractions that are dispersed over larger distances (Lourens, 2007a:8).

Route tourism can include a pro-poor element, namely an explicit agenda to include and promote business operations of the poor. Where small tourism operations are looking to expand their business, it is advisable that they be incorporated as part of a route (Meyer, 2004:2). The length, scale, theme, and visitors attracted in terms of both characteristics and numbers vary considerably from route to route. Many themed routes are more focused on the domestic market as opposed to the international market. Routes, thus, have a variety of functions and attract different customers with a range of needs (Meyer, 2004:5). In general, routes are developed by both the public and the private sector. A route is developed to ensure an increase in the attractiveness of an area and the attractiveness of the tourism product, with the aim to generate income from tourism (Meyer, 2004:11).

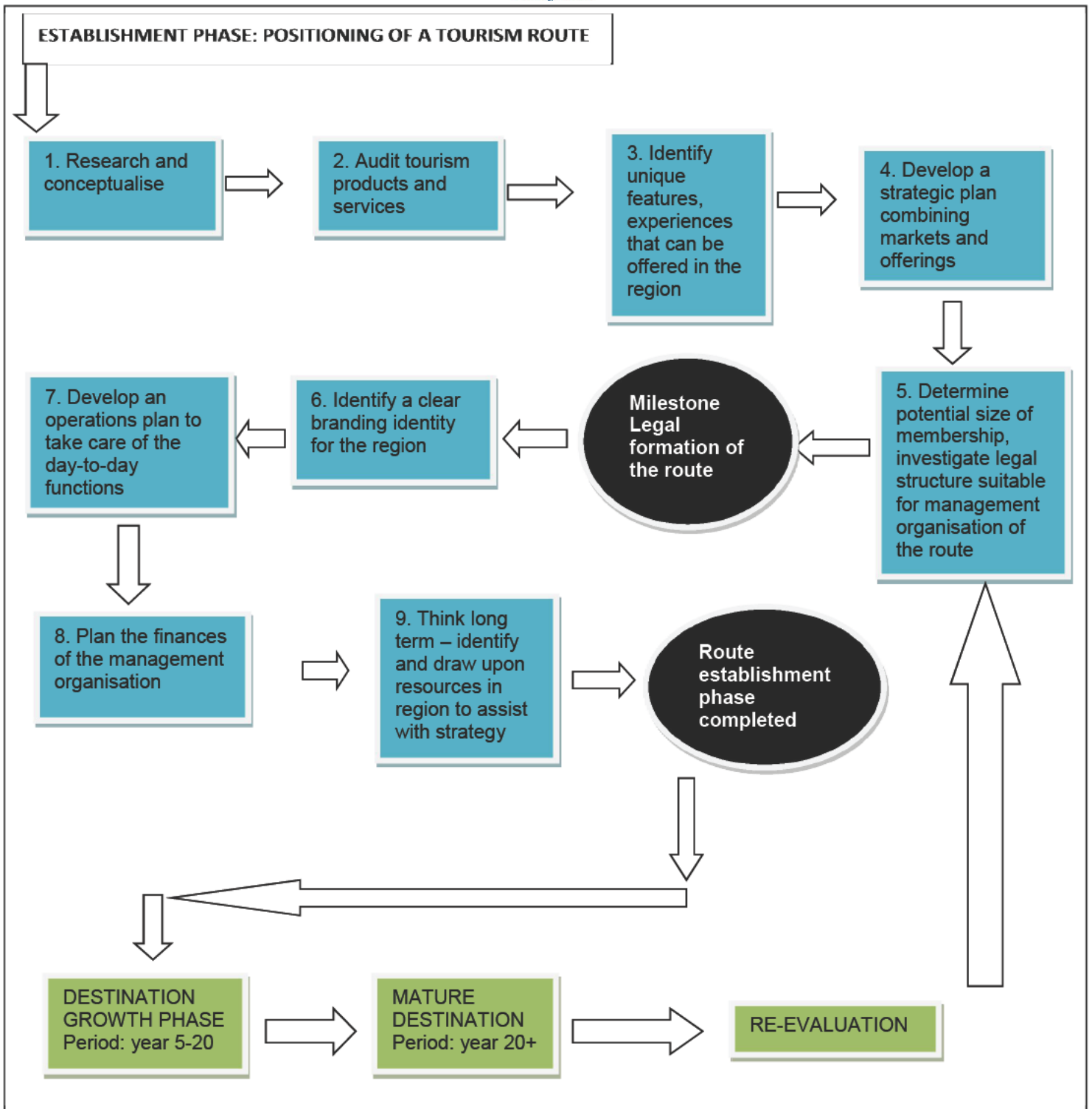
According to Meyer (2004:3), routes are, in general, initiated with one or more of the following objectives in mind:

- To diffuse visitors and disperse income from tourism;
- To bring lesser-known attractions and features into the tourism business/products;
- To increase the overall appeal of a destination;
- To increase the length of stay and spending by tourists;
- To attract new tourists or repeat visitors; and
- To increase the sustainability of the tourism product.

When the objectives are met, the diffusion of visitors and the dispersing of income from tourism will follow. Furthermore, the overall appeal of a destination will increase, as well as the length of stay and the amount of money tourists spend in the region. Routes should be initiated with the objective of attracting new tourists or repeat visitors to ensure the sustainability of the tourism product.

## 2.3 Developing a tourism route

During the development phase, committed leadership is required to see the potential and development of a vision for the region. The establishment and conceptualisation phase of a route is shown in Figure 1. This phase consists of nine steps that could take between one and five years to complete. Precision and inclusiveness are required during the establishment phase to ensure the desired long-term effects (Lourens, 2007a:93).



**Figure 1: Process of establishing and positioning a route tourism destination**

Source: Lourens (2007a:92)

In Figure 1, the process of establishing and positioning a route tourism destination is mentioned. Firstly, the route must be conceptualised based on solid market research. This market research must identify key target markets and their specific

requirements. Secondly, the tourism products within the designated area must be audited. The third step in the process is to scrutinise the tourism assets. The unique selling features or experiences of the area and its products must also be identified in this step. The fourth step needs to determine the potential size of the membership base. Further, the destination managers should encourage product diversification in the area. Product diversification in the area can be accomplished by putting systems into place to ensure the correct product mix for the area (Lourens, 2007a:93).

The next step is for the association or forum that manages the route to plan a clear brand identity for the region after the membership plan has been completed. A clear strategy to direct the work plan and day-to-day operations of the organisation must be determined. The overall survival of an association is dependent on the planning of its finances (Lourens, 2007a:94).

Once the establishment and conceptualisation phase is completed, the route destination will enter a growth phase, which usually starts in year five from inception. The development of a destination could last until year 20 from inception. From year 20 onwards, the destination usually reaches maturity. In the case where the route destination is starting to be perceived as 'unfashionable,' it might be necessary for destination managers to re-evaluate the positioning of the route and to implement innovative plans to invigorate the route (Lourens, 2007a:95).

The process of establishing and positioning a route tourism destination is a time-consuming process and there are particular guidelines that role-players in route development need to adhere to. Meyer (2004) and Lourens (2007a) propose the following guidelines:

- The route must be conceptualised based on solid market research, which should identify key target markets and their requirements (indicated in Figure 1). Market research must be conducted continuously to ensure that the latest tourism trends are included into objectives and strategies for the area.

- An audit of tourism products within the designated area must be conducted. The natural environment (such as the sandstone features of the Eastern Free State), man-made products (such as accommodation establishments and farm stalls) and human assets (such as San rock art) could be included in the audit. Assessment of existing products must be conducted to ensure that products are being kept up to date with the changing dynamics of the tourism industry.
- The tourism assets (such as the Golden Gate National Park in the Free State) must be assessed and identified to ascertain the unique selling features of a particular area.
- The potential size of the possible membership base must be determined by ensuring that tourism products with the ability to complement the unique features and main themes of the route must be lobbied to join the organisation from the early stages of development.
- Destination managers should encourage product diversification in the area by putting systems into place to incentivise the correct product mix for the area. It is not healthy for an area to have only accommodation establishments; a wide range of product offerings would be to the area's benefit.
- Specific landmarks must be targeted by this tourism route.
- A clear strategy to direct the work plan and day-to-day operations must be drafted by the people in charge of a certain route.
- The financial implications of route tourism development must be established.
- The formation of cooperation networks among a multitude of often diverse tourism suppliers and the leadership from key stakeholders are critical in developing a tourism route.

- Product development, infrastructure and access are the fundamental elements for developing a tourism route.
- Community participation in product development and decision making should be established as tourism is highly reliant on goodwill and hospitality of the 'hosts'.
- Information and promotion of the route is a crucial requirement for attracting visitors.
- An explicit pro-poor focus is required in order for the poor to benefit from route development.

The guidelines set forth by Lourens (2007a) and Meyer (2004) provides a foundation for the planning of route tourism in South Africa (Lourens, 2007a:96). The measuring of the value of route tourism is an important step in ensuring that a tourism route lives up to its full potential. Adhering to the mentioned guidelines might improve the chances of a tourism route's success.

## **2.4 Route tourism themes**

Route themes can be used to convey a unified image of a region (Meyer, 2004:20). This will not only increase visitor nights and spending, but also assist in creating a package that will be easier to sell to visitors. The theme will be applied to both the route and auxiliary services (e.g. accommodation, catering, services and shopping) provided on the route. For example, the Mozart Route in Europe incorporates the geographical places in which Mozart lived and worked, and each participating hotel draws on the Mozart theme. They organise themed meals and music recitals and name the rooms after events or sonatas of the composer (Meyer, 2004:20).

The linkage of tourism with other sectors creates opportunities for all of the sectors involved (Lourens, 2007a:7). Nowers, De Villiers and Myburgh (2002) stated that the wine routes of the Western Cape provide opportunities to improve the quality of life



of those in the agricultural and tourism sectors. The wine routes in South Africa are considered very successful and are primarily directed at day-tripping tourists. 'Day-tripping' is slang for someone who travels to a tourist site only for the day (Urban Dictionary, S.a.:Online; Meyer, 2004:14; Lourens, 2007a:8).

The following section provides some of the themes of route tourism around the world. It should be noted that the term 'routes' covers a variety of concepts. This includes circuit tourism, wine routes, cultural tourism routes and heritage routes or trails.

#### **2.4.1 Circuit tourism**

Circuit tourism is defined as a route on which at least three major tourist destinations are located such that none of them is in the same town, village or city. These routes must have a well-defined entry and exit point. The increase of the total number of visits to all the destinations on the circuit and the provision of tourists with a mix of attractions and activities in a destination are the main objectives of a tourist circuit (Ministry of Tourism [India], S.a.:Online).

In Europe, circuits and routes give greater insight, locally or interregionally, into a European theme and link up with one another in various regions of Europe. They are transfrontier in nature and brings out the common human, cultural, social geographical and economic characteristics predating current national borders. 'Transfrontier' refers to the part of a country that borders another country (Dictionary.com, 2015:Online).

#### **2.4.2 Wine routes**

A wine route constitutes a geographical wine-growing region and consists of members who belong to an organisation (wine route, trust and/or association). The aims of these organisations are to promote the region and represent producers and various industry bodies (South African Tourism, 2015f:Online).

The 'wine route' concept is based on the idea of a 'bounded space,' namely an officially demarcated wine region that defines unique attributes for its wines and cultural heritage. Characteristics of wine routes include natural attractions (the scenery), physical attractions (facilities such as wineries on wine estates), vineyards, and roads and markers (signposts) directing the tourists to the individual estates and through the route as a whole (Meyer, 2004:12).

The main advantage South African wine routes have over other wine routes in the world, for example, Australian ones, is their proximity to the main urban generating areas (e.g., Cape Town) (Meyer, 2004:14). Examples of wine routes include the Paarl Wine Route, the Constantia Wine Route and the Stellenbosch Wine Routes in South Africa (Cape Town Tourism, 2015:Online; South African Tourism, 2015d:Online).

#### **2.4.3 Cultural tourism routes**

A cultural tourism route is a land, water, mixed or other type of route, which is physically determined and characterised by having its own specific and historic dynamics and functionality. It allows interactive movements of people and multi-dimensional, continuous and reciprocal exchanging of goods, ideas, knowledge and values within or between countries. This movement and exchange take place over a significant period and cause cross-fertilisation of the cultures in space and time. This is reflected in both the route's tangible and intangible heritage (Martorell, S.a.:Online).

It is necessary to clarify the profound difference between the two concepts 'tourism route' and 'cultural route'. A 'cultural route' is neither invented nor designed, it is discovered and it is referred to as a physical route of historical importance (Martorell, S.a.:Online).

Many cultural routes have attracted visitors for centuries (e.g., the Silk Road, Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes; Kii Mountain Routes), while others have been established more recently (e.g., Architecture without Frontiers Route; Parks

and Garden Route). A South African example of a cultural tourism route is the Ghoema Route in the Stellenbosch district of the Western Cape.

#### **2.4.4 Heritage routes or trails**

A trail has many economic benefits. In a survey of Scottish trails developers, Leask and Barriere (2000:A117) discovered that an important motivation for the creation of trails included economic development: Encouraging longer stays, attracting more visitors, progressing product development and spreading visitation across regions were all cited as benefits (Hayes & Macleod, 2008:Online).

A sense of local pride can be increased when visitors are attracted to communities through the development of a trail. Walking or cycling trails and the health benefits they offer to visitors are clear and being promoted increasingly (Hayes & Macleod, 2008:Online). Heritage routes and trails are explained and clearly differentiated below.

##### **2.4.4.1 Heritage routes**

The 'heritage route' concept is rich and fertile. A heritage route is based on the movement of the population, encounters and an exchange of ideas. Cultural exchanges and cross-fertilisation take place in both space and time (UNESCO, 1994:Online).

##### **2.4.4.2 Heritage trails**

Heritage trails can be followed by foot, by car, bicycle or horseback. Heritage trails can assist in increasing access to the countryside, in marketing an under-visited destination, in easing congestion in popular sites or in interpreting a variety of historical periods or themes within a region (Hayes & MacLeod, 2008:Online).

### 2.4.4.3 Trail typologies

From the audit and interviews done by Hayes and Macleod (2008), it is apparent that trails vary with regard to scale, presentation format, governance, purpose, usage, partnerships and management, development, costs and evaluation methodologies. This is illustrated in Table 1 where trails can be viewed on a scale ranging from simple trails to sophisticated trails:

**Table 1: Characteristics of trail typologies**

Criteria	Simple	Standard	Sophisticated
<b>Scale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Small, discrete area of coverage;</li> <li>•Specific theme; and</li> <li>•One-off.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discrete area of coverage;</li> <li>•One or part of a portfolio of trails;</li> <li>•Could encompass a number of themes or sub-themes probably as a part of the portfolio; and</li> <li>•Linked to museum, visitor centre or civic amenity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Large scale or network encompassing sub-trails and attractions;</li> <li>•Closely linked to other trails and tourism attractions; and</li> <li>•Branded trails with common identity.</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Virtual (leaflet or website based);</li> <li>•Limited promotion, heavily reliant on word of mouth;</li> <li>•Leaflet produced and printed in-house;</li> <li>•Leaflet black and white;</li> <li>•Website accessed through third party;</li> <li>•Interpretation,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Virtual although may have some limited signage;</li> <li>•Promoted through TIC and other cultural/tourism attractions;</li> <li>•Glossy leaflets using full colour;</li> <li>•Leaflets and website may incorporate visual interpretative;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Virtual and physical presence;</li> <li>•Heavy promotional activity through a range of media;</li> <li>•Guide book;</li> <li>•Full colour;</li> <li>•Branding linked to signage and interpretative devices;</li> <li>•Wide range of</li> </ul>

	<p>largely text based; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Often hand illustrated.</li> </ul>	<p>devices e.g., photography and illustration; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Dedicated website.</li> </ul>	<p>interpretative devices;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Website with extensive links;</li> <li>•Professional designers and interpretative; consultants used</li> <li>•Dedicated visitor centres.</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Named individually;</li> <li>•Local authority ranger service, heritage/museum officer;</li> <li>•Historical or civic society;</li> <li>•No formal governance structure, decisions made when necessary; and</li> <li>•Parish and district councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Independent trust or small consortia, usually led by the local authority representatives;</li> <li>•Expertise co-opted when appropriate;</li> <li>•Evidence of formal record keeping; and</li> <li>•All tiers of local government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Dedicated trail manager, possibly with a remit that extends across a number of trails;</li> <li>•Defined skill sets and expertise;</li> <li>•Clear reporting structures and responsibilities; and</li> <li>•All tiers of local government and national agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specific benefits;</li> <li>•Social and community focus; and</li> <li>•Limited rationale and range of outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mixed benefits; and</li> <li>•Integrated rationales.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Primarily environmental and economic benefits relating to tourism impacts;</li> <li>•Social, community, cultural benefits are secondary; and</li> <li>•Complex rationale and range of outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Usage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discrete community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Broader range of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Wide range of users</li> </ul>

	<p>groups, e.g., school children;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local;</li> <li>•Low number of visitors; and</li> <li>•May be seasonally instigated by promotions.</li> </ul>	<p>appeals;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local and possibly national tourists;</li> <li>•Likely to be year round; and</li> <li>•Secondary attraction.</li> </ul>	<p>reflecting rationale and benefits;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Primary emphasis on expanding tourism (regional; national; international);</li> <li>•Primary tourist attraction;</li> <li>•High awareness among gatekeepers; and</li> <li>•High number of visitors.</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships and management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Small number of partners, if any;</li> <li>•Volunteers and enthusiasts involved; and</li> <li>•Informal relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Average 5 partners and funding agencies;</li> <li>•Primarily regional partners although some national representation;</li> <li>•Formal relationship;</li> <li>•Partners acknowledged;</li> <li>•Local authority range of expertise involved; and</li> <li>•Local authority is likely to be the lead partner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Large number of partners and funding agencies;</li> <li>•National and international funding agencies;</li> <li>•Professional expertise brought in;</li> <li>•Formal relationships defined by contractual obligations; and</li> <li>•Acknowledged on documentation.</li> </ul>
<b>Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lead times up to 1 year; and</li> <li>•Ad hoc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lead times 1–3 years; and</li> <li>•Single phase.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lead times in excess of 3 years; and</li> <li>•Multiphased.</li> </ul>
<b>Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Minimal budget, below £2,000;</li> <li>•Reliance on volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Budget up to £25,000;</li> <li>•Capital costs, management costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Large capital and management budgets;</li> <li>•National and</li> </ul>

	time; •Staff time usually not costed; and •Often self-financing through sale of leaflet.	absorbed in other budgets; •Typical sources of funding Local Heritage Initiative; •One-off grants; and •Often a discrete part of a larger bid.	international funding including; and •Examples: Hadrian's Wall Trail £6m, Mineral Heritage Tramways Project £6m.
<b>Evaluation</b>	•Rudimentary.	•Rudimentary.	•Limited.

Adapted from: Hayes and Macleod (2008:Online)

In Table 1, trails can be viewed on a continuum ranging from simple trails to sophisticated trails. The criteria that were followed in compiling the table were scale, presentation format, governance, purpose, usage, partnership and management, development, costs and evaluation of the trail. Looking at the criteria will give an idea of the segment under which any tourism route currently falls.

In Queensland, Australia, particular emphasis has been placed on themed trails linked to drive tourism (Olsen, 2003:331; Rogerson, 2007:51). Hardy (2003) points out several components that apply to drive tourism, including the road (its quality), accommodation, information (e.g., visitor centres, signage and brochures), refuelling and roadside services, vehicle repairs and recovery, and attractions that target drive tourists. The importance of drive tourism has been recognised in the USA and Australia in particular, with their governments supporting the initiative by providing the necessary infrastructure such as signage and roads. A recent addition to the list of countries that now focus on drive tourism is Taiwan (Shih, 2006:1029; Rogerson, 2007:51).

## 2.5 Promotion of themed routes

More than 60% of the route planning for a longer-haul journey is done prior to departure, in what is referred to as 'pre-trip planning'. Information to potential visitors must be provided prior to their departure. Themed tourism routes contributed significantly to making particular routes more attractive to visitors in the pre-trip planning stages. Themed routes are, by nature, a flexible package that is perceived

to be of a higher quality than other routes for tourism purposes. On-going cooperation of the transport authorities, map providers, industry and government is required along the route to reassure that visitors receive an integrated delivery of the tourism product and in order for themed tourism routes to achieve success. Important safety information is also delivered by pre-trip planning information on themed routes (Lourens, 2007a:46).

The encouragement of frequent stops, the promotion of exploring side routes and more remote areas off the beaten track are also viewed as important (Lourens, 2007a:46). The promotion of themed routes throughout the world is thus important to ensure that a tourism route stays profitable and functional.

Packaged tours could be offered to attract more tourists to particular tourism routes. This could lead to the creation of greater access for product owners. Package tours could be explained as excursions or holidays that 'package' a variety of services together to make a single 'combined' trip. Aspects such as transport, accommodation and meals are commonly combined by packages. A tour guide and/or leader could also be included. Tours can be long or short and they could be a one-day or overnight package, or they could be a period of a month or more (ACS Distance Education, 2015:Online).

Packaged tours typically include a combination of the following:

- All transfers between airports/harbours/stations and hotels;
- Twin-share tourist and first-class accommodation with private facilities, as specified;
- Cruises;
- Rental cars;
- Entrance fees to attractions;
- Entry tickets to events or attractions; and
- Insurance.

(ACS Distance Education, 2015:Online)



Packaging tourism routes can offer a big competitive advantage for product owners in the region and serve as an effective method of promoting tourism routes to visitors.

## **2.6 Summary**

Numerous definitions explain the concept of 'route tourism,' as seen from this chapter. Route tourism has clear advantages of which economic growth is possibly the most pronounced, with economic benefits to local communities and product owners. This chapter explained the value of route tourism and the types of route tourism that exist. The chapter also focused on explaining the types of themed route tourism. The guidelines for the development of route tourism were mentioned, as well as how themed tourism routes are promoted.

## CHAPTER 3: INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EXAMPLES OF ROUTE TOURISM

### 3.1 Introduction

Route tourism is especially valuable for smaller towns and villages because their tourism resources and marketing activities can be combined, giving them better exposure and visibility. It has been argued that, in Europe, one of the most difficult issues for route development has been the extreme diversity of tastes and preferences of visitors. For example, visitors to France might want to visit the wine regions, whereas in the United Kingdom (UK), they might prefer the historical buildings such as the Big Ben. In South Africa, heritage and township tours are extremely attractive for international visitors, but not necessarily for domestic South African tourists (Rogerson, 2007:53).

Several developed countries such as those that are part of the EU, for example, France and Spain, have successfully developed tourism routes which has led to increased visitor numbers, with economic benefits (Lourens, 2007a:87). One of the most famous European routes is the Camino de Santiago (Lourens, 2007a:87). This route is one of the most widely studied and publicised routes. After the Camino de Santiago was established, the Council of Europe founded 17 more routes, which were all successful (Council of Europe, 2014:Online; Lourens, 2007a:87).

In South Africa, only a few private sector initiatives have been successful. This includes the Midlands Meander and the Western Cape wine routes (Nowers *et al.*, 2002:195; Lourens, 2007a:87). The purpose of this chapter is to provide examples of current international and national tourism routes. The best practices that emanate from these examples can assist with future route development endeavours.

### 3.2 International examples of route tourism

Opportunities for the formation of local development partnerships are created through the development of route tourism (Rogerson, 2007:51). An example of a well-researched wine circuit is the Niagara Wine Route in Canada, which links over

50 wineries in the region and is the anchor of wine tourism in the region. This wine route shows the potential for the development of a competitive advantage with local clusters as a form of tourism-led local economic development (LED) (Telfer, 2001:21; Rogerson, 2007:51).

The following section provides examples of tourism routes that are currently the most well-known in the world. The tourism routes that will be discussed include the Camino De Santiago in Europe, the Queensland Heritage Trails in Australia and Route 66 in the USA. These tourism routes have a successful record of accomplishment and thus serve as examples.

### **3.2.1 Camino de Santiago (Europe)**

The Camino de Santiago stretches along more than 700 km of northern Spain and is nearly 2 000 km in length. This route is located in a linear form. The spatial focus of the route is Santiago de Compostela, the capital of the independent region of Galicia in La Coruna Province in north-western Spain (González & Medina, 2003:446; Lourens, 2007a:24). The route crosses many rural communities and villages in Spain and France and includes a wide range of historical and natural attractions (Lourens, 2007a:24).

The demonstration of the shared cultural heritage of various European countries was the initial idea behind the route. In 1962, an important milestone in the history of the formal route was the recognition the Spanish government accorded to the City of Santiago for its artistic and historical heritage (Lourens, 2007b:477).

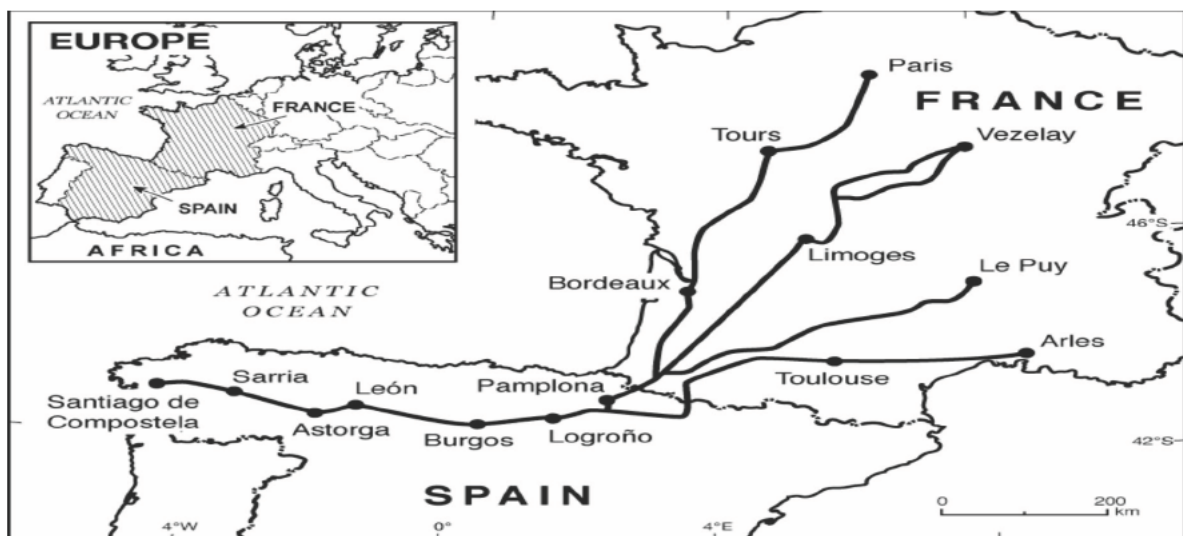
In 1993, the Camino was named a World Heritage Site, which was linked to the launch of the Galician government's Xacobeo campaign promoting cultural tourism. This campaign led to the development of tourism facilities and the preservation of heritage sites throughout the region (Lourens, 2007b:477).

Political power, especially at local and regional levels, plays a critical role in deciding the strategy of tourism promotion and urban planning, as the example of the Camino shows. Local administration can work alongside the regional government and the

private sector (Lourens, 2007a:39). The Camino remains a unique, highly successful and sustainable tourism destination, although the route concept is little different from what is being developed in other countries. The key success factors of the route include drawing relations between key aspects such as preservation of cultural heritage, institutional support for the route and tourist promotion of the Camino that is outlined by Lourens (2007a:40).

New spaces for culture and leisure (museums, auditoriums, sports facilities or parks) in the cities and small towns were created along the route. One of the major drivers of the Camino is its relative proximity to major domestic and regional tourism markets. Visitors to the Camino are mostly domestic or regional (90%), while two of the world's major tourist generating markets – Germany and the UK – are in close travelling distance from the Camino (two to three hours by plane) (Lourens, 2007a:39). The Camino's religious appeal and the pilgrim experience it offers in a setting of magnificent scenery and cultural assets dating back to the Middle Ages offer a one-of-a-kind experience (Lourens, 2007a:40).

In Figure 2, the Camino de Santiago is shown. The towns of Santiago de Compostela, Sarria, León, Burgos, Logroño, Pamplona, Toulouse, Arles, Le Puy, Bordeaux, Limoges, Vezelay, Tours and Paris are shown on the map. It is clear from the map that the route travels through the two countries of France and Spain.

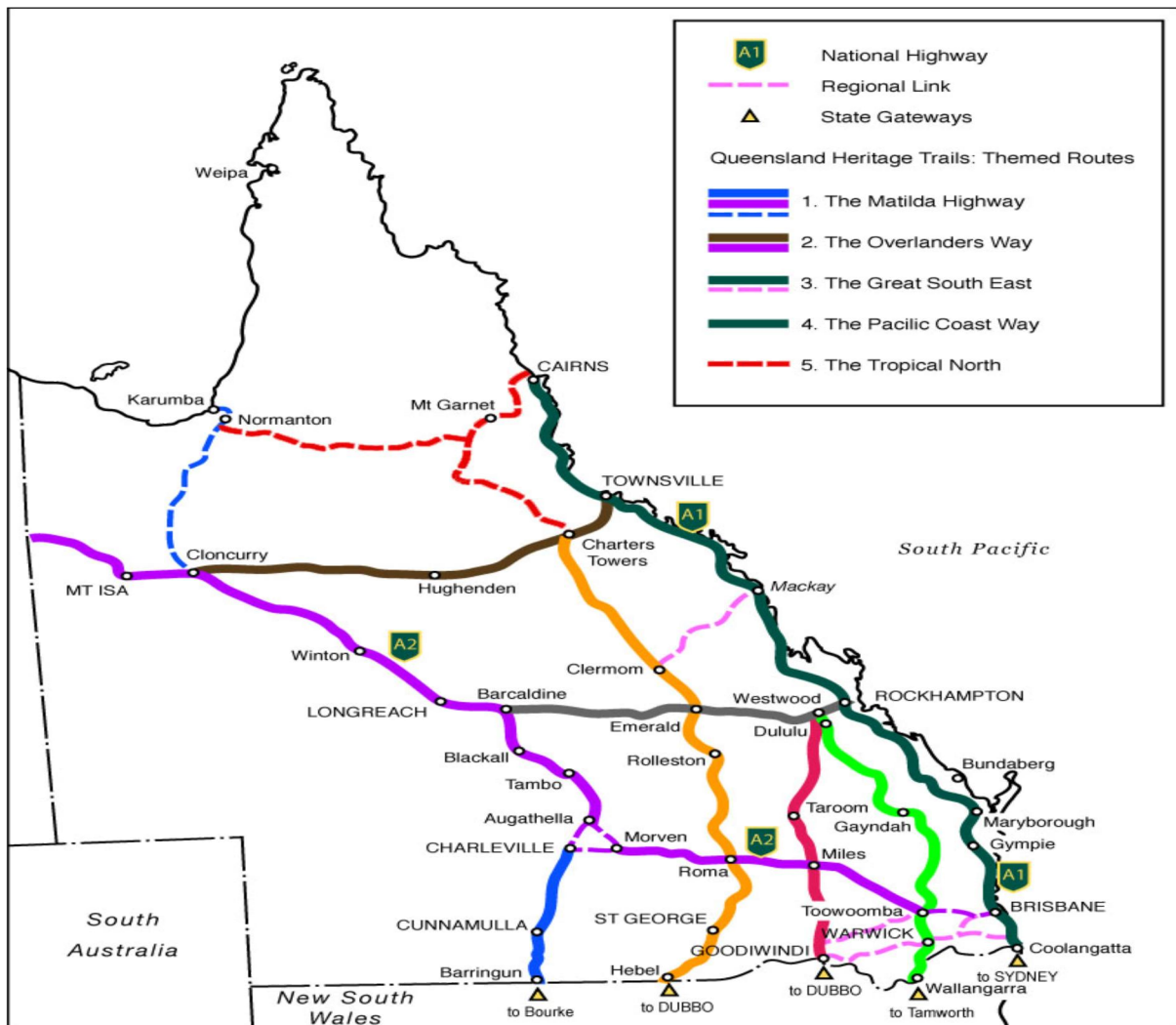


**Figure 2: The routes of the Camino de Santiago**

Source: Gonzáles and Medina (2003)

### 3.2.2 Queensland Heritage Trails (Australia)

Five trails in Queensland form part of the Queensland Heritage Trails. These trails are the Matilda Highway, the Overlander’s Way, the Great South East, the Pacific Coast Way and the Tropical North (presented in Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Queensland Heritage Trails – themed routes**

Source: Queensland Department of Main Roads (2015)

The Queensland government and the Commonwealth government launched the Queensland Heritage Trails Network (QHTN) in 2000 through a joint initiative. The AU\$110 million QHTN Programme was an Australian first. This project was funded through the Queensland and Commonwealth governments in partnership with local government authorities and local communities (Cook, S.a.:Online; Lourens,

2007a:47). The development period of the five trails stretched over a five-year period (1999–2004). The trails offer a variety of attractions of which cultural heritage is the most prominent (Lourens, 2007a:40).

Tourism gained increasing prevalence as an agent for regional economic development due to the changing industrial patterns in regional Australia (Jackson & Murphy, 2006:1018; Lourens 2007a:40). As a result of the 1988 Bicentennial Celebrations, there was a rapid expansion of trails in Australia (Lourens, 2007a:40). Many of these trails had potential, but were not successful due to a lack of understanding of what makes a successful visitor attraction. The low levels of demand and the increase in maintenance costs led to the failure of many metropolitan and regional trails.

The Queensland Heritage Trails showed reasonable success. Their success was mostly achieved by the ability of themed routes to link heritage sites, rural communities and nature-based attractions to the mainstream tourism segment of Queensland, namely beach tourism (Cook, S.a.:Online; Lourens, 2007a:40). The development and marketing of cultural heritage attractions within a particular region, which would not have come to fruition without private-sector investment, were the cornerstones on which the QHTN concept was designed. The QHTN links together heritage experiences, such as the Qantas Founders Outback Museum, allowing visitors to discover Australia's history, cultural and natural wonders (Cook, S.a.:Online; Lourens, 2007a:41).

The concept aims to create jobs and increase awareness and capacity through educational programmes, as well as to deliver sustainable economic benefits to the local communities through increasing the tourism demand of the region (Lourens, 2007a:41). Thorough market research of drive tourism markets led to the continued growth in visitor numbers to the region and its routes in Queensland (Lourens, 2007a:52).



### 3.2.3 Route 66 (USA)

Route 66 stretches over 3200 kilometres between Chicago and Los Angeles (see Figure 4). The website Road Trip USA (S.a.:Online) describes Route 66 as ‘a legendary road that passes through the heart of the USA, and displays neon signs, rusty middle-of-nowhere truck stops, or cheesy Americana in abundance’.



**Figure 4: Route 66**

Source: Guide and Travel (S.a.:Online)

The most compelling reason why tourists follow Route 66 is to experience the road’s ingrained time line of contemporary America. Before it was called Route 66, and long before it was even paved in 1926, this corridor was traversed by the National Old Trails Highway, one of the country’s first transcontinental highways. For three decades before and after World War II, Route 66 earned the title ‘Main Street of America’ because it winds through small towns across the Midwest and Southwest and is lined by hundreds of cafés, motels, gas stations and tourist attractions (Road Trip USA, S.a.:Online).

During the Great Depression, hundreds of thousands of farm families, displaced by the so-called Dust Bowl (the area in the south-central USA that became denuded of topsoil by wind erosion during the droughts of the mid-1930s) (The Free Dictionary, 2015:Online), made their way to the west along Route 66 to California. After World War II, thousands more expressed their upward mobility by leaving the industrial east, following this route in search of good jobs in the west (Road Trip USA, S.a.:Online).

In August 1994, David Knudson drove back to California from Chicago and wanted to do so along Route 66. However, the famous route was not to be found on any map and there were no Route 66 signs. An interstate highway has bypassed Route 66. After seeing Route 66, falling forgotten, David Knudson and his wife Mary Lou devoted their time trying to save as much as possible of the historical road before it was completely gone, and so the National Historic Route 66 Federation was created (National Historic Route 66 Federation, 2015:Online). The Federation can be credited with accomplishing the promotion of the highway around the world, establishing a global Route 66 association and producing three-to-four-day events along the route (National Historic Route 66 Federation, 2015:Online).

The National Historic Route 66 Federation is a worldwide, nonprofit organisation dedicated to directing the public's attention to the importance of Route 66. The Federation also strives to place attention on the importance of America's cultural heritage and acquiring the federal, state and private support needed to preserve the historical landmarks and to ensure the revitalisation of economies and the communities along the entire route (National Historic Route 66 Federation, 2015:Online).

Through public education, advocacy and membership activities, the goals set forth by the Federation have been accomplished. In 1999, the National Route 66 Preservation Bill was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton. An amount of \$10 million in matching fund grants to individuals, corporations and communities are provided by the Act for the purpose of preserving or restoring historical properties along Route 66 (National Historic Route 66 Federation, 2015: Online).



### **3.3 South African examples of route tourism**

Across South Africa, many tourism routes have been established, for example, the Panorama Route, the MDR and the Garden Route (South African Tourism, 2015e:Online). According to Viljoen (2007:126), route tourism represents a development tool that is being used increasingly for developing tourism and local economics in Africa. In the southern part of Africa, the Open Africa Initiative has been established with the aim to develop route tourism.

#### **3.3.1 The Open Africa Initiative**

Open Africa, a nongovernmental organisation (NGO) based in South Africa, is the most high-profile and ambitious route initiative in Africa presently. Open Africa was established in 1993 by Noel de Villiers as an NGO with the broad mission to elevate African values, pride and prosperity (Open Africa, S.a.:Online; Meyer, 2004:7).

Open Africa consists of the following three objectives:

- To stimulate the development of Afrikatourism Routes;
- To gather information on Afrikatourism resources; and
- To disseminate information on Afrikatourism to potential participants and consumers (Meyer, 2004:7).

The Open Africa Initiative has established 63 routes which, in turn, employ more than 28 000 people in tourism-related jobs (South African Tourism, 2015c:Online). There are five Open Africa routes located outside South Africa (one in Namibia, two in Mozambique, one in Swaziland, one in Zambia and one shared between South Africa and Lesotho) (Lourens, 2007a:13). The Fynbos Route near Stanford in the Western Cape was the first publicised route by Open Africa in 1999 and has acted as a model framework for further route development in line with Open Africa's ideals and priorities (Meyer 2004:7; Lourens, 2007a:12).

South African initiatives for route tourism development, similar to international perspectives, include the clustering of activities (e.g., sporting activities, arts and crafts, and festivals), the erection of user-friendly signage and the establishment of easily accessible information offices. These initiatives have played a critical part in the development of tourism routes in South Africa (Rogerson, 2007:57).

A profile of the experience of the Midlands Meander in KwaZulu-Natal and the Highlands Meander in Mpumalanga provides a useful context for looking at route tourism in South Africa. The workings and outcomes of these two LED initiatives have certain parallels. In terms of LED marketing interventions, both the Midlands Meander and the Highlands Meander seek to take advantage of the impact of cumulative attraction where, 'despite their physical separation over a large area, enterprises are joined conceptually together as if they are located en route, in proximity, or in logical sequence to each other' (Mathfield, 2000:54; Rogerson, 2007:57). Relative South African initiatives of locality-bound route tourism, which has been largely driven by private-sector investors, are represented by both case studies (Rogerson, 2007:57).

In the case of the Midlands Meander and Highlands Meander, the planning role of the public sector was secondary to the drive and influence of private-sector investors – the public sector was following instead of leading this private-sector investment (Rogerson, 2007:57). However, little effort has been made to bring in or develop the rich resource pool in neighbouring black communities in the Midlands Meander area (Rogerson, 2007:57).

With regard to the distribution of benefits accruing from tourism development, the above LED initiatives have resulted in an unequal pattern of beneficiaries. Successful tourism expansion has occurred in both cases, but without any spreading of development into surrounding poor communities. Groups of existing white South African tourism entrepreneurs have clearly been the major beneficiaries throughout the years of these route tourism initiatives (Rogerson, 2007:57).

Significant gaps exist in local and international research on the changing nature of the market for route tourism and on visitors' needs and motives (Lourens,

2007b:476). In addition, local stakeholders do not document or share the best practice in route tourism development and marketing experience from both overseas and South African markets (Lourens, 2007b:476).

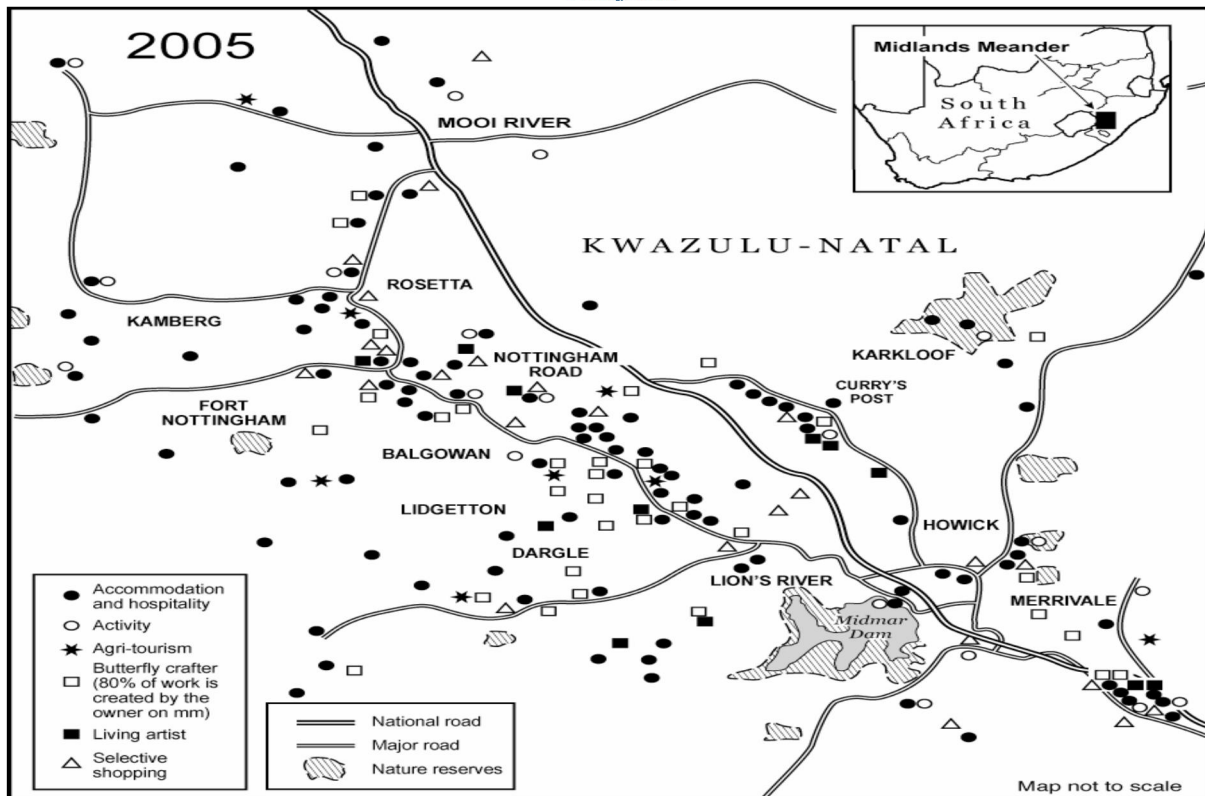
The following section details the tourism routes that are currently operating in South Africa. The following routes are included due to their successful operations: the Midlands Meander and the Cape Route 62.

### **3.3.2 Midlands Meander**

One of very few successful private sector-driven and funded destination management organisations in South Africa is the Midlands Meander Association (MMA) (Lourens, 2007b:480). Five visionary artists and crafters (three potters, a weaver and an artist) initiated the route concept in 1985 with the intention of encouraging members of the public to visit the countryside of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and, at the same time, providing market access to small arts-and-crafts enterprises. The joint marketing venture of local artists had evolved by 1988 into a local tourism association with 57 members consisting of a variety of arts, crafts and hospitality products. The MMA faced many challenges, most importantly concerning finance and fragmentation during the initial years. A formal constitution for the Meander was finally consolidated in 1994.

The first colour brochure was also designed and produced in 1994, advertising 68 products, and a public-relations drive was initiated to attract renewed and new media attention and consumer interest (Lourens, 2007b:480). Although the Midlands Meander is completely private-sector funded, there has been some cooperation with the public sector in the form of the MMA's involvement in local planning issues (Rogerson, 2004:399; Lourens, 2007a:22). Their consistent marketing efforts have been key to its success (Lourens, 2007a:22).

The Midlands Meander is located in KwaZulu-Natal, with its geographic boundaries extending from Hilton in the South to Mooi River in the North (approximately 70 km) and in the West; about 40 km to the central Kamberg and 30 km east towards Curry's Post and the Karkloof indigenous forest (see the map below, Figure 5).



**Figure 5: Midlands Meander in 2005 with an extensive range of tourism product along the R103**

Source: MMA (2005)

In Figure 5, the Midlands Meander tourism route is indicated. Its location in South Africa is shown on the top right corner. The towns through which the route runs are indicated, as well as the extensive range of tourism products that are available along the route.

The Midlands Meander started small and grew in nature. This route has transformed the local economy, but still attracts far fewer visitors than its counterparts in other parts of the world. To ensure positive results, the fine balance between all aspects of route tourism development is important and must be localised. If heritage assets are to be effectively preserved and tourism products developed to serve consumer markets, the importance of the availability and accessibility of capital cannot be overlooked (Lourens, 2007b:488).

Lourens (2007a) found that, overall, the Midlands Meander is a South African showcase of how the private sector conceptualised and developed a once-marginal

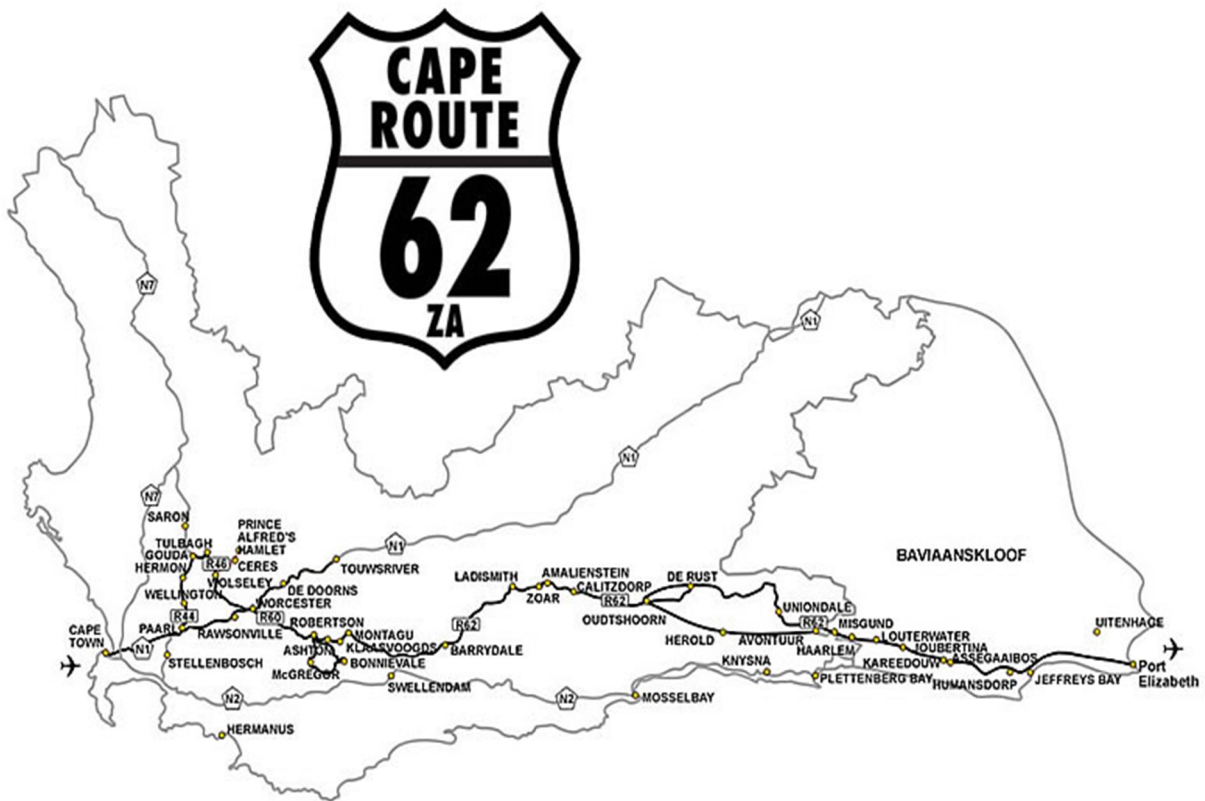
economic sector into a vibrant industry supporting nearly one-third of the local population. The analysis of the development and workings of the Midlands Meander provide further light onto the key success factors that affect route tourism (Lourens, 2007a:84).

### **3.3.3 The Cape Route 62**

The Cape Route 62 (also known as the Mountain Route) is the tourism route that stretches from the Western Cape to the Eastern Cape in South Africa. The area offers magnificent landscapes and towering cliffs, clear streams and an abundance of trees and indigenous flora. Route 62 is modelled after Route 66 (SA-Venues.com, 2015d:Online; Route 62, 2007a:Online).

Route 62 is most likely the longest wine route in the world. The easily accessible towns nestled along the valleys offer many opportunities for discovery such as visits to wineries and game reserves, tribal art, cultural tours, museums and, for the more adventurous, hiking trails and mountain climbing, 4x4 routes, canoeing, horse riding, even ostrich riding, and fishing. This route offers an exciting experience, even for the well-travelled (Route 62, 2007a:Online).

Figure 6 shows the Cape Route 62. All of the towns it passes through are mentioned on the map, starting from Cape Town in the Western Cape, all the way to Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape.



**Figure 6: The Cape Route 62**

Source: Route 62 (2007b:Online)

As mentioned, the two most well-researched routes in South Africa are still the Midlands Meander in KwaZulu-Natal (Lourens, 2007a), and the Highlands Meander in Mpumalanga (Rogerson, 2002). The Midlands Meander has a successful record of accomplishment and thus serves as an ample example.

Other research includes Meyer's (2004), which focused on key issues in the development of tourism routes and gateways with relation to pro-poor tourism. The conclusions Meyer (2004) drew were that tourism routes and gateways promise to provide many opportunities for non-traditional tourism product and service suppliers and that routes can disperse income from tourism to more marginalised communities, if well planned and executed (Meyer, 2004:29).

Lourens (2007b) examined themed tourism routes as a potential driver for local economic development. Lessons drawn from case studies of the Camino de Santiago in Spain and France and the Midlands Meander in South Africa demonstrate their positive impact on rural economies. The study argues that the successful development of tourism routes is not an exact science and that up-and-coming destinations often have many difficulties to overcome (Lourens, 2007b:475).

### **3.4 Reflecting on best practices in route tourism**

This section will reflect on best practices and present the main findings from research/studies on route tourism. The first finding is that history and natural resources of regions are important factors in attracting large visitor numbers to a country. The local history and natural beauty of a region ensures the growth of both the local economy and the infrastructure. In the cases where tourists are offered a unified experience involving contact with nature and culture, these territories are allowed to enter the global tourism market, which also ensures further growth of the region. In route tourism, when local people are incorporated and attractions are unified by a theme, it is possible to achieve success in the region from which all local people can benefit.

A diversification of products such as the inclusion of hiking and cycling trails will increase visitor numbers. Conducting proper research and securing significant investment funding will also help to ensure the future growth and economic benefits of a region, while political power, especially at local and regional levels, plays a critical role in deciding the strategy of tourism promotion and urban planning. Moreover, local government and private-sector stakeholders fulfil a crucial role in the implementation and on-going management of routes.

The national perspective on route tourism focuses on the same aspects as those of the international routes, with the prime objective of job creation and the growth in the economy and infrastructure. South Africa is a third world country and job creation is a big part of its goals to be achieved in the near future. As one of South Africa's most pristine tourism routes, the Midlands Meander serves well as a guideline of what needs to be in place in order to achieve a successful tourism route. The Midlands

Meander consists of an association (the MMA) and is one of the few success stories of themed-based routes in developing countries. The MMA has reaped the benefits of following a consistent marketing plan over the past 20 years. From this example, it is clear that the involvement of the private and public sector, as well as a strong association in control of the tourism route, will lead to a successful tourism route. All of the mentioned factors play a role in the success of the Midlands Meander and, as a result, the route can be viewed as a successful tourism route.

In South Africa and abroad, more research is needed on the changing nature of the market for tourism, on visitor needs and motivations, and especially on route tourism. It is important for associations in charge of tourism routes to create historical, economic and cultural linkages between individual cities, smaller towns, tourist-historical cities and regions to ensure growth. To conclude on best practices in route tourism, it is clear that the marketing and management of a tourism route are key aspects that will, in return, lead to the success of the route.

### **3.5 Summary**

The tourism industry consists of many cases of route tourism as discussed above, namely the European, Australian and African examples. This chapter gave examples of well-known international and national tourism routes. The main purpose of route tourism anywhere in the world is to create historical, economic and cultural linkages between individual cities, smaller towns, tourist-historical cities and regions. This chapter also emphasised the importance of a well-organised association in control of a tourism route, as it leads to the growth of not only the tourism route itself, but of the local region as well.



## **CHAPTER 4: THE EASTERN FREE STATE AND THE MALOTI DRAKENSBERG ROUTE**

### **4.1 Introduction**

As indicated before, this investigation focuses on the Free State section of the MDR, with specific emphasis on the Eastern Free State. The Free State province is located in the central part of South Africa. The province shares its borders with Lesotho in the east, Gauteng in the north, the Northern Cape in the west, the Eastern Cape in the south, and KwaZulu-Natal in the east.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP), the MDR and the MDRF. The Eastern Free State, including the towns that form part of the route and the main attractions on the route, will be discussed. The conceptual framework of the research study is also provided in the chapter.

### **4.2 The Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP)**

The private sector and MDTP (launched in 2003 by South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho) entered into a collaborative effort, including both the governments of South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho, to ensure job creation and sustainable tourism on the MDR (MDTP, S.a.:Online; Cornhill, Grussendorf, Inglis, Kromberg, Krone, Makkink, Peden, Prigge & Salomon, 2007:5).

The aims of the MDT Conservation and Development Project are, firstly, to conserve the global biodiversity of this distinct area which covers 14 740 km<sup>2</sup> of the mountains straddling the north-eastern border between Lesotho and South Africa (Peace Parks Foundation, 2015:Online) and, secondly, to contribute to community development by generating income from nature-based tourism (MDTP, S.a.:Online).

As early as the 1980s, relevant authorities from South Africa and Lesotho have communicated on common concerns pertaining to the MDR. These included the biodiversity conservation, security issues of stock theft and the trade of dagga. The

communication between the two countries continued until mid-1990 after which they decided that a formal agreement was needed in the context of the new democratic South Africa. This agreement needed to state how the two countries could work together with regard to the mountain resource that is shared by both.

The Giant's Castle Declaration, signed in 1997, committed the two countries to more effective cooperation. A cooperative transfrontier conservation and development programme was established to address the main threats to the mountain environment (Hattingh, 2007:3). Because of the agreement between the two countries, the World Bank and the Japanese government funded a project preparation phase during 1999. The outcome was a series of preliminary task reports. Based on the insights gained, the implementation of the first phase of the MDTP was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the World Bank.

The preparation phase increased the effectiveness of cooperation between the two countries. Ensuring that the relevant project effectiveness requirements were adhered to, was a continuous process between the two countries and needed to be in place before project financing from the GEF could be disbursed. In 2001, the Ministers of Environment (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in South Africa and Ministry of Environment, Gender and Youth Affairs in Lesotho – now the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture) signed the Bilateral Memorandum of Understanding, committing the two countries to the joint implementation of the project (Hattingh, 2007:3).

The first phase of the MDTP was initiated in 2003 with the express purpose of conserving the mountain heritage of the Maloti Drakensberg, while benefiting the local people (Hattingh, 2007:1). Phase one involved several conservation surveys and sector-specific studies with the aim to fill some of the information gaps that exist for the MDT Conservation Area (Hattingh, 2007:4). To have any chance of actually achieving the project development objectives, the transfrontier collaboration for the Maloti Drakensberg needs to be continued in the long term.

### 4.3 Maloti Drakensberg Route

The MDR initiative concentrates on nature-based tourism while it aims to increase awareness of the unique appeal of the region. Spectacular attractions on the MDR include the world's oldest clutch of dinosaur eggs, some of the world's finest conservation areas, over 3 000 species of flora, birding hotspots, significant engineering achievements such as the Katse Dam, as well as Southern Africa's best adventure, sporting, cultural and artistic destinations. The MDR brings together South Africa and Lesotho's best sites in a concerted effort to develop and protect the region and its inhabitants into the future (MDR, 2015:Online).

Figure 7 is a map of the MDR section – particularly the Eastern Free State section that forms part of the investigation. Towns in the Eastern Free State section include Harrismith, Bethlehem, Clarens, Fouriesburg, Ficksburg, Clocolan, Ladybrand, Hobhouse, Wepener and Zastron.



**Figure 7: Map of the Free State section of the Maloti Drakensberg Route (indicated by the thick black line)**

Source: MDR (2015:Online)

#### 4.4 The Maloti Drakensberg Route Forum (MDRF)

The MDR is governed by a forum, the MDRF, that manages the route. The MDRF derives benefits from tourism to the entire route, while conserving natural and cultural resources for future generations (MDR, 2015:Online). The section of the route in the Free State currently consists of 27 product owners (including restaurants, accommodation establishments and adventure companies) who form



part of the MDRF. Members of the MDRF can advertise in the brochure and the official website of the route, which will lead to greater awareness of their products on offer (Booyesen, 2007).

A constitution was set up for the MDR, which encompasses all the details regarding the MDR and the MDRF.

#### **4.5 The Eastern Free State**

The Thabo Mofutsanyana District, also known as the Eastern Free State, is the tourism core of the Free State province. It displays the diversity that is on offer in the Free State and contains well-known tourism towns such as Clarens and Ficksburg. The Eastern Free State is situated between the Orange River in the south and the Vaal River in the north. The region boasts a rugged and mountainous area in the East (SA-Venues.com, 2015e:Online). The activities and attractions that can be experienced in the Eastern Free State include battlefield sites, fly-fishing, hiking, river rafting, the Golden Gate Highlands National Park, and a number of festivals, with the annual Ficksburg Cherry Festival being the most prominent.

This is the oldest festival in South Africa and brings thousands of visitors to the town of Ficksburg every November (MDR, 2015:Online). Another attraction, the Sterkfontein Dam with its 103 km shoreline, offers the ideal terrain for visitors to have fun in the water with activities such as water sports and fishing (MDR, 2015:Online). The Eastern Free State is also a popular destination for artists and collectors and offers many art galleries for tourists to visit along the MDR. Good food and wine are on offer in the region with its many popular eateries.

As mentioned, the focus of this investigation was the section of the MDR that runs through the Eastern Free State. The section includes a distance of 397 km and runs from Harrismith to Zastron. As indicated before, it includes the towns of Harrismith, Clarens, Bethlehem, Fouriesburg, Ficksburg, Clocolan, Ladybrand, Hobhouse, Wepener and Zastron. A profile of each of these towns will be provided, as well as the attractions each offers.

## **4.5.1 Cities and towns in the MDR section in the Free State**

### **4.5.1.1 Harrismith**

Harrismith was established in 1849 and named after Sir Harry Smith, the then governor of the Cape Colony. The town was used as a major base by the British during the Anglo Boer War. Harrismith is located on the banks of the Wilge River at the foot of the Platberg Mountain which is 9 km long and 2 394 m high. The town is situated on the N3 national road, halfway between Johannesburg in Gauteng and Durban in KwaZulu-Natal (Free State Province, S.a.).

Harrismith is surrounded by rows of serried Drakensberg peaks and quiet pastoral valleys. Many inhabitants of Harrismith are artists (South African Tourism, 2015b:Online). The Town Hall is an example of the architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Also situated outside of Harrismith is a historical bridge crossing the Wilge River which was officially opened in 1907 and is referred to as the Hamilton Bridge (Nienaber & Le Roux, 1982:49). Historical buildings include the oldest home in Harrismith situated in 78 Warden Street and a British blockhouse built during the British occupation of the town during the Anglo Boer War (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### *Adventure and sport*

In the Harrismith area, the Sterkfontein Dam offers superb angling and fly-fishing opportunities. This dam is an ideal venue for water sports, and every February a 1 500 m swimming and catamaran race is held at the dam. The third oldest 18-hole golf course in South Africa is situated in Harrismith and boasts the Platberg Golf Classic every March. Harrismith offers many hiking and biking trails with several of the hiking trails passing through the Drakensberg Botanical Gardens. Polo is also a popular sport among the locals. A gymkhana tournament, coupled with horse-rides and 'boeresport,' takes place every April, and polo tournaments are held in May and September (Free State Province, S.a.).

Harrismith hosts the Platberg Mountain Marathon annually in October. Other sporting activities include bowls, squash, soccer, badminton, rugby and tennis, with

the Prince Arthur Men's Fours tennis tournament also held annually in October (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Arts and crafts*

Harrismith offers several galleries where art and crafts can be bought (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Fauna and flora*

Bird-watchers frequent Harrismith and the Drakensberg Botanical Gardens, which is situated on the lower slopes of the Platberg Mountain and is known for its wide variety of indigenous flora. The wild flowers in the Gardens represent about 20 per cent of the Drakensberg flora. Historical attractions that can be viewed in the gardens include an old blockhouse built during the Anglo Boer War to protect the town's water supply. The town of Harrismith is supplied by water from two of the dams in the region. The Platberg Nature Reserve, which is privately managed, includes game-watching, hiking, biking, climbing and abseiling opportunities (Free State Province, S.a.).

President Brand Park is situated on the banks of the Wilge River. It is an ideal spot for picnics and has a bird sanctuary and caravan park. The Sterkfontein Dam Nature Reserve spans an area of 18 000 ha and lies approximately 23 km from Harrismith on the Harrismith–Bergville Road (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### **4.5.1.2 Bethlehem**

The town of Bethlehem, nestled in the Maloti Mountains, was founded in the mid-1860s. The word 'Bethlehem' is of Hebrew origin and means 'house of bread'. Bethlehem lies at the heart of the wheat belt of the Free State and is the largest commercial centre in the Eastern Free State. The town is located on the Liebenberg River just south of the Rooiberg Mountain on the N5. Bethlehem experienced rapid growth because of its railway connection to Johannesburg, Harrismith and Bloemfontein (SA-Venues.com, 2015a:Online).

Bethlehem's history and architecture include the Baartman Wagon House Museum where displays of an impressive collection of old farming equipment, kitchen utensils and woodcarvings can be viewed. Bethlehem is well known for its legacy of fine, old sandstone buildings (Free State Province, S.a.).

Bethlehem is one of the leading tourist attractions in the area. Examples of activities that visitors to Bethlehem partake in include visiting the historical sandstone buildings that are now provincial heritage sites in town, the Bethlehem Museum and the Sol Plaatje Dam. Over weekends, locals visit Lion's Rock just outside Bethlehem, or Sunnyside Guest Farm for an outing (SA-Venues.com, 2015a: Online).

### *Adventure and sport*

The town of Bethlehem has many adventure and sport activities for visitors to participate in. They include air ventures such as the National Hot Air Balloon Championships and air shows that are held in Bethlehem annually. Air flips and hot air balloon trips are also available during the year for tourists. Angling, boating and swimming are popular pastimes, and anglers frequent the three dams in the vicinity: Gerrand and Saulspoort Dams, and Loch Athlone. These are ideal venues for angling, boating and swimming. Cycling is also a popular pastime in this area and many cyclists participate in the annual Hoogland Classic Cycle Race held every October (Free State Province, S.a.).

Bethlehem boasts an 18-hole golf course where golf tournaments and fun days are held. There are several hiking trails in the area which are popular with visitors and locals alike. Wolhuterskop Nature Reserve lies on the road to Fouriesburg and is a popular game reserve for game watching (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Arts and crafts*

Bethlehem boasts art galleries in town that are well worth a visit. Art and craft markets are also hosted regularly (Free State Province, S.a.).



### **4.5.1.3 Clarens**

Clarens was established in 1912. The town received its name by token of appreciation for the people of Clarens, Switzerland, for looking after President Paul Kruger who spent his last days in voluntary exile in this village (Erasmus, 2014:360).

Often known as the 'Jewel of the Free State,' Clarens is nestled in the bowl of the Rooiberge and has panoramic views that have inspired many landscape paintings. Clarens is a popular and easily accessible weekend getaway for people from Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein. This has led to the opening of a variety of avante garde restaurants, lively pubs, interesting shops and art galleries. Clarens offers some of the best still waters and streams in South Africa for the avid fly fisherman (MDR, 2015:Online).

As was mentioned, the Eastern Free State is seen as the adventure and art destination of the Free State and is known for its beautiful scenery. The town of Clarens is seen as the adventure capital of the Eastern Free State and offers plenty of activities to tourists such as white-water rafting and slalom paddling on the Ash River, quad biking, abseiling, mountain biking and paintballing activities, to name a few.

For those who are into history and culture, there are museums, historical war memorabilia and relics dating to the early Basotho Wars and the Anglo Boer War and battlefield sites, as well as the well-known Basotho cultural village (MDR, 2015:Online). Clarens also boasts a golf course. The Golden Gate National Park is situated in the foothills of the Maloti Mountains, just a short drive from Clarens, and is a popular tourist destination (MDR, 2015:Online).

In the centre of Clarens, a monument has been erected commemorating five members of Paul Kruger's Transvaal Commando who were killed near Clarens during the Basotho War of 1866. An important regional Anglo Boer War battlefield site, Surrender Hill, is situated some 10 km from Clarens on the Fouriesburg Road (Free State Province, S.a.). Fossil and dinosaur tours are undertaken in Clarens. In

the Clarens district, an important San rock art site is located at the foot of massive sandstone outcrops on the farm Schaapplaats (Free State Province, S.a.).

Clarens offers visitors the opportunity to view many natural wonders, which include Mushroom Rock, an interesting rock formation that can be viewed 3 km from Clarens on the Fouriesburg Road. The other natural wonder Clarens has to offer is Titanic Rock, the rock formation overlooking the entrance to Clarens, which resembles the hull of a ship. Because Clarens and the Titanic both made headlines in 1912, the rock formation was dubbed 'Titanic' (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Adventure and sport*

The town of Clarens offers activities such as abseiling at the mountainous areas surrounding the town, bass angling at the Kloof Dam and fly-fishing at venues such as the Townlands Dam, Bergwoning, Craigrossie, De Molen, Groenhoek, Zaaihoek and St Fort. There are many hiking trails allowing visitors to enjoy the natural beauty and mountain scenery of the area, and several of the trails traverse the nearby Golden Gate National Park. There are many holiday farms in the area where hiking trails include attractions such as San rock art and minor battlefield sites (Free State Province, S.a.).

Several privately owned farms in the area, as well as the Golden Gate National Park, offer horse-riding trips. Also on offer are hunting trips that can be undertaken on several game farms in the area (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Arts and crafts*

The town of Clarens is famous for its craft shops and many art galleries in which the works of renowned South African artists, as well as those of several lesser-known artists from the area, are exhibited (Free State Province, S.a.).

## *Fauna and flora*

Outside of Clarens, the Golden Gate National Park, an 11 500-ha nature reserve, proclaimed in 1963, is situated in the foothills of the Maloti Mountain Range. The Golden Gate National Park is home to the rare bearded vulture and, as far as game is concerned, visitors will be able to see relatively large herds of black wildebeest, eland, oribi, mountain reedbuck, rhebuck, zebra and buffalo. Accommodation in the form of bungalows, cottages and camping areas are on offer for visitors.

A scenic viewpoint visited by many tourists is the Ash River Outfall (one of the Highlands Water Scheme's viewpoints on the Bethlehem Road, approximately 8 km from Clarens). The Lesotho Highlands Water Project agreement was signed in 1986 and was one of the biggest civil engineering undertakings in the world at that time. The object of the project was to transfer excess water from Lesotho to Gauteng in South Africa (Free State Province, S.a.; Walker, 2014: Online).

### **4.5.1.4 Fouriesburg**

Fouriesburg is situated in the scenic Brandwater Basin, surrounded by the Maloti, Rooiberg and Witteberg mountain ranges. Fouriesburg lies in the heart of South Africa and right on the border of Lesotho. The town was founded in 1892 on the farm Groenfontein that belonged to Christoffel Fourie, whom it was named after (Erasmus, 2014:360).

Fouriesburg's heritage has been preserved over the years and its original sandstone buildings have also been preserved and in good condition today. Unique scenic beauty, multiple activities for nature and adventure enthusiasts, art and culture, places of historical and architectural interest, small-town hospitality and delicious food are all on offer at Fouriesburg (MDR, 2015:Online).

The town and surrounding farms offer many types of accommodation catering for all tastes and preferences. Some of the attractions include atmospheric pubs, a farm deli and bistro, art and photography galleries, craft stores, a recycled glass

workshop, a bus-themed restaurant, many different accommodation facilities and an information centre (MDR, 2015:Online).

The Dutch Reformed Church that is situated in Fouriesburg was erected in 1894 and marks the spot where Paul Kruger and his men camped during one of the Basotho Wars. The modest home of a former president of the Orange Free State can be visited and is known as the President Steyn House. A sandstone museum, which depicts the origins and past of Fouriesburg can be visited in Robertson Street (Free State Province, S.a.).

Fouriesburg offers visitors the opportunity to view the uninhabited Holkrans Cave in the Meiringskloof Nature Reserve. The cave has an enormous overhang and the entrance is not easily detected; it is also the largest sandstone overhang in the Southern Hemisphere according to many (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### *Adventure and sport*

Fouriesburg offers visitors the opportunity of angling at any of several trout and bass-angling dams in the area. The area around Fouriesburg is traversed by several 4x4 routes. Trails in and around Fouriesburg that are ideal for hiking and biking are also available. The biggest sandstone cave in the Southern Hemisphere, the Salpeterkrans, is situated in the Fouriesburg area. Every year, the Surrender Hill Marathon, a qualifying race for the Comrades Marathon, is held between Fouriesburg and Clarens (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### *Arts and crafts*

The town of Fouriesburg has several galleries and shops where original artwork and South African crafts are exhibited and sold (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### **4.5.1.5 Ficksburg**

Ficksburg is a rural destination 400 km from Johannesburg that offers a wide range of out-of-the-ordinary activities. More than 30 experiences are on offer for visitors to

Ficksburg which include visits to cherry and asparagus farms, hiking and horse riding in the Sandstone Mountains, and a leisurely cruise aboard the White Mischief along the Meulspuit Dam through the Thaba Sediba Private Nature Reserve. There are over 100 species of birds to be spotted, including fish-eagles, goliath herons and malachite kingfishers. For a more artistic experience, visits to the Ficksburg's Pellissier Gallery, with its world-renowned Pierneef murals are not to be missed (South African Tourism, 2015a:Online).

Ficksburg is famous for its cherries and is the largest cherry-producing area in South Africa. The first Cherry Festival was hosted in 1968 in the town. One highlight of the annual festival, which takes place in November, is indulging in fresh, succulent cherries (South African Tourism, 2015a:Online). The farm Hoekfontein near Ficksburg offers some Late Iron Age sites. San rock art can also be viewed at different sites near Ficksburg, for example, the farms Moolmanshoek, Hoekfontein and Boschfontein. The farm Moolmanshoek also offers 4x4 trails (Free State Province, S.a.).

Ficksburg's Old Cemetery holds the graves of several British and Boer soldiers who died during the Anglo Boer War, as well as the graves of three Frenchmen who fought on the Boer side. Ficksburg Museum depicts the history of the town and provides an overview of the town's cherry industry. The town has its share of historical sandstone buildings, such as the Reformed Church, Methodist Church, Old Magistrate's Court, Old Post Office and Town Hall (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Adventure and sport*

There are several 4x4 trails on farms and game reserves in the area, and an ideal way to explore Ficksburg and its surroundings is via the hiking trails in the area. Many of the privately owned farms have horse trails where tourists can do horse riding. There is also a local club that has two provincial polo fields, and Franshoek Mountain Lodge boasts a polo school (Free State Province, S.a.).

Ficksburg's sports complex has several tennis courts, two floodlit rugby fields, a hockey field, an athletics track, two cricket pitches, netball, badminton and squash

courts, a swimming pool and a shooting range. There are two bowling greens on the slopes of the Imperani Mountain and an 18-hole golf course. Meulspruit Dam is an ideal spot for angling, power boating, and water sports, such as skiing and windsurfing (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Arts and crafts*

Ficksburg has several galleries and an art collection in the town and the surrounding area. A large collection of paintings by renowned South African artists are on exhibition at the SH Pellissier Art Gallery at the local primary school and is noted for its Pierneef frieze. The tourist centre gives visitors the opportunity to buy unique handmade products from the Ficksburg area such as sandstone sculptures, mohair rugs and tasty cherry and asparagus eats (Free State Province, S.a.).

### *Cuisine*

Ficksburg hosts the annual Cherry Festival, the longest-running agricultural festival in South Africa. The festival has been held in Ficksburg for 60 years. The festivities include various cherry and asparagus tours, cruises on Meulspruit Dam, a golf classic, a half-marathon road race, equestrian events, live demonstrations of cherry 'mampoer' (moonshine) distilling and baking competitions (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### **4.5.1.6 Clocolan**

Clocolan was laid out on two farms, Rienzi and Harold, in 1906 (Erasmus, 2014:362). The area that is overshadowed by the 1 820 m-high Hlohlowane Mountain, was first named Hlohlowane – 'Ridge of the Battle' – by its Basotho inhabitants. With the Basotho's driven out the region in the early 1800s, the new inhabitants mispronounced the name and it became Clocolan (Free State Province, S.a.).

Clocolan is situated in one of the main sunflower-producing belts of South Africa and is an important farming area specialising in asparagus, among other things. The Deemsters Asparagus Factory can be visited where tourists can learn about the

history of this local crop (SA-Venues.com, 2015b:Online). San rock paintings can also be viewed on farms in the region (Erasmus, 2014:362) and the weaving of articles by local craftswomen can be viewed at Lethoteng Weavers (SA-Venues.com, 2015b:Online). De Hoek farm in the district also offers San rock art (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### *Adventure and sport*

Angling and canoeing opportunities are on offer in the many dams in the vicinity, such as Stasie, Moperi, Lucretia and Steunmekaar Dams. Several 4x4 vehicle trails are available around town with many of the hiking trails starting at the Evening Star, a restored mission building. Clocolan has facilities for rugby, cricket, squash, tennis and bowls. It also boasts its own golf course (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### *Arts and crafts*

Articles from local weavers can be bought at Lethoteng Weavers while also observing them at their weaving activities. At Makoadi Rabbit Farm, handiwork from angora rabbit fur can be viewed (Free State Province, S.a.).

#### **4.5.1.7 Ladybrand**

Ladybrand, a small town sometimes spoken of as a sleepy border town, is surrounded by the undulating hills of the Eastern Free State. Ladybrand was established in 1867 on the farm Mauershoek on the foot of the Platberg. It was named after Lady Catharina Brand, the wife of Sir Christoffel Brand, who was the first speaker of the Cape parliament; she was also the mother of the first Orange Free State, President JH Brand (Erasmus, 2014:362). Ladybrand is situated midway between the towns of Hobhouse and Ficksburg, virtually on the edge of the Lesotho border (SA-Venues.com, 2015c:Online).

Ladybrand also lies in the Caledon Valley. Rose Cottage Cave, a Middle Palaeolithic cave on the Platberg, roughly 3 km east of Ladybrand, dates back more than 50 000 years. The area around Ladybrand is also one of the world's prime rock art regions.

Tandjiesberg is one of 12 rock art national heritage sites in South Africa and over 300 sites occur in and around Ladybrand (SA-Venues.com, 2015c:Online).

#### **4.5.1.8 Hobhouse**

The town of Hobhouse was founded on 14 September 1912 on the farm, Poortjie (Erasmus, 2014:363). Hobhouse is situated close to the Caledon River border of Lesotho. The town is a centre for a region producing maize, wheat, cheese and livestock. It is named after a British lady, Emily Hobhouse (Erasmus, 2014:364), who dedicated her life to alleviating the suffering of the Boer women and children in the British concentration camps during the Anglo Boer War.

Excellent samples of San rock art are to be found in the caves in the surrounding area of Hobhouse. A miniature replica of a church, one of two built in the region in 1938 to commemorate the Great Trek, can be viewed on the grounds of the church (MDR, 2015:Online). An interesting archaeological site that can be viewed by visitors is situated on the Lemoenhoek farm, and San rock art can also be found in many caves around the Caledon River. The Doll Museum has a collection of more than 600 dolls dating back to the 19th century (SA Travel Directory, 2015a:Online).

#### **4.5.1.9 Wepener**

The town of Wepener was founded in 1869 on the banks of the Jammersbergspruit, a branch of the Caledon River. The town is named after Louw Wepener (the hero of Thabo Bosigo, who drove the Basotho's over the Caledon river in the Basotho Wars in 1865) (Erasmus, 2014:364; Nienaber & Le Roux, 1982:11). The town lies close to the border of Lesotho. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the district of Wepener was the scene of many battles, raids and skirmishes in the Basotho Wars.

The Dutch Reformed parish was established in 1870 and the town was granted its first management board in the year of 1875. Today the town is a commercial centre for a 1 725 km<sup>2</sup> district where mixed farming is practised (cattle and sheep, dairy, wheat and maize) (Erasmus, 2014:364). The main produce in the Wepener area includes building sand, wool, grain, corn and livestock. On the farm, Welbedacht, 32



km south-west of the town, a dam has been built, storing 110 million m<sup>3</sup> of water from the Caledon River. The drinking water to Bloemfontein and many other towns in the Free State is currently being supplied by this dam (SA Travel Directory, 2015b:Online).

#### **4.5.1.10 Zastron**

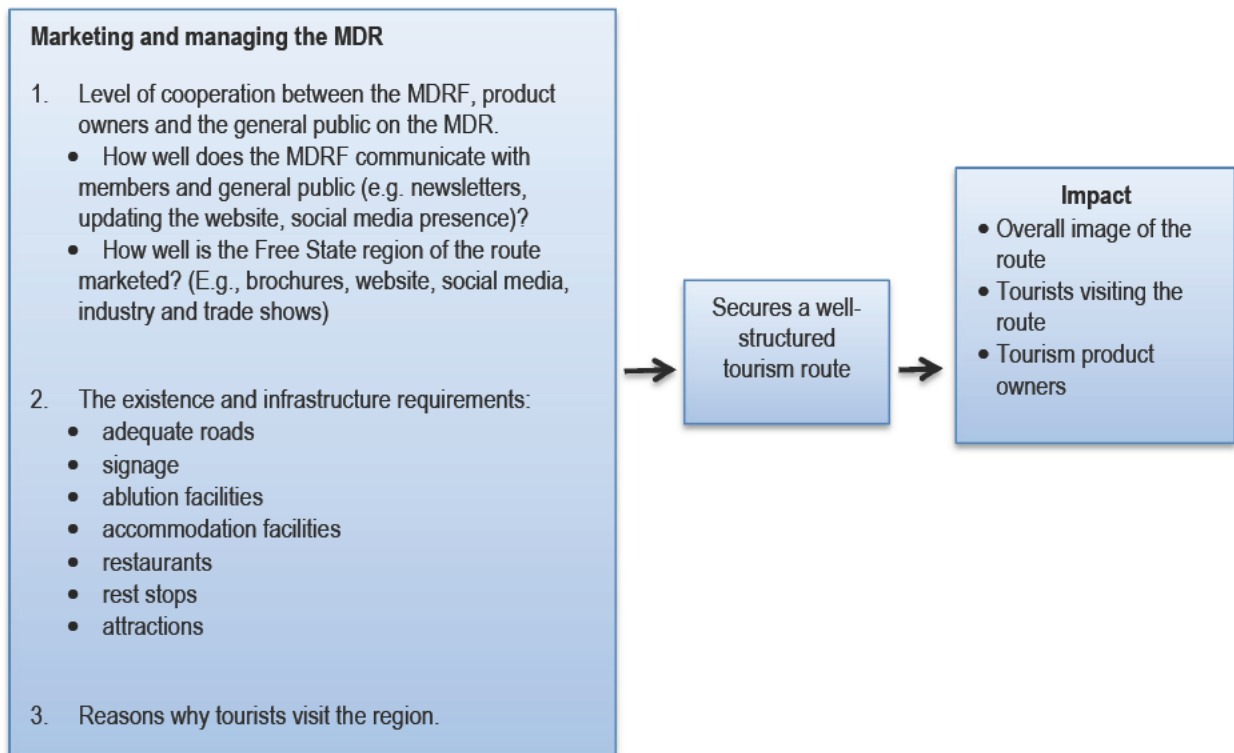
Zastron, an agricultural town surrounded by productive livestock, dairy, wheat and cattle farms (South African Tourism, 2015g:Online), is situated in the far south-western side of the Eastern Free State at the foot of the Aasvoëlberg. The town was established in 1876 on the farm, Verliesfontein, and was first accepted as a town in the year of 1882. One of the most popular destinations in the region is the Montagu Dam, located just outside Zastron, where fishing and water sports are common activities. Other favourite activities in the area include hiking trails, mountain biking, rock climbing and quad biking. On days when the sky is clear, the Maloti Mountains of Lesotho can be viewed in the distance (Nienaber & Le Roux, 1982:12).

Zastron is also called ‘the place of the eye’ because of the eyelike hole in Aasvoëlberg (South African Tourism, 2015g:Online). Zastron boasts an Anglo Boer War Monument, which is situated in front of the Dutch Reformed Church in town. Historical graves located in Chase Street include that of JH de Winnaar, founder of the town (Free State Province, S.a.). Zastron offers the visitor the opportunity of a choice of day trips in this area of the Free State. These day trips include visits to dinosaur footprints and the Cannibal Caves at Mohale’s Hoek, where cannibals once lived (South African Tourism, 2015g:Online).

Zastron also boasts a cave on Glen Rosa Farm where a 5 m-high, perfectly preserved polychrome San rock art frieze can be viewed (Free State Province, S.a.). Thousands of years ago, the region was home to the San people who lived in the surrounding sandstone caves. Their legacy lives on in their rock paintings on the surrounding farms (South African Tourism, 2015g:Online). The hunting lodges around Zastron are frequented during the year by hunters from all over the world, the USA in particular. Zastron also offers a nine-hole golf course 2 km outside of town (South African Tourism, 2015g:Online).

## 4.6 Conceptual framework for the investigation

The main aim of this investigation was to assess the marketing and management effectiveness of the MDR that runs through the Eastern Free State. The criteria for measuring the marketing and management effectiveness of the route were based on the work of Lourens (2007a) and Meyer (2004). This is reflected in Figure 8.



**Figure 8: The conceptual framework for the investigation**

Figure 8 represents the assessment of the marketing and management effectiveness of the MDR. This served as the conceptual guide for the development of the questionnaire that was used for the study. Firstly, the level of cooperation between the MDRF, product owners and the public on the MDR were identified. This included how well the MDRF communicates with its members and the public (e.g., newsletters, updating the website, social media presence) and how well the Free State region of the route is marketed (e.g., brochures, website, social media, industry and trade shows) by the MDRF.

Secondly, the existence and infrastructure requirements (adequate roads, signage, ablution facilities, accommodation facilities, restaurants, rest stops and attractions)

were surveyed, and the last step was to ascertain why tourists visit this specific region. The overall image of the route, tourists visiting the route and, lastly, the tourism product owners on the route are directly influenced by how effective the route is marketed and managed by the MDRF.

#### **4.7 Summary**

This chapter provided a detailed description of the Eastern Free State, the MDR and the MDRF. The towns that form part of the Eastern Free State region of the MDR were mentioned and discussed. A description of all the main attractions and activities that form part of the Eastern Free State region of the MDR was also given. As can be seen the Eastern Free State has plenty of activities and attractions on offer for visitors and can be developed into one of the biggest tourism generating regions in South Africa, if managed correctly. The chapter concluded with the conceptual framework of the research study.



## CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Introduction

Research could be described as the process whereby new knowledge is discovered (Salkind, 2009:2). Research is an intensive activity that is based on the work of others with the aim of generating new ideas and solutions to existing problems (Salkind, 2009:2). The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the research methodology applicable to this study. This includes the research design, data-collection procedure, population and sampling, fieldwork challenges and the pilot study.

### 5.2 Research design

The research design is the plan according to which the researcher intends to obtain information related to a particular phenomenon (Welman & Kruger, 1999:46). The approach a researcher usually takes in carrying out the research project is known as the research methodology. The particular tools the researcher selects for the research is dictated by the research methodology (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12). The research process involves obtaining scientific knowledge by means of various objective methods and procedures (Welman *et al.*, 2005:2). General tools of research include the library and its sources, the computer and its software, measurement techniques, statistics, the human mind and language (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12).

In virtually every subject area, knowledge is incomplete and all human societies and business have unsolved problems. Unsolved problems can also be regarded as knowledge gaps. Knowledge gaps could be addressed by applying the principles of scientific research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:1). Scientific research is by nature a systematic process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in order to increase the comprehension of a particular phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:2). The research design relates to the broader plan of how the research study is to be executed, as well as the measuring instruments used and the way in which the data are analysed.

In quantitative research, data are presented by numbers and statistics. In qualitative research, the researcher collects numerous forms of data and examines them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:135). This study incorporated both a qualitative and a quantitative research approach. Although the aim of the study was to ascertain how effective the MDRF markets and manages the Free State section of the MDR (thus gathering data from product owners), tourists' experiences on the route were also captured in a separate questionnaire. Two structured questionnaires were administered: one to product owners and one to tourists on the MDR.

### **5.2.1 Population and sampling**

The population is a collection of individuals or objects that are the focus of a scientific inquiry and known to have similar characteristics. The group of participants to whom the researcher wants to generalise the results of the particular study, is another way to describe the population. The subset of the particular population of a study is known as the sample. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common, binding characteristic or trait (Salkind, 2009:89). The object of the research study that consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions they are exposed to is also known as the population of the research study (Welman & Kruger, 1999:47; Welman *et al.*, 2005:52).

The population of this investigation was the product owners and tourists on the Free State section of the MDR. At the time of the research, there were 27 product owners that formed part of the MDRF on the Free State section. They were all targeted for data collection, thus the entire population was targeted. Product owners included owners of restaurants, accommodation establishments and adventure companies. A list of all the product owners is attached in annexure A. As there was no statistics available on the number of tourists visiting the route, convenience sampling applied to the tourists. Convenience sampling (also known as accidental sampling) makes no pretense of identifying a representative subset of a population. People or other units that are readily available, for instance, those who arrive on the scene by mere happenstance are approached (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:212). Tourists visiting the

various establishments during the time of data collection were requested to complete a questionnaire.

### **5.2.2 Questionnaire construction**

Two structured questionnaires (annexure C and annexure D) were used to collect the data for this investigation.

The two questionnaires are set out in the following manner:

Questionnaire 1 (Tourists) (annexure C):

- Section A: Demographics (age, race, gender, language, country reside in currently, etc.);
- Section B: Visiting the route;
- Section C: Rating facilities and services; and
- Section D: Recommendations (open-ended questions).

Questionnaire 2 (Product owners) (annexure D):

- Section A: Demographics (age, race, gender, position in business currently);
- Section B: Interaction with the MDRF;
- Section C: Facilities and services; and
- Section D: Recommendations (open-ended questions).

A cover letter accompanied both questionnaires explaining the aim and scope of the investigation. It also reiterated that the information was for research purposes only and that all information would be treated confidentially (see annexure B).

### **5.2.3 Data collection procedure**

The data collection process involves everything from contacting possible sources and arranging data collection trips to the actual venue where the data for the research study will be recorded (Salkind, 2009:150). In this study, data collection was performed by the researcher who travelled to all the relevant product owners.

Appointments were made with product owners beforehand. Permission was obtained from product owners on the day of the visit to administer the tourist questionnaire to tourists visiting the establishment of the product owner. A research assistant assisted the researcher with gathering data from tourists. The research assistant was trained and briefed beforehand to administer the questionnaire.

Tourists were approached and their consent was requested to complete the questionnaires. The data collection took place over the long weekend in the beginning of May 2015 and stretched for six days. As too few tourists' questionnaires were gathered, a second data collection was scheduled for the weekend of 22 and 23 May 2015. Twenty seven (27) product owners' questionnaires and 51 tourists' questionnaires were completed.

#### **5.2.4 Data analysis**

Data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics describes a body of data and summarises the observations, while inferential statistics makes inferences about large populations from relatively small samples. Inferential statistics has two main functions, to estimate a population parameter from a random sample and to test statistically based hypotheses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:253; Welman *et al.*, 2005:231).

#### **5.2.5 Pilot study**

A pilot study is an effective way of determining the feasibility of a study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:111). The pilot study is often neglected but remains the most important component of a study. A pilot study save time by letting the researcher know which approaches are likely to be effective in solving the research problem at hand (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:111; Welman *et al.*, 2005:148).

A pilot study can be informal with the researcher simply approaching friends or colleagues (Lategan, Lues & Friedrich-Nel, 2011:42). The pilot study for this research was conducted at five accommodation establishments in the town of Lady Grey in the Eastern Cape Province. Product owners in Lady Grey were targeted as

they form part of the MDR's Eastern Cape section. Five product owners and five tourists who visited the accommodation establishments on the day of the visit formed part of the pilot study. The pilot study was carried out to confirm the applicability of the questionnaire. The product owners and tourists who formed part of the pilot study were not included in the main study. As the questionnaires were administered by the researcher, there was an opportunity to clarify some of the questions before the main study took place.

### **5.3 Fieldwork challenges**

Some of the challenges that the researcher encountered while administering the questionnaires were as follows:

- Some of the respondents refused to partake in the study.
- Some of the establishments that formed part of the MDRF were no longer in operation.
- In some areas along the MDR, it was difficult to obtain questionnaires from tourists, as there was none in these areas during the researcher's visit.

### **5.4 Summary**

This chapter focused on the research methodology applied in this investigation. The research design included both a quantitative and a qualitative approach, and two questionnaires were administered – one to product owners and one to tourists on the route. All the product owners who formed part of the MDRF (N=27) were targeted for data collection. Tourists were targeted using convenience sampling – 51 completed the tourist questionnaire. Chapter 6 will provide an analysis of the findings for both the tourist and product owner questionnaires.



## CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on analysing the findings of the empirical section of this investigation. As indicated before, the empirical section of this investigation consisted of two questionnaires – the tourist questionnaire (see annexure C) and the product-owner questionnaire (see annexure D). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to interpret the data.

### 6.2 Descriptive statistics

The following section contains the descriptive statistics for the tourist questionnaire.

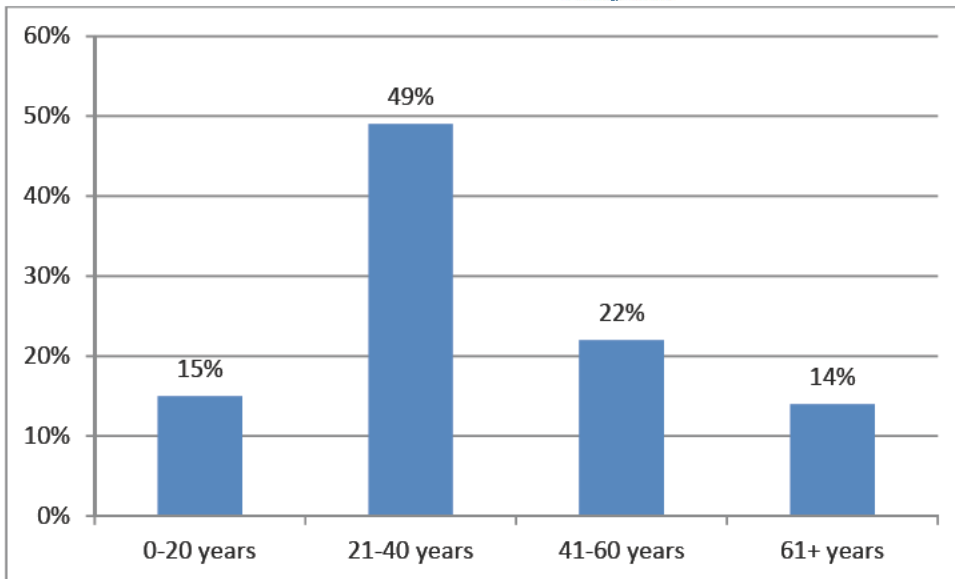
#### 6.2.1 The tourist questionnaire

##### Section A: Demographic profile of respondents

This section describes the demographic profile of respondents, including age, race, gender, country of residence, province of residence and annual income.

##### **Age**

Question 1 captured the age of the respondents. The ages ranged from 14 to 68 years (see Graph 1).

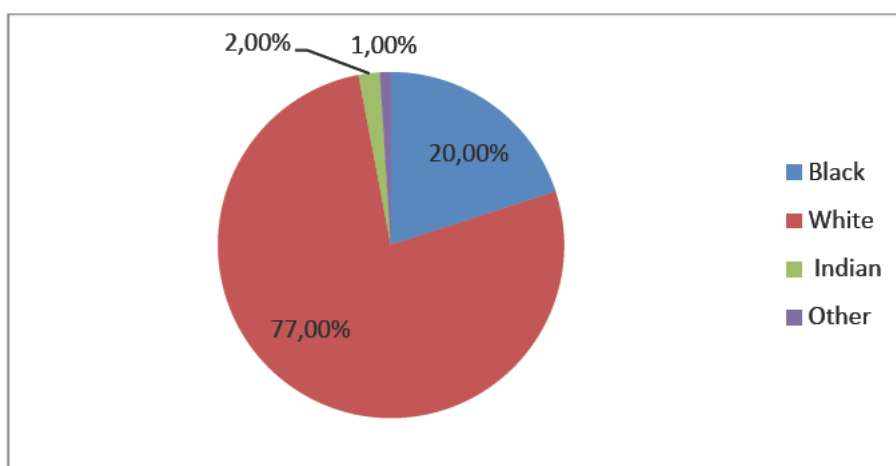


**Graph 1: Age of the respondents**

Graph 1 shows that 49% of the respondents ranged between the ages of 21 and 40 years, 22% between 41 and 60 years, 15% between 0 and 20 years and 14% were 61 years and older.

### **Race**

Question 2 captured the racial composition of respondents. The results are displayed in Graph 2.

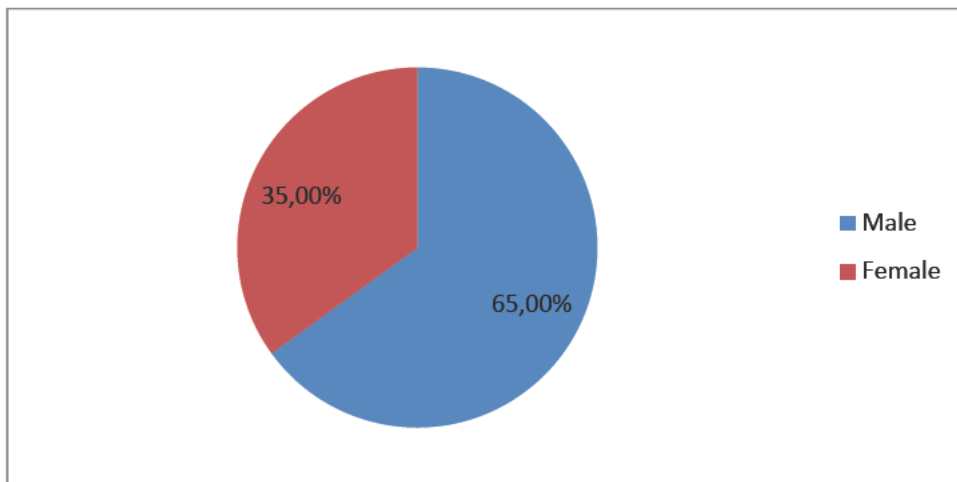


**Graph 2: Racial compositions of the respondents**

Graph 2 shows that 20% of respondents were black, 77% white, 2% Indian, 1% other and that there was zero Coloured respondents.

### ***Gender***

Question 3 required the respondents to indicate their gender. Refer to Graph 3 for the results.

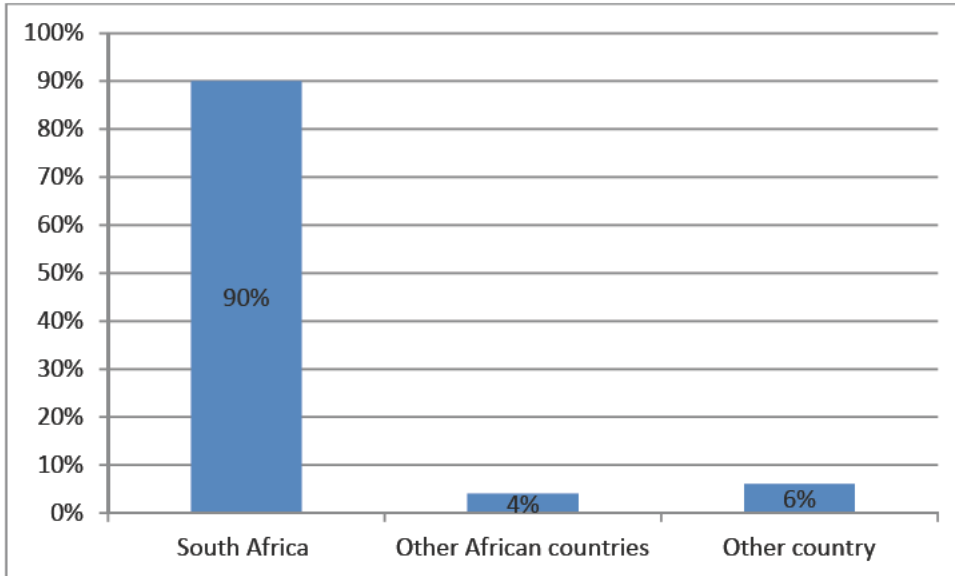


**Graph 3: Gender compositions of the respondents**

Graph 3 shows that 35% of the tourists were female and 65% male.

### ***Country of residence***

Question 4 indicates the country the respondents were residing in at that time. Refer to Graph 4 for the results.

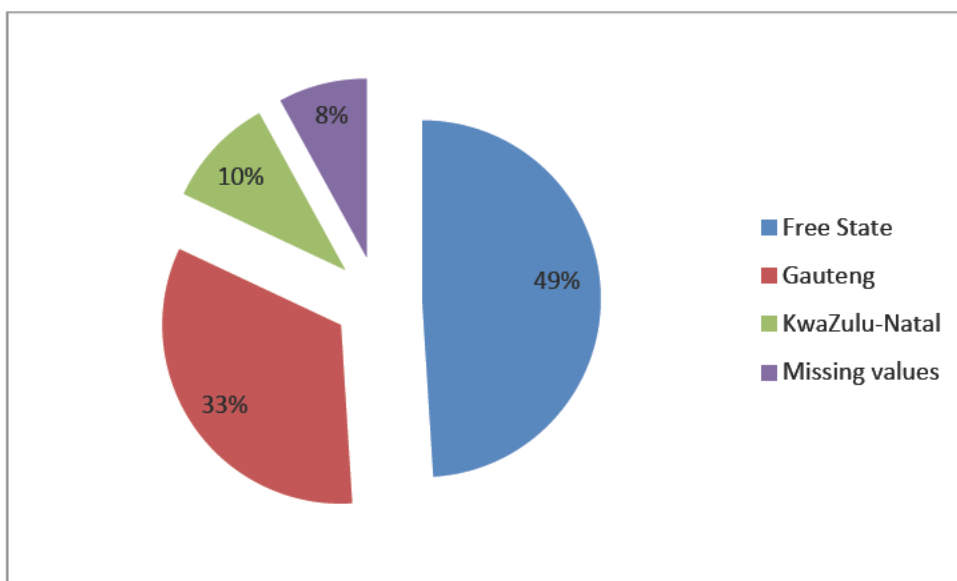


**Graph 4: Respondents’ country of residence**

Graph 4 indicates that 90% of the respondents were residing in South Africa at the time of the research and 4% in other African countries. A total of 6% of the respondents were residing in countries outside of Africa.

***Province of residence***

Question 5 indicates the South African province in which the respondents were residing at the time. Graph 5 indicates the results.



**Graph 5: Respondents’ province of residence**

Graph 5 indicates that almost half (49%) of the respondents were residing in the Free State, 33% in Gauteng, while 10% were residing in KwaZulu-Natal. A total of 8% of the respondents did not indicate their province of residence.

### ***Annual income of respondents***

Question 6 indicates the respondents' annual income, which is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2: Respondents' annual income**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
R0–R300,000	45
R301,000–R500,000	20
R501,000–R 700,000	14
R701,000 or more	20
Missing values	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 indicates the annual income of the tourists who visited the region. The annual income of R0–R300,000 was the category with the most respondents, with a percentage of 45%, followed by the R301,000–R500,000 category with 20%, and then R701,000 or more also with 20% of the respondents. The R501,000–R700,000 category had 14% of the respondents, while 1% did not complete the question.

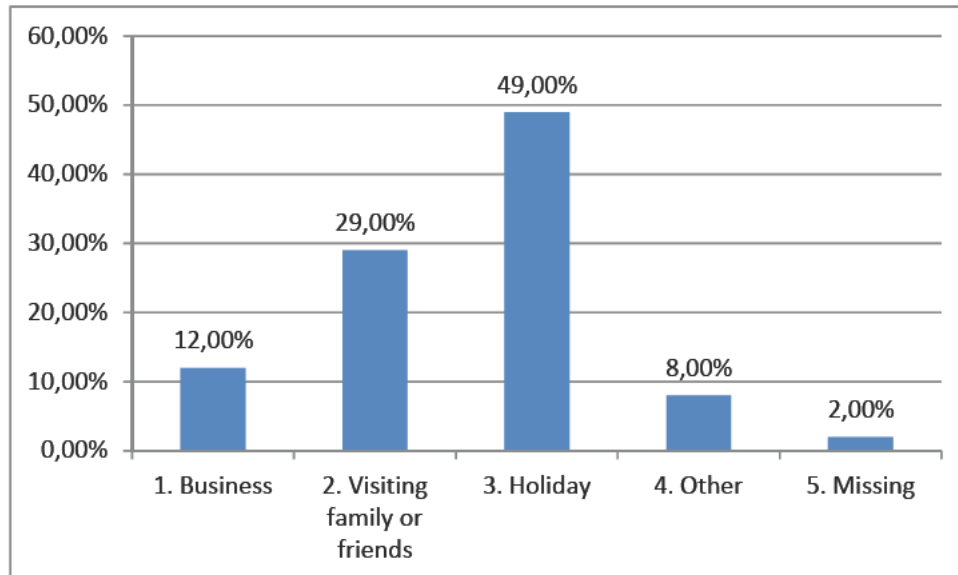
The following section (B) deals with the respondents who were visiting the MDR.

### **Section B: Visiting the route**

This section deals with the main purpose of the respondents' visit to the route, how they came to know about the destination, what sources of information they used in the vicinity to travel from one destination to the next, and the types of accommodation they used.

### **Main purpose of visit to the route**

Question 7 indicates the main purpose of the respondents' visit to the route.

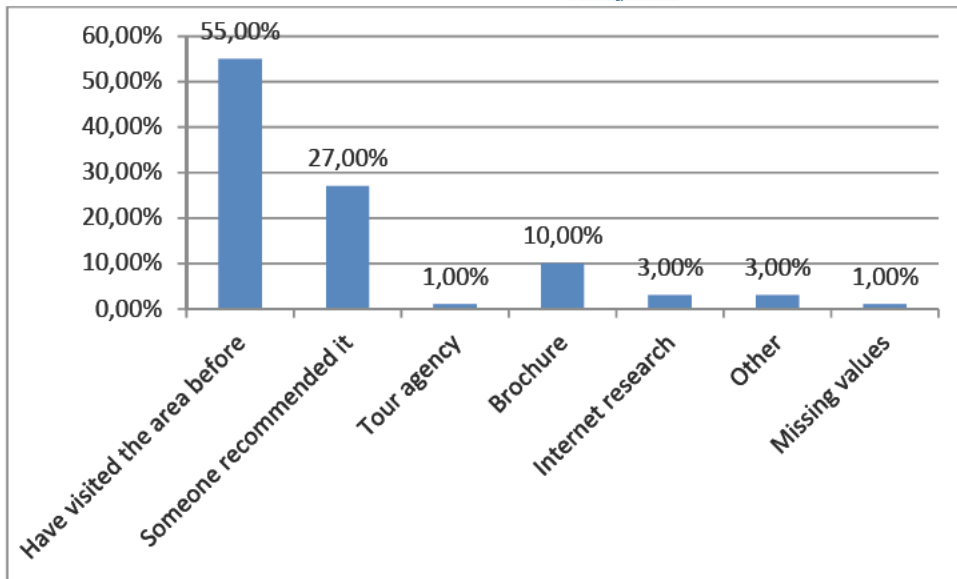


**Graph 6: Main purpose of respondents' visit to the route**

Graph 6 reflects the main purpose of the respondents' visit to the route. The graph shows that 49% of the respondents visited the route for a holiday, while 29% visited family or friends. A total of 12% of the respondents visited the MDR for business, while 8% visited the route for other purposes than stated. A total of 2% of the respondents did not include their main purpose for visiting the route.

### **How the respondents came to know about the route**

Question 8 indicates how the respondents came to know about the route. Refer to Graph 7 for the results.

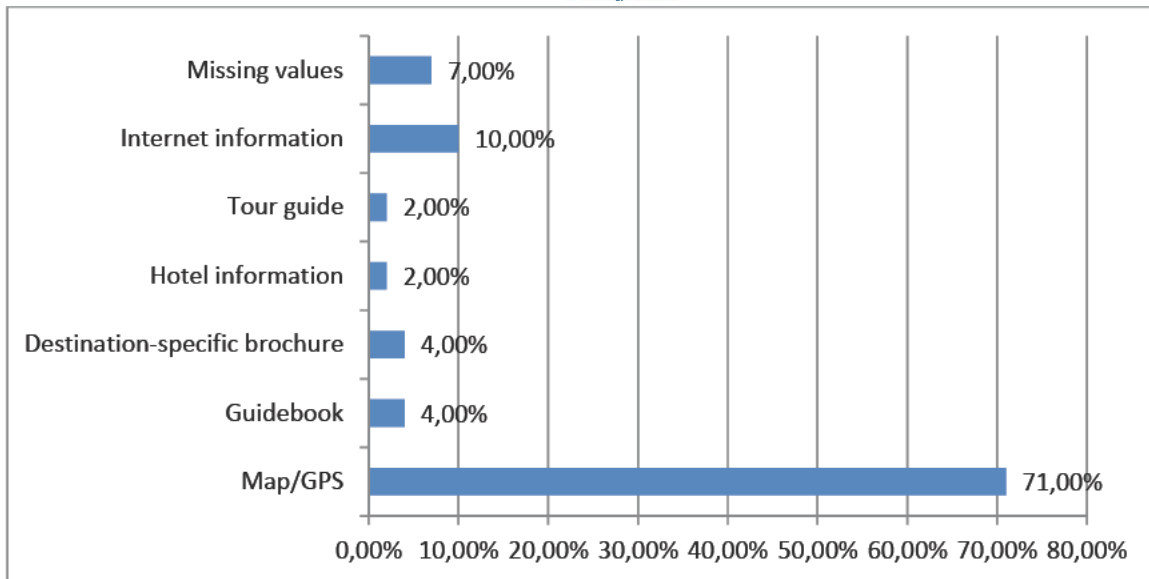


**Graph 7: How the respondents came to know about the route**

According to Graph 7, 55% of the respondents have visited the area before and have thus decided to return to the route. A total of 27% of the respondents indicated that someone recommended the route to them, while 10% came to know about the route obtaining information from brochures. A total of 3% of the respondents indicated that they conducted Internet research and 3% used other methods not stated to come to know about the route. A total of 1% of the respondents used a tour agency, while 1% of the respondents did not indicate how they came to know about the route.

***Sources of information the respondents used in the vicinity to travel from one destination to the next***

Question 9 indicates the sources of information the respondents used in the vicinity to travel from one destination to the next. These are displayed in Graph 8.



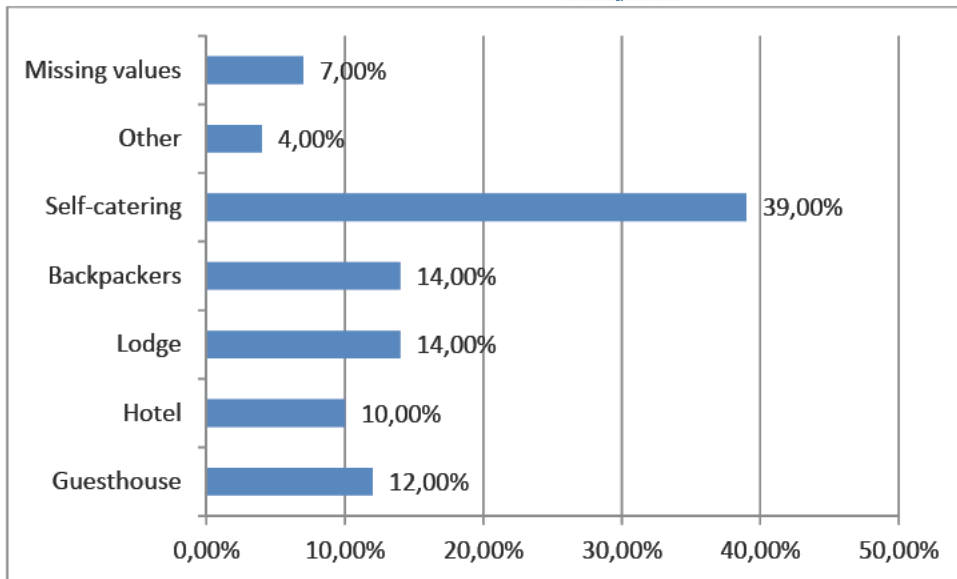
**Graph 8: Sources of information respondents used in the vicinity to travel from one destination to the next**

Graph 8 shows that 71% of the respondents used a map/GPS to travel from one destination to the next, while 10% used Internet information. A total of 4% consulted a guidebook and 4% referred to a destination-specific brochure to travel around. Tour guides were used by 2% and another 2% got the information from the hotel they stayed at. A total of 7% of the respondents did not answer the question.

### ***Types of accommodation***

Question 10 refers to the types of accommodation the respondents made use of during their stay on the MDR. See Graph 9 for the results.





**Graph 9: Types of accommodation used by the respondents**

Graph 9 indicates that 39% of the respondents made use of self-catering facilities during their stay on the MDR, while 14% made use of a lodge as accommodation. A total of 14% stayed at backpackers, 12% stayed in guesthouses, and 10% in a hotel. A total of 4% indicated they made use of other forms of accommodation, while 7% of the respondents did not answer the question.

The following section (C) presents findings on how the respondents rated the facilities and services that they encountered while travelling on the MDR.

### **Section C: Facilities and services**

This section includes the rating of the signage/information on the route, the cleanliness of the facilities along the route, and the product service and quality of both the attractions and the accommodation facilities.

#### ***Signage/information***

Question 11 indicates the respondents' feedback on the signage/information on the MDR. Refer to Table 3 for results.

**Table 3: Signage/information**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Missing values	Total
11.1 The information services provided along the route	17.65%	58.82%	21.57%	1.96%	100
11.2 Road signage	17.65%	60.78%	19.61%	1.96%	100
11.3 The quality of the roads	43.14%	31.37%	21.57%	3.92%	100

According to Table 3, a total of 58.82% of the respondents were satisfied with the information services provided along the route. Over half of the respondents (60.78%) indicated that they were satisfied with the road signage on the MDR. A total of 43.14% indicated that the quality of the roads of the MDR are poor, and only 31.37% found the quality of the roads to be satisfactory.

***Cleanliness of the facilities along the route***

Question 11 further refers to the respondents’ feedback regarding the cleanliness of the facilities along the MDR. The results are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4: Cleanliness of the facilities along the route**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Missing values	Total
11.4 Toilets, restrooms and rest stops	15.69%	54.90%	25.49%	3.92%	100
11.5 Other public facilities	17.65%	50.98%	25.49%	5.88%	100
11.6 Restaurant and dining areas	9.80%	45.10%	41.18%	3.92%	100
11.7 Filling stations	17.65%	49.02%	29.41%	3.92%	100

It is clear from Table 4 that 54.90% of the respondents were satisfied with the cleanliness of the toilets, restrooms and rest stops on the MDR. A total of 50.98% indicated that the cleanliness of the other public facilities were satisfactory, while 45.10% were of the opinion that the cleanliness of the restaurant and dining areas

along the MDR were satisfactory. The results indicated that 49.02% were satisfied with the cleanliness of the filling stations along the MDR.

### Product service and quality

Question 11 concludes by referring to the respondents' feedback on the product service and quality along the MDR at the attractions and accommodation facilities. Refer to Tables 5 and 6 for results.

**Table 5: Product service and quality: Attractions**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Missing values	Total
11.8 General service levels	1.96%	52.95%	35.29%	9.80%	<b>100</b>
11.9 Friendliness of staff	0.00%	39.22%	49.02%	11.76%	<b>100</b>
11.10 Efficiency of staff	1.96%	50.99%	35.29%	11.76%	<b>100</b>
11.11 Professionalism of staff	1.96%	45.10%	41.18%	11.76%	<b>100</b>
11.12 Knowledge levels of staff concerning the MDR	23.53%	41.18%	21.56%	13.73%	<b>100</b>

Table 5 indicates that 52.95% of the respondents found the general service levels of staff at the attractions satisfactory. Almost half (49.02%) of the respondents indicated that the friendliness of the staff at the attractions were excellent, with only 1.96% indicating that it was poor. A total of 50.99% were of the opinion that the efficiency of the staff was satisfactory, while 45.10% found the professionalism of the staff to be satisfactory. A total of 41.18% indicated that the knowledge levels of staff concerning the MDR were satisfactory.

**Table 6: Product service and quality: Accommodation**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Missing values	Total
11.8 General service levels	0.00%	47.06%	47.06%	5.88%	<b>100</b>
11.9 Friendliness of staff	0.00%	41.18%	54.90%	3.92%	<b>100</b>
11.10 Efficiency of staff	5.88%	45.10%	43.14%	5.88%	<b>100</b>
11.11 Professionalism of staff	5.88%	43.14%	47.06%	3.92%	<b>100</b>
11.12 Knowledge levels of staff concerning the MDR	23.53%	31.37%	37.25%	7.85%	<b>100</b>

According to Table 6, 47.06% of the respondents found the general service levels of staff at the accommodation establishments to be satisfactory, while 47.06% found it to be excellent. A total of 54.90% were of the opinion that the friendliness of the staff at the accommodation establishments where they stayed were excellent. A total of 45.10% indicated that the efficiency of the staff was satisfactory, while 47.06% indicated that the professionalism of the staff was excellent at the accommodation establishments along the MDR. According to 37.25% of the respondents, the knowledge levels of staff concerning the MDR were excellent at the accommodation establishment.

#### **Section D: Open question**

The following section summarises the open question related to recommendations for improving the MDR. The main recommendations include:

- The quality of the roads needs improvement.
- Better marketing of smaller towns, such as Hobhouse, needs to be done.
- More detailed information on the attractions and activities must be made available.
- Places of interests need to be marketed better to the public.

- Accommodation establishments need to improve levels of service delivery, especially friendliness of staff.
- More rest stops need to be created along the Free State section of the MDR.

## **6.2.2 The product owner questionnaire**

The following section contains the descriptive statistics for the product owner questionnaire.

### **Section A: Demographic profile of respondents**

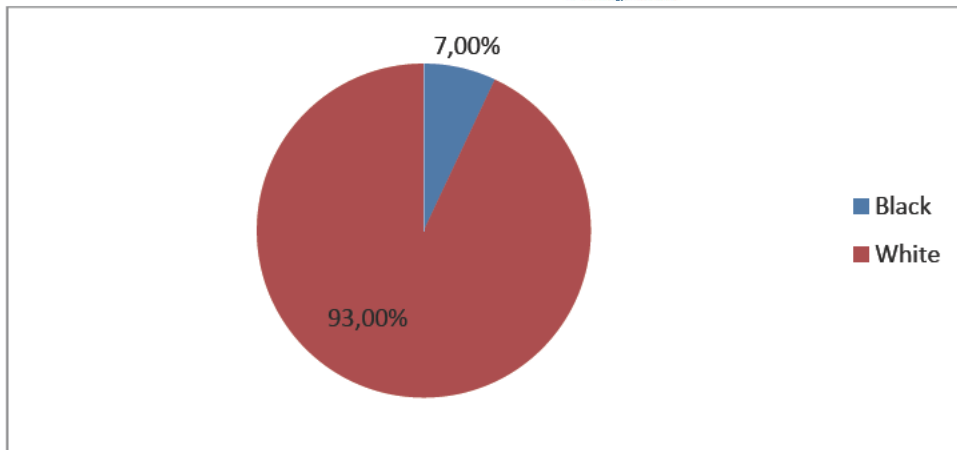
This section describes the demographic profile of respondents, including years' experience in the industry, race, language, gender, position in the establishment and the type of facilities that are offered near the respondents' business.

#### ***Years' experience***

The product owners' years' experience in the tourism industry ranges from 4 to 30 years.

#### ***Race***

Question 2 indicates the product owners' racial groups, which are displayed in Graph 10.

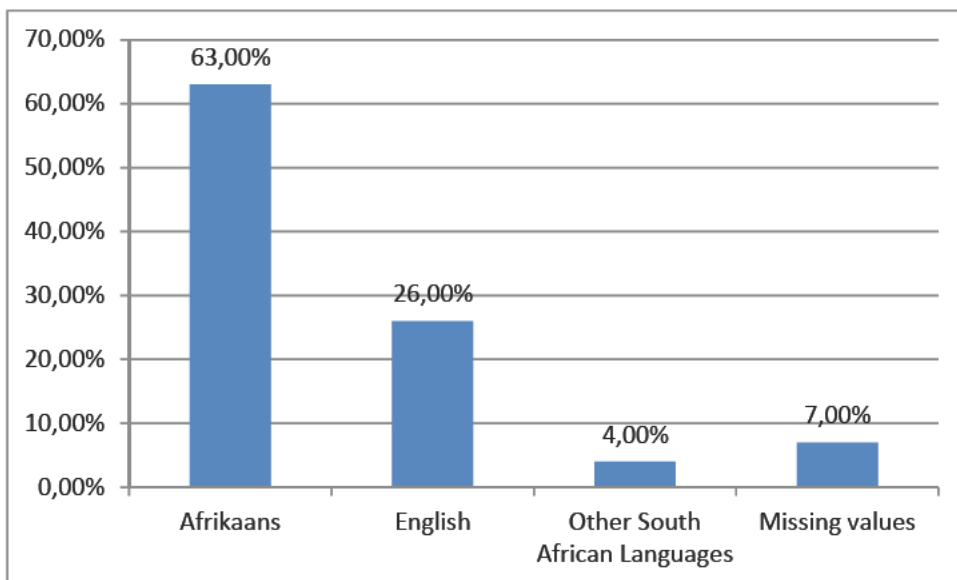


**Graph 10: Racial composition of the respondents**

Graph 10 shows that 7% of the respondents were black and 93% white.

### **Language**

Question 3 refers to the respondents' language group. Refer to Graph 11 for the results.



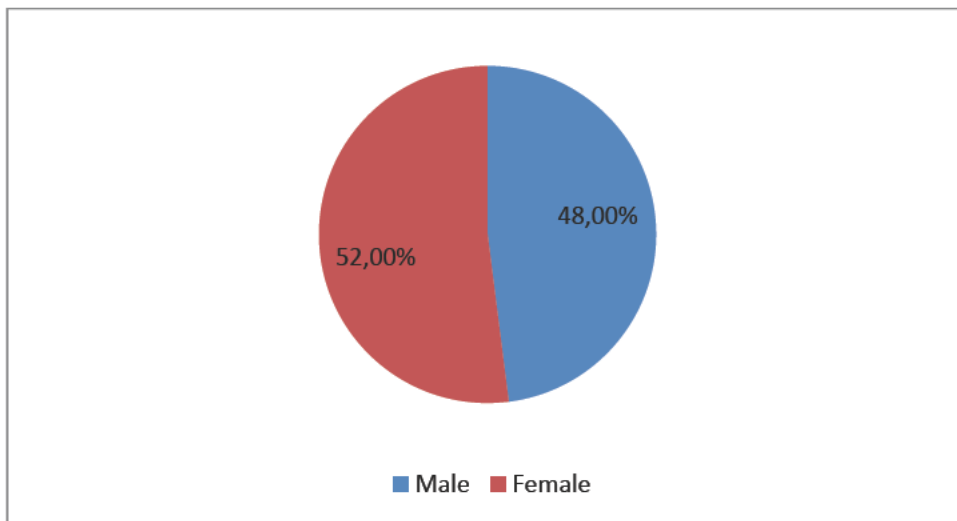
**Graph 11: Language groups of the respondents**

According to Graph 11, 63% of the respondents are mainly Afrikaans first-language speakers, with English first-language speakers at 26%. A total of 4% have other

South African languages as their first language, while 7% of the respondents did not indicate their first language.

### ***Gender***

Question 4 required the respondents to indicate their gender. The results are shown in Graph 12.

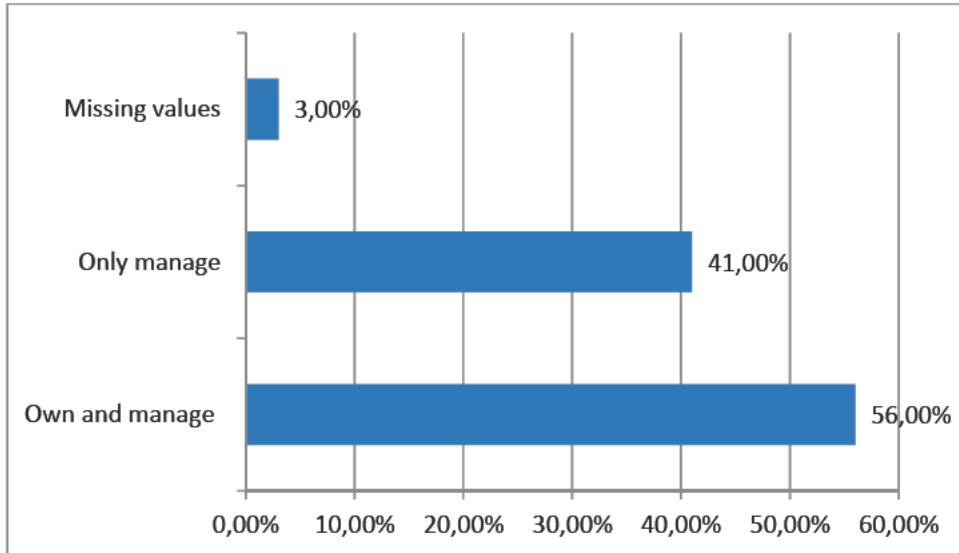


**Graph 12: Gender composition of the respondents**

It is clear from Graph 12 that 48% of the respondents were male and 52% female.

### ***Position***

Question 5 indicates the position of the respondents in the establishment, which is displayed in Graph 13.

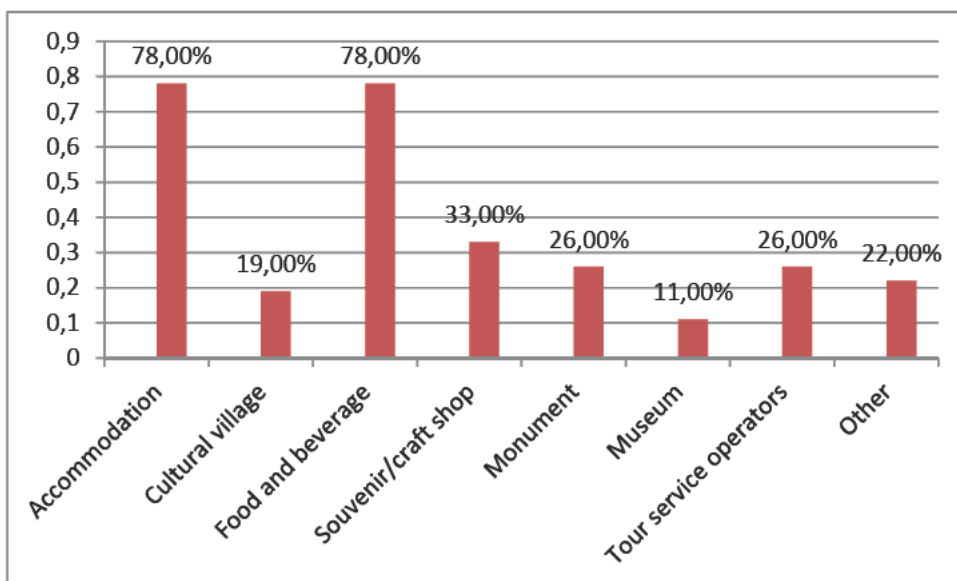


**Graph 13: Position of the respondents**

Graph 13 shows that 56% of respondents were the owners and managers of the establishments, while 41% were only managers. A total of 3% of the respondents did not answer this question.

### ***Facilities***

Question 6 refers to the facilities on offer at the different businesses on the MDR. Note that many product owners offer more than one facility to visitors and they could choose a variety of options. See Graph 14 for the results.



**Graph 14: Facilities on offer at the different establishments**



Graph 14 indicates that 78% of the establishments on the MDR provided accommodation facilities, while 78% have food and beverage facilities. A total of 33% of the establishments on the MDR provided souvenir/craft shops, with 26% offered a tour service operator, and also monuments (26%). A total of 19% of the establishments offered cultural village as one of their facilities to tourists and 11% provided museums to the visitors. A total of 22% offered other facilities at their establishments.

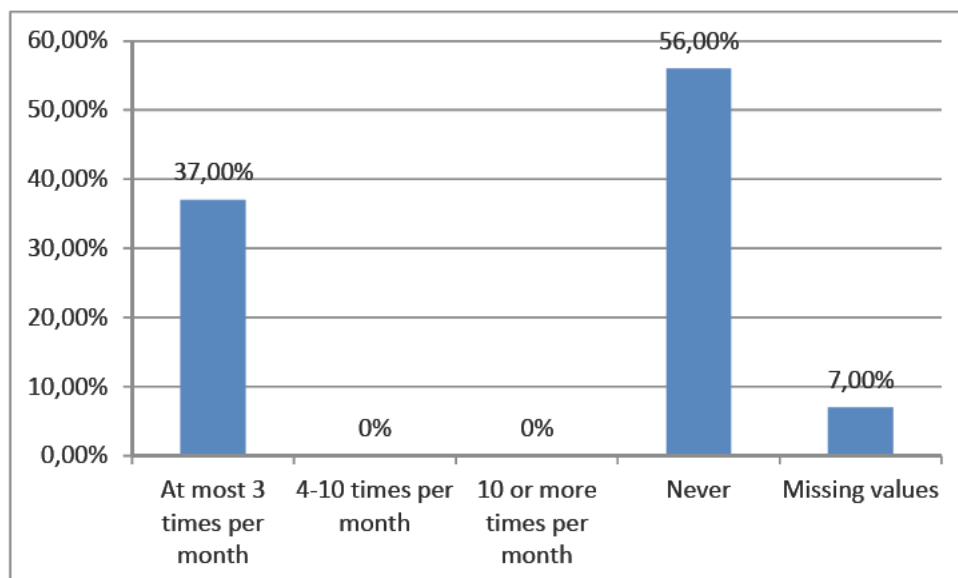
The following section (B) presents findings in relation to the interaction between the product owners and the MDRF.

### Section B: Interaction with the MDRF

This section includes findings on the frequency of the respondents' interaction with the MDRF, as well as questions pertaining to the marketing strategies of the MDRF.

#### *Frequency of interaction with the MDRF in the past two years*

Question 7 indicates the frequency of interaction with the MDRF in the past two years. Graph 15 shows the results.



**Graph 15: Frequency of interaction with the MDRF in the past two years**

Graph 15 indicates that 56% of the respondents had never interacted with the MDRF in the past two years. A total of 37% reported that they have had at most had 3 times a month interaction with the MDRF, while 0% have had 4 to 10 or 10 or more times per month interaction of any sort with the MDRF in the past two years. A total of 7% of the respondents did not answer the question.

### ***Marketing strategy of the MDRF***

Question 8 contains the questions relating to the marketing strategies of the MDRF. Refer to Table 7 for the results.

**Table 7: Marketing strategy of the MDRF**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Missing values</b>	<b>Total</b>
8.1. I am aware of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	51.85%	44.45%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.2. I am able to use and implement the marketing strategy of the MDRF	29.63%	48.15%	22.22%	<b>100</b>

According to Table 7, 51.85% of the respondents were aware of the marketing strategy of the MDRF, while 48.15% were of the opinion that they were not able to implement the marketing strategy of the MDRF.

### ***Satisfaction levels regarding marketing***

Question 8 pertains to the levels of satisfaction with the following marketing-related statements, which are provided in Table 8.

**Table 8: Satisfaction levels regarding marketing**

	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Not satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Missing values</b>	<b>Total</b>
8.3 Communication of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	40.74%	48.25%	7.40%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.4 Applicability of the marketing strategy to my business	40.74%	40.74%	14.82%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.5 Effectiveness of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	48.15%	37.04%	7.41%	7.40%	<b>100</b>
8.6 Cooperation between my business and the MDRF	48.15%	37.04%	11.11%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.7 Frequency of visits from members of the MDRF	44.44%	44.44%	7.41%	3.71%	<b>100</b>
8.8 Applicability of the information disseminated (including brochures, website, etc.) by the MDRF	37.04%	40.74%	18.52%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.9 Applicability of the suggestions made by the MDRF to my business	55.56%	37.04%	3.70%	3.70%	<b>100</b>
8.10 Overall management of the MDRF	66.67%	25.93%	7.40%	0.00%	<b>100</b>

It is clear from Table 8 that 48.25% of the respondents were not satisfied with the communication of the marketing strategy of the MDRF. A total of 40.74% did not know whether the marketing strategy was applicable to their business, while 40.74% were not satisfied that the marketing strategy was applicable to their business. Almost half (48.15%) of the respondents did not know whether the MDRF marketing strategy was effective. A total of 48.15% indicated that they were not aware of cooperation between the MDRF and their business.

A total 40.74% of the respondents were not satisfied with how information was being disseminated. A total of 55.56% did not know whether the suggestions by the MDRF to improve their business were applicable, while 66.67% of respondents indicated that they did not know how well the MDRF was being managed.

This following section (C) describes the respondents' opinions regarding the facilities and services on the MDR.

## Section C: Rating of facilities and services

This section deals with the respondents' rating of facilities and services, specifically looking at the signage/information, facilities and services provided on the MDR.

### *Signage/information*

Question 9 indicates the respondents' feedback on the signage/information on the MDR. Refer to Table 9 for results.

**Table 9: Signage/information**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Missing values	Total %
9.1 Information services provided on the route	51.85%	40.74%	0.00%	7.41%	<b>100</b>
9.2 Road signage	40.74%	48.15%	3.70%	7.41%	<b>100</b>
9.3 Quality of the roads	51.85%	37.04%	3.70%	7.41%	<b>100</b>

According to Table 9, 51.85% of the respondents found the information services provided on the route to be poor. Almost half of the respondents (48.15%) indicated that they were satisfied with the road signage on the MDR, while 51.85% said that the quality of the roads on the MDR was poor.

## Section D: Open question

The following section summarises the open question related to the recommendations for improving the MDR. The main recommendations were:

- The overall quality of roads is problematic and should be improved.
- The MDRF needs to be more involved in assisting product owners with attracting visitors to the Free State section of the MDR.
- The MDRF needs to pay more attention to advertisement and marketing, for example, on radio, in booklets, brochures and social media.

- Product owners require more personal interaction with and visits from the MDRF.
- Better communication from the MDRF to the product owners is needed.
- Product owners recommend that new leadership be introduced in the MDRF.
- The MDRF's marketing strategies need to be communicated more clearly to product owners.
- More ideas and possibilities need to be identified by the MDRF.

### **6.3 Inferential statistics**

The aim of this investigation was to ascertain the effectiveness of the MDRF marketing and management of the Free State section of the MDR. The product owner questionnaire allowed for some inferential interpretations of the findings.

Because the sample was so small ( $n < 30$ ), it did not allow for the application of parametric statistical tests which rely mostly on data that tests normal distribution or t-distribution. Nonparametric statistics make fewer assumptions regarding the shape of the distribution of the data, and are often appropriate when working with frequencies across a limited Likert scale, as in this case. Examples of nonparametric statistics include the Kurskal-Wallis test and Spearman's rank-order correlation (Hoskins, S.a.:Online).

The latter was used in this study, because it relies on ranking the frequencies of each variable (question, in this case) against those of a second variable (other question) and measuring the parity of their ranks for all three levels per question.

Question 8 of the product-owner questionnaire was correlated with question 1. Cronbach's alpha score across questions 8.1 to 8.10 was .862, thus showing the reliability of the question. In order to ascertain whether there is a significant correlation between the satisfaction levels of the years' experience in the tourism



industry and the product owners' satisfaction levels with the marketing strategy of the MDR, Spearman's rank-order correlation test was applied.

Table 10 displays the results of correlation analysis for all two-way combinations between the 11 variables (years, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10).

**Table 10: Spearman rank-order correlations**

Variable	Spearman's rank-order correlations (product owner questionnaire) MD pairwise deleted. Marked correlations are significant at $p < .05000$										
	1. Years	8.1. Marketing strategy	8.2. Implement marketing strategy	8.3. Communication	8.4. Applicability	8.5. Effectiveness	8.6. Cooperation	8.7. Frequency	8.8. Applicability	8.9. Suggestions	8.10. Management
1. Years	1.00										
8.1 Marketing strategy	-0.22	1.00									
8.2 Implementation of marketing strategy	-0.28	0.55	1.00								
8.3 Communication	0.36	-0.47	-0.33	1.00							
8.4 Applicability	0.25	-0.58	-0.38	0.78	1.00						
8.5 Effectiveness	0.30	-0.32	-0.21	0.88	0.67	1.00					
8.6 Cooperation	0.34	-0.42	-0.26	0.87	0.71	0.93	1.00				
8.7 Frequency	0.30	-0.33	-0.33	0.70	0.55	0.76	0.81	1.00			
8.8 Applicability	0.21	-0.58	-0.28	0.77	0.54	0.62	0.54	0.37	1.00		
8.9 Suggestions	0.32	-0.23	-0.16	0.81	0.66	0.84	0.92	0.86	0.54	1.00	
8.10 Management	0.03	-0.07	-0.03	0.59	0.47	0.73	0.70	0.51	0.37	0.65	1.00

Table 10 indicates all the pairwise correlations. Figures in red indicate a significant linear relationships, at a significance level of .05% or 5%.

There is a significant correlation between:

- Communicating the marketing strategy and implementing the marketing strategy;
- The effectiveness and applicability of the marketing strategy; and
- The cooperation between the MDRF and the product owners.

The frequency of visits from the MDRF to its members shows a significant influence on the communication, applicability, effectiveness, cooperation, suggestions and the management of the MDRF. A significant correlation is also present between the marketing strategy and the implementation of the marketing strategy of the MDRF.

#### **6.4 Summary**

This chapter presented an analysis of the findings from both the tourist and product owners' questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to the analysis of the data. Chapter 7 provides the conclusions and recommendations of the study.



## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 analysed and discussed the findings from the empirical part of the investigation. This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations that have emanated from this investigation. Future research areas are also suggested.

### 7.2 Conclusions based on questionnaires

The aim of this investigation was to assess the marketing and management effectiveness of the Free State section of the MDR. The studies of Meyer (2007) and Lourens (2007a) were used as conceptual guides for the compilation of both the product owner and the tourist questionnaires. A total number of 51 tourists who were visiting the Free State section of the MDR were approached to complete a structured questionnaire, while the full population of tourism product owners (27) were targeted for data collection. Conclusions drawn from the tourist questionnaires, personal experience and feedback that the researcher gained from his interaction with both the tourists and product owners on the MDR will be discussed in the following sections.

#### ***7.2.1 Conclusions from the tourist questionnaires***

The age distribution of tourists who visited the route was between 14 and 68 years. Most of the tourists were between 21 and 40 years. The racial composition was mostly white (77%) and then black (20%). The majority were males (65%) – a possible reason could be because of the abundance of outdoor activities on the route, such as golfing and fly-fishing.

Most of the tourists who visited this region were South African citizens. Most of them resided in the Free State (49%). Gauteng was indicated as the second largest generator of tourists to the route (33%). These tourists indicated they visited the route as part of weekend break-aways.

Only a small number of respondents were international visitors (10%). International tourists indicated a dearth of marketing about the Free State section of the MDR. This is a serious shortcoming seeing that it is the task of the MDRF to market the route. The annual income of respondents were between R0 to R300,000. This finding correlates with the age distribution of respondents (most were between 21 and 40) indicating younger visitors who are still in the early stages of their careers.

The main reasons for visiting the sites on the route were for holiday (49%) and visiting friends and/or family (29%). The sites and attractions on the route offer many activities for holiday visitors. Visiting family and friends is also a good way to become acquainted with the sites and attractions. Most of the tourists made use of self-catering accommodation, probably because it is the cheapest. Also, self-catering accommodation provides a great deal of freedom for visitors to explore the environment without any time constraints (such as fixed lunch or dinner times).

Tourists were generally satisfied with the information services on the route (e.g., information offices) but felt that signage on the route can be improved. The quality of the road infrastructure was indicated as problematic and could be seen as a deterrent for future visits to the route. The cleanliness of the facilities (toilets, restrooms, rest stops, other public facilities, restaurants, dining areas and filling stations) were found to be satisfactory. The tourists found the friendliness of staff at attractions and accommodation establishments along the MDR to be excellent.

A serious concern was raised as to the lack of staff knowledge about the attractions and activities in the vicinity. However, at accommodation establishments, 37% of the tourists found the knowledge of the staff to be excellent. The professionalism of staff at attractions was indicated as being satisfactory, while 47% of the tourists indicated that the professionalism of staff at accommodation establishments was excellent. The general service levels as indicated by the tourists were satisfactory at both attractions and accommodation establishments along the MDR.

The following figures display some pictures of the rest stops and signage on the route.

Picture 1 indicates one of the rest stops on the Free State section of the MDR.



**Picture 1: Rest stop along the MDR**

Picture 2 indicates signage along the Free State section of the MDR.



**Picture 2: Signage on the Free State section of the MDR**

Picture 3 indicates more signage on the Free State section of the MDR.



**Picture 3: More signage on the Free State section of the MDR**

### **7.2.2 Conclusions based on the product owner questionnaires**

Several conclusions can be drawn from the product owner questionnaire. Product owners' experience in the industry ranged from 4 to 30 years. The racial composition of product owners was 93% white and 7% black. A total of 63% of the respondents were Afrikaans speaking, and 26% were English speaking. A total of 48% were male and 52% were female. A total of 56% of the product owners managed their own establishments. The facilities that were available in the vicinity were mostly accommodation establishments, food and beverage providers, souvenir/craft shops, conference facilities, and tour service operators.

An alarming finding is that most of the product owners (56%) indicated that they have had no interaction with the MDRF in the past two years. Only 37% of product owners have had some interaction with the MDRF in the last two years. Only 52% of the product owners indicated that they were aware of the marketing strategy of the MDRF. They also indicated poor communication on the part of the MDRF. This consistently poor communication affected all the other interactions the MDRF have had with product owners, as well as the managerial and marketing assistance expected from the forum.

These conclusions are supported by the correlation analysis performed in Table 10. Table 10 indicates that the frequency of visits from the MDRF to its members shows a significant influence on the communication, applicability, effectiveness, cooperation, suggestions and the management of the MDRF. Product owners further indicated that information services provided on the route were poor, as well as the quality of the roads. The complaints included out-of-date signage along the route. The general feeling among the product owners was that the signage along the route was inadequate and even misleading.

The product owners reiterated that they received little support for the fees they pay to the MDRF. They also identified a need for a more robust marketing strategy that could benefit the entire route, which would include making more books and brochures available and updating them regularly. This conclusion incorporates the views of Meyer (2004) that a successful route benefits the product owners by exposing tourists to lesser known attractions and rural areas, which would ultimately benefit from route tourism development.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

This section presents recommendations that address the marketing and management effectiveness of the Free State section of the MDR.

- The MDRF must create a robust marketing strategy. This must include the following aspects:
  - ✓ More marketing material needs to be made available and updated regularly.
  - ✓ The map of the Free State section of the MDR needs to be updated regularly.
  - ✓ The MDRF should have stalls at trade shows such as the Tourism Indaba in Durban.

- ✓ The MDRF needs to be better marketed internationally. This can be done by means of Internet marketing and using social media which are already in operation but needs to be updated more regularly.
- Communication with product owners needs to be better coordinated. This can be done through monthly newsletters, creating WhatsApp groups and the like.
- An annual meeting or conference can also assist members in knowing each other's challenges and in opening up communication channels with the MDRF.
- Product owners need to be given assistance in effectively implementing the marketing strategy of the MDRF. Training sessions can be scheduled for product owners.
- Training of staff on knowledge of attractions along the route, needs to be regular and coordinated.
- The MDRF needs to create links and networks with both public and private businesses in the area. This will lead to better cooperation between stakeholders which, in turn, can result in better services provided to tourists (which corresponds with the views of Lourens, 2007a:89).
- The inputs from the Free State Tourism Authority need to be secured.
- The MDRF needs to engage with authorities on maintaining road and other infrastructure, such as better signage (which correlates with the views of Lourens, 2007a:89).
- MDRF must engage with local tourism forums to improve and coordinate tourism marketing strategies.



## 7.4 Suggested future research

This investigation revealed the need for further research into the MDRF and its daily operations as well as research of route tourism in other parts of the Free State.

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## **ANNEXURE A: LIST OF PRODUCT OWNERS IN THE FREE STATE SECTION OF THE MALOTI DRakensBERG ROUTE**

1. Mountain View Zastron
2. Kotteljonsie
3. Ou Stal B&B
4. Nell's Bar & Restaurant
5. Brian Coleman
6. Matsopa Municipality
7. Pine Dene Small Arms Museum
8. Woodpecker B&B
9. Ben Nevis B&B
10. Impereni B&B
11. Wynford Holiday Farm
12. Lali's Guesthouse
13. Camelroc Guest Farm
14. Mountain Odyssey
15. Ash River Lodge
16. Aspen Guesthouse
17. Clarens Brewery
18. Riverwalk B&B
19. Ollie Esplin
20. Clarens Destinations
21. Protea Hotel Clarens
22. The Royal Terrace
23. The Loft Guesthouse
24. Golden Gate National Park
25. Santa Bronkhorst
26. Di Plaas Stoep Restaurant
27. Fouriesburg Country Inn



## ANNEXURE B: COVER LETTER



29 April 2015

Dear Participant

**Thank you in anticipation for your time and willingness to contribute to my Master's study on Assessing the marketing and management effectiveness of the Free State section of the Maloti Drakensberg Route and its value in the tourism industry.**

The completion of this questionnaire is anonymous and the information will be handled confidentially. Your inputs are of extreme value and importance for the researcher and management.

The information will be used for research purposes only and the findings based on this survey will be communicated at a later stage.

Please answer this questionnaire as honestly and fully as possible.

Yours truly

Mr E Proos

Study leader: Prof Deseré Koko (051-5073114 Email: [koktd@cut.ac.za](mailto:koktd@cut.ac.za))



## ANNEXURE C: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: TOURISTS



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### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**Please indicate your answer with a circle around the relevant number.**

**1. Please indicate your age in years: \_\_\_\_\_**

**2. Please indicate your racial group.**

1	Black
2	White
3	Coloured
4	Indian
5	Asian
6	Other (specify)

**3. Please indicate your gender.**

1	Male
2	Female

**4. In which country do you currently reside?**

1	South Africa
2	Other African countries
3	Other country (specify)

**5. If from South Africa, indicate the province.**

1	Free State
2	Gauteng
3	KwaZulu-Natal
4	Eastern Cape
5	Northern Cape
6	Western Cape
7	Limpopo
8	Mpumalanga
9	North-West

**6. Please indicate your annual income.**

1	Nil – R300,000
2	R301,000 – R500,000
3	R501,000 – R 700,000
4	R701,000 or more

**SECTION B: VISITING THE ROUTE**

**7. What is the main purpose of your visit?**

1	Business
2	Visiting family or friends
3	Holiday
4	Other (specify)

**8. How did you come to know about this route?**

1	Have visited the area before
2	Someone recommended it
3	Tour agency
4	Brochure
5	Internet search
6	Other (specify)

**9. What sources of information did you use in the vicinity to travel from one destination to the next?**

1	Map/GPS
2	Guidebook
3	Destination-specific brochure
4	Hotel information
5	Tour guide
6	Internet information

**10. Please indicate the type/s of accommodation that you are using?**

1	Guesthouse
2	Hotel
3	Lodge
4	Backpackers
5	Self-catering
6	Other (specify)

### SECTION C: RATING FACILITIES AND SERVICES

**11. Rate the following facilities and services of the Maloti Drakensberg Route.**

**Signage/Information:**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent
11.1 The information services provided along the route	1	2	3
11.2 Road signage	1	2	3
11.3 The quality of the roads	1	2	3

**Cleanliness of the facilities along the route:**

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent
11.4 Toilets, restrooms and rest stops	1	2	3
11.5 Other public facilities	1	2	3
11.6 Restaurant and dining areas	1	2	3
11.7 Filling stations	1	2	3

**Product service and quality**

	Attractions			Accommodation		
	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent
11.8 General service levels	1	2	3	1	2	3
11.9 Friendliness of staff	1	2	3	1	2	3
11.10 The efficiency of staff	1	2	3	1	2	3
11.11 Professionalism of staff	1	2	3	1	2	3
11.12 The knowledge levels of staff concerning the MDR	1	2	3	1	2	3

**SECTION D: RECOMMENDATIONS**

**12. Do you have any recommendations for improving the Maloti Drakensberg Route?**

**Please print.**

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**Thank you for your time and participation.**

## ANNEXURE D: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: PRODUCT OWNERS



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### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

**Please indicate your answer with a circle around the relevant number.**

**1. How many years' experience do you have in the tourism industry?.....**

**2. Please indicate your racial group.**

1	Black
2	White
3	Coloured
4	Indian
5	Asian
6	Other (specify).....

**3. Please indicate your language group.**

1	Afrikaans	
2	English	
3	Other South African languages (specify)	.....

**4. Please indicate your gender.**

1	Male
2	Female

**5. Please indicate your position in the establishment.**

1	I own and manage the establishment.
2	I only manage the establishment.

**6. Which of these facilities are offered by or in the vicinity of your business?**

1	Accommodation	
2	Cultural village	
3	Food and beverage (restaurant/bar)	
4	Souvenir/craft shop	
5	Monument(s), heritage site(s), natural wonder(s)	
6	Museum(s)	
7	Tour service operator(s)	
8	Other (specify)	

**SECTION B: INTERACTION WITH THE MALOTI DRakensBERG ROUTE FORUM**

**7. How frequent is your interaction with the Maloti Drakensberg Route Forum in the past two years (can include email, phone calls, meetings, etc.)?**

1	At most 3 times per month
2	4–10 times per month
3	10 or more times per month
4	Never

**8. Questions pertaining to the marketing strategies of the Maloti Drakensberg Route Forum (MDRF).**

	Yes	No
8.1 I am aware of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	1	2
8.2 I am able to use and implement the marketing strategy of the MDRF	1	2

Please indicate your satisfaction levels related to the following:

	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Not satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
8.3 The communication of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	1	2	3
8.4 The applicability of the marketing strategy to my business	1	2	3
8.5 The effectiveness of the marketing strategy of the MDRF	1	2	3
8.6 The cooperation between my business and the MDRF	1	2	3
8.7 Frequency of visits from members of the MDRF	1	2	3
8.8 The applicability of the information disseminated (including brochures, website, etc.) by the MDRF	1	2	3
8.9 The applicability of the suggestions made by the MDRF to my business	1	2	3
8.10 The overall management of the MDRF	1	2	3

### SECTION C: FACILITIES AND SERVICES

#### Signage/Information:

	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
9.1 The information services provided on the route	1	2	3
9.2 Road signage	1	2	3
9.3 The quality of the roads	1	2	3

### SECTION D: RECOMMENDATIONS

**10. Do you have any recommendations to improve the marketing and management of the Maloti Drakensberg Route? Please print.**

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**Thank you for your time and participation.**