RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANY FACETS:
UNPACKING THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN
PROTECTED AREA MANAGERS AND
COMMERCIAL TOUR OPERATORS

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B.SC. (HONS. ENV. SCIENCE)

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Environmental Science
Murdoch University

28 June 2007
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research, unless otherwise stated. It contains, as its main content, work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary institution.

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Agathe Wegner

28 June 2007
ABSTRACT

For protected areas worldwide, commercial tour operators are increasingly providing the services and products desired and needed by visitors to these areas. Given the engagement of both protected area managers and tour operators in protected areas, and inevitably with each other, it is critical that their relationship and its complexities are clearly understood. As such, the interests of managers and operators overlap insofar as that they work in the same locales, share some of the burden of service provision, and aim to offer a quality product. However, this study shows that they diverge in other ways, particularly given the commercial imperative that necessarily strongly influences the activities of their business, irrespective of its location. This thesis seeks to unpack the complexities of a relationship that is critically important both in terms of the quality of the tourism experiences offered by protected areas, and the conservation of such areas in the longer term. In order to obtain an understanding of the complexity of the interactions between protected area managers and tour operators, qualitative research methods were used, in which in-depth interviews provided a rich picture of the important diverse aspects and facets impacting on their relationships.

This study found that both managers and operators considered the purpose of protected areas to be the conservation of biodiversity and their recreational use and enjoyment. Surprisingly, their similar values were unknown to them. A major influence on their relationships was their perceptions of power, with ‘dominant’ power largely based on legislative and regulatory mandates, perceived to rest with the protected area managers. In contrast, this study also found evidence of ‘resistant’ power. This form of Foucauldian power was held particularly by operators in one geographic locale, and was associated with the concepts of
cultural groupings and groupthink. The underlying public policy context influenced the effectiveness of the collaborative efforts of managers and operators. Interwoven with these differences were variable expectations regarding the nature and purpose of communication and what collaboration might 'mean'. These findings importantly suggest several future directions for both practice and research. First, managers and operators share values and hold both similar and different expectations and perceptions, similarities and differences which are significant. Secondly, understanding the importance of power and how it is exercised is critical if successful relationships between managers and operators are to be fostered. Finally, further unpackaging of the meaning of communication and collaboration for managers and operators, a process initiated in this study, is essential if relationships between these groups involved in conservation and recreation in protected areas are to be improved. Therefore, this study suggests that their collaboration can be enhanced at individual, organisational/locale and policy levels, by adopting and implementing an action research framework.
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CHAPTER 1
SETTING THE CONTEXT

The link between protected areas and tourism is as old as the history of protected areas. Protected areas need tourism, and tourism needs protected areas. Though the relationship is complex and sometimes adversarial, tourism is always a critical component to consider in the establishment and management of protected areas.

(Eagles et al., 2002:xv)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Australia’s protected areas are considered special places with the people living here being proud of their natural and cultural assets. Our protected areas, which are thought of as natural assets, attract many visitors from all over the world who are interested in visiting them and experiencing their beauty (CALM, 2006; Carlsen and Wood, 2004; Worboys et al., 2005). This type of tourism is referred to as nature based tourism and defined as experiencing flora and fauna in natural settings (Jafari, 2000:410). It encompasses various forms of tourism which use the natural environment, including adventure, wildlife, and ecotourism (Newsome et al., 2002). Many nature based tourism activities in Australia take place in protected areas, including national parks, conservation reserves, marine parks, and world heritage areas (Buckley and Sommer, 2001). Nature based tourism, particularly in protected areas, has experienced a strong growth over the past few years (Buckley, 2000a; Cole, 2001; Eagles, 2002; Newsome, et al., 2002; Worboys et al., 2001).
Nature based tourism relies upon two fundamental constituents: appropriate levels of environmental quality, and suitable levels of consumer services (Eagles, 2002). With increasing tourist numbers the challenge for protected area agencies then becomes one of managing tourism in protected areas in ways which protect and maintain the values that attracted tourists in the first place, as the growing demand for nature based tourism opportunities is leading to increased pressure on the environment. This increasing demand has led to a shift in responsibility of protected area management agencies to becoming providers of recreational services in addition to their function of conserving the areas (Buckley and Sommer, 2001). The responsibility shift leads to a shift in requirements of protected area managers (PAMs) with respect to their roles and functions.

Fundamental attributes for PAMs working in protected areas are a mix of technical, human, and conceptual skills so they can manage the natural environment and tourism (Worboys, et al., 2005:127). PAMs regularly placed the natural environment and its management ahead of visitor management (Hillman, 2004; McArthur, 1994). However, managing protected areas is recognised as being essentially a social process (Worboys, et al., 2001), involving communication amongst stakeholders and working with people to achieve objectives and goals.

1.2 CHALLENGES FACING PROTECTED AREA MANAGERS AND COMMERCIAL TOUR OPERATORS

Many agencies in charge of protected areas have staff trained in sciences who have no or only limited experience and knowledge of tourism management and understanding of visitors' wants and needs (Eagles, 2002). Traditionally, their role
involved maintaining facilities, monitoring, protecting and classifying sites of flora and fauna, as well as managing visitors (Wearing and Bowden, 1999). PAMs face a dilemma balancing conservation with recreation, based on their legislative dual mandate (Buckley, 2000a; Cole, 2001; McCool and Stankey, 2001). The decision of allocating financial resources and the question of priorities and perspective with respect to protected areas poses additional strain on the task of management. Many PAMs have expressed concerns that an increase in tourism within protected areas may threaten conservation aspects of the areas for which they are responsible (Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Buckley, 2000b; Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Cole, 2001; Cole and Hammitt, 2000; DITR, 2003; Eagles, et al., 2002; Worboys, et al., 2001).

Tourism in protected areas does, however, provide financial resources for environmental conservation and management. PAMs rely on funds from tourism to contribute to operating costs (Buckley, 2000a). Protected areas that attract more visitors are likely to gain greater political profiles and therefore might receive more government grants (Eagles, 2002). An associated concern is that financial imperatives may reduce the ability of managers to manage for conservation if tourism becomes a higher priority than conservation. There is also resistance to the increased dependence on income through tourism (Eagles, et al., 2002). This resistance is based on the concept that nature is free, universally owned, and visiting protected areas should be free of charge.

To work successfully and effectively in providing a good tourism product depends how well PAMs and the tourism industry are able to work together. This strongly influences the quality of the tourism product, the satisfaction of visitors and the
protection of the natural resource base on which the industry depends. An important associated issue is how well the diversity of staff within protected area agencies engages with, and support tourism priorities and work with each other. In many ways, providing tourism products in protected areas is a partnership between several parties. Two parties crucial to the success and sustainability of tourism in protected areas are the commercial tour operators (CTOs) operating within these areas and PAMs in charge of their management. Misunderstandings through to animosity between these two parties are a recognised concern (Selin and Chavez, 1995b).

Previous research that has examined CTOs’ attitudes towards licensing has identified collaboration difficulties between PAMs and CTOs (Hughes and Carlsen, 2004). A lack of communication was identified as the key problem by the CTOs. They stated that the conservation agency with whom they regularly interact needs to improve its communication with the CTOs and take a more pro-active role in identifying the needs of local operations. This research has focused specifically on CTOs’ perceptions and did not look at PAMs’ perceptions. CTOs’ animosity towards PAMs was based on their perception of the conservation agency’s lack of communication and recognition and acknowledgment of their economic needs (Carlsen, 2003; Genter et al., forthcoming; Hughes and Carlsen, 2004).

CTOs in the context of this research are defined as business organisations that combine transportation, accommodation and other service suppliers in package tours (Jafari, 2000:584). Because many owner/operators run their own tours, this research does not differentiate between a CTO and a tour guide. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise the key roles of tour guides, they are considered as
‘couriers’ whose principal task is seen as imparting information (Jafari, 2000:583). Their responsibilities and roles are multifaceted ranging from providing interpretation, education, leadership, and motivation to entertainment. They often act as mediators and facilitators, however, their primary role is to provide a quality experience (Ham and Weiler, 2002; Weiler and Ham, 2001). Additionally, officers from Tourism Western Australia participated as part of the group of CTOs in order to gain a rich picture of the views held by members of the tourism industry.

Insufficiency or lack of communication impacts directly on the working arrangements and relationships of PAMs and CTOs. In addition to the constraints of limited communication on their working relationships, they also need to meet the requirements of, and comply with, licence conditions, agencies, and bureaucracies whilst having different priorities (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Buckley et al., 2001; Eagles, et al., 2002; Hughes and Carlsen, 2004; McKercher, 1998a; McKercher, 1998b; McKercher and Robbins, 1998). Furthermore, potential value differences and perspectives need to be considered in order to fully understand the relationships between these two parties.

Limited information was found in the literature that specifically addressed relationships between PAMs and CTOs with respect to their working encounters in nature based tourism, with most studies focussing on communication to explain their working arrangements (Hughes and Carlsen, 2004; Parker and Avant, 2000). To fully understand the factors influencing the working arrangements between PAMs and CTOs it is vital to move beyond our understanding of communication as the limiting factor, and instead to take up the notion of relationship to explore their position. There is currently a gap in the literature linking the relationship between
PAMs and CTOs to their communication (or lack thereof), even though communication is an essential constituent of relationships (Sirakaya and Uysal, 1997), as well as the use and exercise of power between them (Coles and Scherle, 2007; Hall, 2007).

Some authors suggest that the key priority for managing protected areas is conservation, followed by recreation (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; DITR, 2003). To effectively manage protected areas it is necessary to consider the political and legal system, internal organisational structures, and the broad social and political structure of the society (Worboys, et al., 2005). If managed appropriately, tourism can and should be considered as a legitimate ‘use’ of protected areas, and as a significant source of revenue (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; DITR, 2003; Eagles, et al., 2002; Worboys, et al., 2001).

Nature based tourism also requires resources to be managed sustainably to enable CTOs to develop a reliable and responsible product; the tourism industry needs to protect its assets (Clarke, 1997). Collaboration between PAMs and CTOs can assist in such protection. Collaborative management in protected areas between stakeholders is of increasing importance in order to successfully achieve government policy objectives and provide a sustainable tourism product (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Buckley, et al., 2001; DITR, 2003; Eagles, et al., 2002; Worboys, et al., 2001). An example of a policy document relevant to protected area tourism is the Nature Based Tourism Strategy for Western Australia by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)¹ and Tourism Western

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¹ The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) (Western Australia) was established on 1 July 2006, bringing together the Department of Environment (DoE) and the Department of
Australia, who state their combined visions and principles for a path forward to achieve sustainable tourism (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a). The strategy provides a structure for the implementation of its primary goal to set a policy framework for the management of tourism in protected areas in Western Australia. It is a framework that aims to ensure long-term and wide-ranging benefits from this industry, while highlighting the need for sustainability and cooperative approaches (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a).

It is important to recognise that this is not an ‘either/or’ scenario; that of either conservation or tourism. Implicitly, tourism in protected areas can have positive effects, such as providing a mechanism to generate income, raise public awareness of the area, provide education and information and provide a range of values (Putney, 2003). However, it also provides negative effects; for example, the degradation of resources, disturbance of wildlife, habitat destruction and potential loss of biodiversity. Recognising this is not as obvious as it might seem, when considering the positions and views PAMs and CTOs hold. For CTOs it is very important to sustain resources and limit impacts from their tours as their livelihood depends on maintaining the area without negative impacts and derive an income from these areas. In contrast, PAMs and the conservation agency frequently rely on the income generated through tourism to protected areas to subsidise work programs as well as managing for conservation (Buckley, 2000a).

Conservation and Land Management (CALM). DEC took over CALM’s management responsibilities for protected areas in the State. However, because this research started in 2003 with CALM being the conservation agency, CALM was known and recognised as the agency in charge, and as such the participants referred to the agency as CALM in their interviews and the documentation. For the purpose of accuracy I will refer throughout the thesis to DEC as the conservation agency.
Even though it is recognised that collaboration is of importance (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Buckley, et al., 2001; DITR, 2003; Eagles, et al., 2002; Worboys, et al., 2001), constraints on, and difficulties to successful collaboration in environmental management can be present in various forms. Six main types of constraints on collaboration of individuals within an organisation or across organisations were identified:

1. Legislation and mandates;
2. Resources;
3. Organisational perception;
4. Organisational guidance and training;
5. Personal commitment; and

Some of these categories are based on imposed requirements and/or restrictions from outside, within the organisation, across organisations, or on the personalities of the individuals involved (Margerum, 2001). These six types of constraints are broad groups only; other authors outline extensive lists of potential impediments to collaboration which fit into these groups and which are also applicable to tourism and protected area management (Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000).

Collaboration between PAMs and CTOs should be encouraged because of the complexity, uncertainty and potential for conflict in the tourism planning and setting stage (Reed, 1999). In Western Australia, partnerships between private tourism operators and public land management agencies, specifically the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) managing protected areas, are important (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; CALM and WATC, 1997). In Australia,
various government departments on a State and Federal level emphasise and encourage collaborative working arrangements between conservation agencies and the tourism industry (Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Buckley and Sommer, 2001; De Lacy et al., 2002; DITR, 2003; TAPAF, 2002; Tourism Western Australia, 2004a; TTF Australia, 2004; UNEP, 2005). Improving the working relationships between these parties (conservation and tourism) has the potential to contribute to the industry’s sustainable use of protected areas as well as reducing management costs through more efficient practices.

1.3 MY PERSONAL MOTIVATIONS TO CONDUCT THIS RESEARCH

It all started in Germany. After leaving school I became interested in working in the tourism industry and started an apprenticeship in a travel agency. After two years I graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Tourism Management and took on a position in the tourism industry. This allowed me to travel extensively to often remote and beautiful places. I greatly enjoyed visiting and exploring natural areas, for example Iceland, as part of a tour group. However, in doing so I became aware of the role tour operators/guides played with regards to the groups’ behaviour, but also of how the group was perceived by park managers in the field. Sometimes tour operators had a seemingly good relationship with park personnel, at other times they hardly communicated with each other or even saw each other. I considered myself part of ‘tourism’, being part of the tourism group, but also as being highly aware of the interconnectedness between us, the tour group, and the environment we were in at the time.
Taking a leap in time, in migrating to Australia I still had a great interest in tourism; however, I felt a sense of dissatisfaction when thinking about going back and working in the tourism industry as I knew it. I could relate to tourism but I also realised that there are potential impacts and conflicts arising from tourism. Coming to Australia I fell in love with our protected areas and since then I have had a strong desire to spend time in and explore different parks as often as possible. While thinking about taking up a job, most likely in tourism, I felt there was something missing on a professional basis for me personally. Being interested in environmental issues and with my love for nature, I made the decision to study environmental science. In my application for a placement in Murdoch University's Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science program, one of the questions was to demonstrate why I chose this particular degree. I wrote that, as a mature aged student, I enrolled in that degree to gain additional qualifications in another field of my interest and that it was my intention to understand both tourism and the environment, and to try to mesh the two in order to be able to achieve a satisfactory outcome for both.

Having completed my undergraduate studies in environmental science with a policy stream, I saw a great opportunity to work in both fields of my interest through this PhD project. Conducting research as part of this project provided me with the opportunity to work with PAMs, part of the conservation agency, as well as CTOs, part of the tourism industry. I had the opportunity to spend some time with the participants, especially travelling with a CTO in June 2004 through protected areas in the Kimberley and Midwest regions of Western Australia. This provided me with an insight which would otherwise have been difficult to obtain. I stressed that I did ‘not belong’ to either the tourism industry or the conservation agency, to
provide a platform for me to be considered by the respondents as ‘neutral’. Because I was privileged in having access to both groups while also having background knowledge in both fields of work, I recognised that it is all a matter of perspective, it is not an either/or question of “Do we have conservation or tourism?” It is a tightly woven mesh with people – individuals, at its core. They all bring their own views and values to their daily work, just as I did.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS THESIS

The focus of this research was on identifying and interpreting the positions of PAMs and CTOs, their expectations of each other, their ethical stance and values with respect to protected areas, and the values they assign to other people working in these areas. The underlying research question which was developed to guide and lead this study was: ‘What are the features influencing the relationships and collaborative efforts between protected area managers and commercial tour operators working in protected areas?’

The following research objectives address the above research question:

1. Analyse and understand the perceptions of PAMs and CTOs in Western Australia regarding their current working arrangements with respect to collaboration, expectations of each other and protected areas;
2. Determine their ethical stances and values as per objective 1;
3. Use the information from objective 1 to identify and map their interrelationships as a basis for understanding influences on working arrangements;
4. Place the different perspectives into a broader context of collaboration;
5. Determine the implications of the findings from objectives 1 – 4 in order to make recommendations how to improve their collaboration.

In order to answer the research question and achieve the stated objectives, interpretivism in qualitative research was used. Qualitative research is suited to matters that require an empathic understanding of societal phenomena, a recognition of the historical dimension of human behaviour and the subjective aspects of the human experience (Babbie, 1990; Creswell, 1994; Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992; Neuman, 2000). The objectives were addressed by examining PAMs’ and CTOs’ views as well as interpreting and critically analysing their positions. The significance of this research is founded in the need to better understand PAMs and CTOs working in protected areas and why they act the way they do to improve their working relationships.

In this thesis I used different theoretical perspectives to explore the proposition that PAMs’ and CTOs’ values, their use of power, the public policy context, and differing expectations, perceptions and perspectives influence their working arrangements. Each theoretical perspective was used in their respective chapters to analyse the data and build a rich picture of the respondents’ views and gain an understanding of how these influence collaboration, and affect and limit their working relationships. Lastly, the limitations on collaboration extend beyond the problem of communication; rather they are a product of these differing expectations and related factors.
1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis has nine chapters divided into the introductory chapter, method and results chapters, analytical chapters, and conclusion.

Chapter 2 explains the methodological framework adopted including the paradigm and underlying research philosophy in discussing the concept of crystallisation, and highlights that a researcher's worldview has to be considered as it influences his/her analysis and interpretation. This chapter also addresses the research design and method, followed by the data collection, primarily through in-depth interviews with PAMs and CTOs, and my role as an active participant.

Chapter 3 introduces the reader to the study regions in Australia, the Kimberley, the Midwest, and the South West, the participants (PAMs and CTOs), and the tours offered by the participating CTOs. This chapter sets the scene for placing the research into context.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the results from the interviews. Chapter 4, Managers' views, covers their expectations of what is a ‘good’ CTO, followed by their perceptions of CTOs whilst reviewing their thoughts on current barriers to working together. The next section focuses on the sociograms drawn by the participants to inform, and provide additional depth and another level of understanding to, the interviews, followed by the values they assign to protected areas and the people working in them. The same chapter structure is used in Chapter 5, Operators' views.
**Chapter 6** is the first of three chapters that discusses and analyses the results of the interviews conducted with PAMs and CTOs. This chapter begins with an overview of ethical considerations in tourism to protected areas and the role of values. Values will be discussed from the public policy domain and organisational perspective with their associated goals and objectives, but also in relation to the importance of individuals’ values. Individuals’ values are explored as playing a key role in the relationship between PAMs and CTOs and in the level of collaboration.

**Chapter 7** is a continuation of the discussion and analysis and addresses the results with respect to organisational cultural groupings and power. This research identified cultural groupings within PAMs and CTOs which influence, through the use of power, their level of collaboration. The sociograms were used to explain how the participants placed themselves in relation to others in protected areas. In addition to the identified barriers, power as used and exhibited by groups amongst the respondents strongly impacts on their working relationships.

The last of the discussion and analysis chapters, **Chapter 8**, uses discourse analysis to show the misunderstandings that can occur between PAMs and CTOs and suggests why these occur.

**Chapter 9** draws conclusions from the discussions of the different aspects: values, (individual and public policy), culture, power, perceptions, expectations and perspectives contained in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, and draws linkages of the implication to collaboration for the purpose of recommending action research to address the key issues raised in each of the chapters.
CHAPTER 2
ACQUIRING THE INFORMATION:
THE RESEARCH APPROACH

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research in the social sciences is a social act and cannot be viewed as an objective process (Mulkay, 1991). The researcher is part of the process through his/her observation of, interaction and participation with the participants. This chapter will describe the research approach used in this study. In order to address the stated research question and objectives (Chapter 1) and allowing for an in-depth study of the participants perceptions, expectations, views and values with its associated interpretation, the most suitable research method is qualitative research:

Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. ... Qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand.

(Denzin and Lincoln, 2000a:3)

This definition highlights an important aspect relevant to this research, that of using interpretive approaches for seeking a better understanding of the subjects’ views and meanings on the issue to be studied. An important aspect of a qualitative research approach is that it applies to matters that need understanding, specifically an empathic understanding of societal phenomena and the recognition of the historical dimension of human behaviour and the subjective
aspects of the human experience (Babbie, 1999; Creswell, 1994; Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992; Neuman, 2000). This method of ‘interpretivism’ is rooted in an empathetic understanding, or *Verstehen*, and can be traced to German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) (Neuman, 2000).

In the remainder of this chapter, the prevailing paradigm for this research and the research design will be discussed and the reason for its choice explained. The analytical approaches are described, ethical requirements are addressed, and the credibility and crystallisation approach used discussed. Figure 2.1 provides a schematic outline of the research design.

**Figure 2.1: Schematic outline of the research design**

- **Literature review**
  - Previous research
  - Protected area management

- **Participant observation**
  - Participant observation in protected areas
  - Active participation as part of tours

- **In-depth interviews**
  - With PAMs and tour operators
  - Open-ended questions inc. probing
  - Open-ended questions with fixed-choice prompt card
  - Open-ended question combined with a task
  - Open-ended question with self ranking

- **Document analysis**
  - Analysis of public policies

Aim to determine, analyse and understand the perceptions, influences, perspectives, expectations and interrelationships between PAMs and CTOs with respect to their working relationships (Research objectives)
2.2 LEADING PARADIGM

Whatever we do, whatever we assume, all our actions are based on our worldview and underlying set of values and beliefs (Rokeach, 1973). Everyone has an instilled set of beliefs and assumptions which are the foundation of the way we think, act and function. Relating one’s worldview and beliefs to research is the concept of paradigm. A paradigm can be defined as an interpretive framework, a ‘basic set of beliefs that guides action’ (Guba, 1990:17). Research is governed by paradigms and often reflects the researcher’s worldview. In conducting research, one’s underlying worldview, beliefs and assumptions need to be taken into account as they will influence the research; therefore being aware of one’s own paradigm and the knowledge of alternative paradigms helps to place the research into context.

Research may be multi-paradigmatic while at the same time there are no clear and distinct boundaries between paradigms. Difficulties can arise in clearly identifying the prevailing paradigm, as well as possible overlaps of paradigms and newly recognised ones. The following paradigms are recognised most commonly: positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, interpretivism/constructivism, and the recently elaborated (since the late 1990s) participatory paradigm (Creswell, 1998; Heron and Reason, 1997; Lincoln and Guba, 2000). In Table 2.1 the similarities and differences of these paradigms are compared.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Positivism</th>
<th>Postpositivism</th>
<th>Critical Theory</th>
<th>Interpretivism/Constructivism</th>
<th>Participatory Inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong> (what is the form and nature of reality?)</td>
<td>Naïve realism - ‘real’ reality being rooted in unchanging, universal truth</td>
<td>Critical realism - ‘real’ imperfect reality with the possibility to be questioned</td>
<td>Virtual reality formed by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values developed over time</td>
<td>Relativism – local and specific constructed realities</td>
<td>Participative reality – subjective – objective reality, co-created by mind and given cosmos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong> (what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?)</td>
<td>Two-fold (dualist)/ Findings are fundamentally distinct from ideas, values, or theories; objectivist; findings are true</td>
<td>Modified two-fold (dualist)/ objectivist; findings are probably true but may be influenced by subjectivity</td>
<td>Transactional/subjectivist; value-mediated findings; findings are influenced by subjectivity</td>
<td>Transactional/subjectivist; constructed findings</td>
<td>Critical subjectivity; co-constructed findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong> (how do we know the world or gain knowledge of it?)</td>
<td>Experimental/ manipulative Verification/falsification of hypotheses; mainly quantitative methods</td>
<td>Modified experimental/ manipulative; may include qualitative methods</td>
<td>Dialogic (relating to)/ dialectic; findings determined through abstraction and interpretation</td>
<td>Hermeneutic/ dialectic; findings determined through interpretation</td>
<td>Participation/ collaborative action inquiry Use of language shared in experiential context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inquirer posture (voice)</strong></td>
<td>‘Disinterested scientist’ as informer of decision makers</td>
<td>‘Disinterested scientist’ as informer of decision makers</td>
<td>‘Transformative intellectual’ as advocate and activist</td>
<td>‘Passionate participant’ as facilitator of multivoice reconstruction</td>
<td>Two voices, primary voice awareness in self-reflective action; secondary voices in illuminating form (e.g., narrative, song and other means of presentations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (2000), Heron and Reason (1997), and Neuman (2000)
The key differences in the paradigms in Table 2.1 are their field of application and their ‘use’. Positivism and postpositivism are traditionally understood as the leading paradigms in the sciences with a long history within the philosophy of science (Neuman, 2000). A characteristic of research within these paradigms is its perceived objectivity based on quantitative data. Critical theory is frequently associated with conflict theory or feminist analysis and addresses empowerment aiming for social transformation to greater justice and equity (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Using interpretivism/constructivism the researcher tries to gain a deeper understanding of the subjects; this paradigm is related to the theory of meaning. The participatory paradigm advocates active participation of the researcher, here the researcher is fully immersed, with the subjects, as part of the research (Heron and Reason, 1997).

This study is situated within the interpretivism/constructivism paradigm with the aim of developing an understanding, reconstruction and presentation of the ‘social world’ which was studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000c). Interpretivism/constructivism has two different aspects of Verstehen (understanding): (1) as a complex process in which individuals interpret their own actions in relation to the actions of other people with whom they interact; here, the individual is doing the interpretation; and (2) as a process of the social sciences. In interpretivism/constructivism the researcher seeks to gain understanding of the acts and processes observed (Schwandt, 2000). To be able to analyse the data it is important to grasp the meaning of what was said. This is the process of Verstehen, which goes beyond merely analysing what was said at face value.
The process of using interpretivism/constructivism has subjective aspects, with the researcher’s worldview directing and becoming to a certain degree part of the analysis, which characterises it as hermeneutic (Greene, 2000; Schwandt, 2000; Spiggle, 1994). Furthermore, working within this paradigm means working with values, not only the researcher’s values which may influence the analysis, but also the participants’ values which underlie what they say and mean. Values play a fundamental role in working with individuals and with the data: they ‘are intertwined with knowing, as knowing is intertwined with being and acting’ (Greene, 2000:986). This means that how data were viewed is to a certain degree influenced by the researcher’s values and as such it is important to recognise that interpretivism/constructivism takes into account these values.

For this research I used both aspects of Verstehen, in that the researcher aims to understand, and assigns meaning to, the observed (1), and to explain processes between the participants (2). It is important to stress that the purpose of using qualitative research methods for this study was not to generalise the results to all protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs), but rather to gain in-depth understanding of the respondents in Western Australia. I expect however, that the results are generalisable to the relationships between PAMs and CTOs in a number of countries throughout the world.

2.3 CRYSTALLISATION

The concept of crystallisation as verification of one’s research was proposed by Richardson in the early 1990s and is based on a postmodern perspective in which she and others considered the traditional notion of ‘validity’ as a rigid, fixed, two-
dimensional object (Janesick, 2000; Richardson, 1994). Richardson (1994) uses a crystal as a metaphorical description to demonstrate how the notion of ‘validity’ can be addressed in qualitative research. Research based on the postpositivism paradigm traditionally relied on triangulation which typically uses multiple methods as one form of validation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000b). However, according to Richardson (1994) these multiple methods are based on the assumptions that there is a fixed point of reference, the point of intersection that can be triangulated.

In accordance with the different sides and angles of a crystal the concept of crystallisation assumes that there can be no single, or triangulated, truth. Instead there are many more sides or perspectives, from which to approach the world than the three being considered in triangulation. Crystallisation as defined by Richardson:

‘[c]ombines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see depends upon our angle of repose. ... Crystallization, without losing structure, deconstructs the traditional idea of “validity” (we feel how there is no single truth, we see how texts validate themselves), and crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. Ingeniously, we know there is always more to know.’

(Richardson, 2000:934)

The concept of crystallisation recognises the importance of our role as researchers having a wealth of experiences, analytical approaches and differences in worldviews, which will be taken up in the analysis and therefore our research.
Translating this back to the crystal metaphor means that what we see, which colours and shapes, depends entirely on how we view it, how we turn the crystal, how much light enters the crystal, how many planes the crystal has and so forth. This means that a researcher has multidimensionalities, angles and approaches to analyse the collected data. The researcher is aware of the wealth of different facets of any given approach to the social world, while the research gradually develops and clarifies important common themes that emerge from the data (Janesick, 2000).

The analysis of this research drew on the notion of crystallisation. After analysing the results, while being aware of my potential subjectivity as the researcher, three different theoretical positions surfaced, based on intersections of areas of focused reading and emerging results: the role values play as part of PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships (Chapter 6); the importance of cultural groupings and power and their influence on collaboration (Chapter 7); and the respondents’ expectations, perceptions and understanding (Chapter 8). These three theoretical positions can be compared to three different sides of a crystal, helping us to get a sense of the crystal as a whole. They collectively interpret the results to provide a composite picture, as all the sides of a crystal do form a complete picture of the crystal.

2.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Research can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (see Table 2.2). Studies may have multiple purposes but at the meta level there is one prevailing purpose (Neuman, 2000).
Table 2.2: Main characteristics of research purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploratory</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Explanatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Become familiar with the facts, settings, concerns</td>
<td>- Provide a detailed, highly accurate picture</td>
<td>- Test a theory’s predictions or principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Create a general mental picture of conditions</td>
<td>- Locate new data that contradict past data</td>
<td>- Extend a theory to new issues or topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Generate new ideas, conjectures, or hypotheses</td>
<td>- Document a causal process or mechanism</td>
<td>- Support or refute an explanation or prediction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Focus on ‘what’ questions</td>
<td>- Focus on ‘how’ and ‘who’ questions</td>
<td>- Focus on ‘why’ questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Neuman (2000), Creswell (1994) and Babbie (1999)

In order to answer the research question and derived objectives outlined in Chapter 1 within a qualitative framework, this research has adopted an exploratory research design. An exploratory design as the overarching dimension was selected because the research project advanced into an area not previously studied. An exploratory approach is used in order to become familiar with the basic facts, settings, and concerns of those being studied (Neuman, 2000). In exploratory research the context is very important as it addresses ‘what’ questions as part of the research, whereas a descriptive design focuses on the ‘how’ and ‘who’ questions, and an explanatory design focuses on ‘why’ questions. The research question guiding this study, as presented in Chapter 1, was ‘what are the features influencing PAMs’ and CTOs’ working relationships in protected areas?’ It is a question requiring an explanation of the current arrangements and relationships between PAMs and CTOs.

The underlying paradigm and the purpose of a research project need to be considered together, as they are directly linked. For example, a study based on the
positivist paradigm aims to answer questions in an explanatory way. This type of research traditionally tests hypotheses whilst focussing on ‘why’ questions. In contrast, in conducting research within the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm the primary aim is on understanding, and gaining familiarity with, the social world and facts, therefore interpretivism/constructivism is exploratory in nature. Research with an exploratory purpose asks ‘what’ questions with the aim being to gain new insight and develop a representation of the social world (Table 2.2). This distinction is important because the primary purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of, and insight into, the features (‘what’ are the features) influencing PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships in protected areas. Though this research is firmly based within an exploratory research design, descriptive components will be included to enrich the findings and provide specific details of the locales and participants (Chapter 3).

To acquire a rich set of results in qualitative research, a combination of various complementary methods is favoured (Babbie, 1999; Creswell, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000a; Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992; Neuman, 2000; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Using several methods as part of one research project provides a balance between the different components which would otherwise be difficult to achieve. In order to fully address each research objective and the overarching research question, in-depth face-to-face interviews were considered to be the most appropriate method of exploring the underlying issues and gaining a deep understanding of them. In-depth interviews allowed me to obtain nuances in the participants’ answers.
Ethnography and participant observation were the other methods used. Both are interpretive approaches and were applied to explore the nature of particular social phenomena, such as cultural groupings and values within the organisation and groups, and to investigate a small number of cases in detail (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). Ethnography generally refers to an holistic understanding and description of cultures or cultural groupings (Babbie, 2001; Spradley, 1979). The goal of ethnography is to understand why people (the subjects) act the way they do; it means learning from people, rather than studying people. As an ethnographer I used participant observation as a technique for both observing and listening to people in natural settings, which was possible as I became part of a tour group travelling through the Kimberley and the Midwest. The individuals became informants while I, the researcher, focused on identifying what was meaningful and relevant to the individuals with respect to their working relationship with each other (Spradley, 1979; Spradley, 1980).

Selection of study areas

In Western Australia, protected areas throughout the State are considered tourism assets and are the focus for nature based tourism activities (Tourism Western Australia, 2006a; Worboys, et al., 2005). In Western Australia, both, PAMs and CTOs work in protected areas and as such were the focus of this research. The study areas were all based in Western Australia. The decision to conduct the research in this State was dependent on financial and logistical constraints. A set of criteria for selecting the study areas was developed; the criteria and the reasoning behind them are outlined in Table 2.3 below.
Table 2.3: Selection criteria for study areas (not ranked)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Together the study areas must:</th>
<th>Collectively</th>
<th>Each study area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have interactions/relationships between PAMs and the tourism industry</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Have diverse working relationships ranging from remote communities/towns, to intermediate, to more densely settled regions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have a range of management levels within PAM’s organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>At least one study area must have a primary role in the policy development in tourism and recreation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>At least one study area must have indigenous involvement</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>At least one study area must be internationally recognised and used by the tourism industry</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To capture the diverse working relationships (criterion 2), as well as the diversity within the industry, three of the Department of Environment and Conservation’s (DEC) administrative regions were selected to conduct this study. These were the Kimberley due to its remoteness, the Midwest as semi-remote and with Shark Bay ascribed in the World Heritage list (criterion 6), and the South West region of Western Australia as a densely settled popular tourism destination (see Chapter 3 for detailed study area descriptions). Head office staff in Perth were also included as part of the study.

**Selection of participants**

In order to identify potential participants, I used purposive sampling, occasionally referred to as judgement sampling. This method is very useful for in-depth
investigation in which the aim is to gain a deeper understanding of selected groups (Babbie, 2001; Neuman, 2000; Patton, 1990). Purposive sampling was the most suitable approach because it involves the subjective selection of the sampling units (respondents) (Creswell, 1998; Frankfort-Nachtman and Nachtman, 1992) based on their work in the identified study areas, and in accordance with the criteria presented in Table 2.3. The aim of the sampling process was to select information-rich respondents with extensive experience in managing, or working in, protected areas.

PAMs and CTOs in the three study areas and head office were identified and selected as potential respondents through discussions with various representatives from DEC’s Parks and Visitor Services Division. The Parks and Visitor Services Output focuses on the management associated with recreational, educational and interpretative aspects and visitor services on DEC managed land. The aim is to encourage, enrich and facilitate visitor experiences and raise awareness of, and support for, protected areas, nature based tourism and recreation services and policies (CALM, 2005a). Suggestions with respect to the selection of potential participants were sought and taken up from senior staff who knew all PAMs within each study area. Respondents ranging from field staff, such as rangers and gatekeepers, to district managers, regional managers and policy staff in head office were selected in order to gain a range of perspectives and insights based on their different experiences. All selected participants were involved in managing or working in protected areas.

To ensure a diversity of CTOs was included in the study, selection criteria were developed to assist their identification as potential participants (Table 2.4). The
underlying justification was to select diverse CTOs from different base locations, based on operational size, target groups and the activities they offer to develop a rich understanding of the relationship between PAMs and CTOs. For example, a CTO living in and servicing the local national park and running specialised and small tours might have different working arrangements from a CTO who caters for larger groups and with a base in another State. Furthermore, respondents from Tourism WA working in head office and in one of the regions were selected to provide additional input.

Table 2.4: Selection criteria for CTOs (not ranked)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>CTOs must:</th>
<th>Collectively</th>
<th>Each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Be licensed to operate within DEC lands</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Operate their business in the study areas identified using the criteria in Table 2.3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Differ in commercial extent of their operations (local; state wide; Australia wide)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Differ in size (small, medium, large)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Offer a range of activities, from no activities to specialised tours</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Have a range of different client groups (e.g. different age groups)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Have at least one operation owned and operated by indigenous people</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 DATA COLLECTION

The empirical research was conducted using in-depth interviews and participant observation. Using this combination of methods allowed for full representativeness
of the participants’ perspectives, values, and expectations. Furthermore, the combined data sources improved the robustness of the findings. The majority of the fieldwork was conducted throughout 2004.

Potential participants were initially contacted by e-mail. After not having the expected recruitment success, approximately one half agreed to participate, and a formal letter of invitation was mailed (Appendix 3). The letter of invitation was followed up with a telephone call within one week of posting the letter, in which I introduced myself, briefly explained the study and invited them again to participate. Most contacts resulted in agreements and a convenient date and interview time was arranged. One day prior to the scheduled meeting I confirmed the date and time either by telephone or e-mail. After the interview a letter of thanks for the interviewee’s willingness to participate was sent out.

**Interviews**

Most data collected during this research were through personal interviews with PAMs and CTOs in the identified regions. A total of fifty-three respondents, twenty-nine PAMs and twenty-four CTOs, agreed to participate in this study (Table 2.5). The aim was to talk to similar numbers of PAMs and CTOs to allow for comparisons. The attrition arose through cancellations of scheduled interviews due to unforeseen circumstances on short notice.

The interviews occurred mostly at the participants’ workplaces; in the case of PAMs this was either in their office or out in the field, and with CTOs either on their tours where appropriate or in their offices or home. These arrangements helped to
put participants at ease as the interviews were conducted in familiar surrounds and allowed them to freely express their views in a conversational manner. It was important for me to establish trust and rapport at the beginning of each interview as this enabled me to capture the nuances and meanings of the participants’ response from their point of view.

Table 2.5 Total number of respondents per region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study areas</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>PAMs</th>
<th>CTOs and officers from Tourism WA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7 CTOs</td>
<td>1 Tourism WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7 CTOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7 CTOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 Tourism WA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the participants’ consent the interviews were tape recorded in order to obtain a verbatim record and to allow me to interact and probe during the meeting. Four interviews were not taped due to their being arranged spontaneously while in the field because of chance encounters. In addition to the tape recordings, written notes of the discussion and of reflective impressions were taken during all interviews. Tapes were transcribed verbatim soon after being completed.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews based on open-ended questions were used. The interview questions were derived from the research literature, the research question and objectives, and were structured according to a funnelling process to move from the general to the particular (Neuman, 2000). The question
sequence was also selected to allow a natural flow of issues to be covered (Appendix 1). Silence as a ‘prompt’ was used to allow the respondents to elaborate, and probing was used as a technique to encourage them to clarify and explain the reasoning and philosophy behind an answer (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992).

Questions one to four and question six were open-ended questions (Appendix 1). Question one asked the participants about their work in protected areas and how they would describe their roles. Question two aimed to determine the values PAMs and CTOs assign to protected areas through their identification of what they considered to be the main purpose of protected areas. The aim of question three was to obtain an understanding of what the participants expected from a ‘good’ PAM/CTO. Question four aimed to collect information on what they perceived as current barriers to working together, and question six was designed for participants to present a memorable experience between themselves and the other party with whom they worked.

For question five (Appendix 1) the respondents were shown a fixed-choice prompt card (Appendix 2) and asked to select the most fitting characteristics describing how they perceive the PAMs and CTOs with whom they currently work. The prompt card displayed fifty-two words or phrases ranging from funny, neutral, and positive characteristics such as ‘collaborative’, ‘helpful’, ‘friendly’, to negative characteristics for example ‘stubborn’, ‘bush basher’2 and ‘pessimistic’.

---

2 Australian colloquial term for a person who is disrespectful of the environment, often associated with driving through the Australian bush by 4 wheel-drive or cross-country vehicle on unmarked tracks and trails.
Question seven asked the participants to complete a task, this being to draw a picture or diagram (sociogram) in which they indicate their position and the positions of all other stakeholders involved in/managing protected areas (Appendix 1). The objective behind this task was to identify the placement of the participants, specifically PAMs and CTOs, relative to others in protected areas (Scott, 2000). The technique employed was that of developing cognitive maps of a participant’s mental representation of places. As with cognitive mapping, the respondents were provided with a blank sheet of paper and asked to draw their picture or diagram (Sommer and Sommer, 2002). Furthermore, they were also asked to draw the connections (interactions), one-way, two-way or no interactions at all, between all stakeholders to illustrate their working relationships. Several participants experienced difficulties in drawing the sociogram. To make it easier the task was slightly amended, the participants listed all the stakeholders they could think of and I wrote all the stakeholders they identified on individual Post-it\(^3\) notes. PAMs and CTOs then arranged each note according to how they saw it fit onto a blank page. In using this approach the participants created their sociogram.

Question eight was open-ended with a self-ranking component (Appendix 1). Respondents were asked to identify the five most important attributes for people (e.g. PAMs, CTOs, researchers, volunteers) working in protected areas, ranked from one being the most important to five being the least important. The aim in asking this question was to identify the respondents’ personal values with respect to someone working in protected areas. Using this form of ranking or scaling helps to

\(^3\) Brand name for a slip of notepaper that has an adhesive that allows it to stick to a surface and be removed without damaging the surface.
conceptualise the ideological dimensions that underpin participants’ positions on the topic in question (Neuman, 2000).

In this semi-structured interview process, all respondents had considerable liberty in expressing their views, definitions and perceptions of a given situation, and room to elaborate. This type of conversation permits the researcher to obtain details of personal perceptions, reactions, and the like (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). Additionally, this interview technique allowed me to seek clarification and ask for supplementary information when needed. The same procedure and same set of questions and question sequence was used for each interview, for PAMs and CTOs alike. Using this approach helped to ensure consistency of results between the interviews and allowed for comparative analysis. Some of the questions were modified and adjusted after the first few interviews as a result of response difficulties experienced by the respondents. The length of the interviews ranged from 45 to 150 minutes.

The aim in using in-depth interviews was to obtain and explore rich information of the participant’s position and worldview with respect to each other and protected areas in the three study areas and head office. The focus was on the quality rather than quantity of the data obtained, in order to gain insights and develop the respective understanding of PAMs and CTOs and their relationship between each other. Interviews were conducted until the same themes emerged and no new information was obtained. Having successfully obtained a full range of perspectives with recurring themes (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984) through the interviews, and with the data records showing only limited new information, the conclusion was made that the data saturation point was reached
and therefore the interview process ended. The data saturation point is the stage at which the breadth of information was captured in the obtained results and no new information or diversity of data emerges and therefore repetitive answers were obtained fitting into the categories already devised (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Richards, 2005; Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

**Becoming an active participant**

After I carried out the first few interviews it became apparent to me that to really ‘know’, ‘experience’ and observe how PAMs and CTOs communicate and collaborate with each other I had to become part of the setting, and be present during their encounters in the field. Here, becoming part of the setting meant rather than becoming one of the players (PAMs or CTOs), it involved going on nature based tours with a CTO to directly observe PAMs’ and CTOs’ interactions. A CTO offered the tours as in-kind support for the project. Being able to participate in several tours through the Kimberley region, three different tours in total, was ideal for active participation in the setting (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1981; Creswell, 1998; Schwandt, 2000). According to Cresswell (1998) and Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), researchers can ‘participate’ along a continuum, from being a complete outsider to becoming a complete insider. Care needs to be taken to not associate my ‘participation’ as part of PAMs or CTOs along this continuum, as I neither was nor worked as a PAM or CTO, but rather a tourist on a guided tour.

The position of my participation according to the continuum during these tours was somewhere in the middle from a tourist’s perspective. I was not a complete insider because the CTOs of my tours and most of the PAMs I met during the tours knew
of my role as a researcher, but also not a complete outsider as I participated as part of the tour groups and was able to observe the interaction between the CTO and protected area manager, often without me being noticed as part of the larger group. My position was not one of participation in a classic sense, as that would have meant being in that occupation. Rather, it was a combination of being an active participant in nature based tourism activities whilst observing the encounters between PAMs and CTOs.

The method of participant observation is a classic tradition and has been recognised as a foundation in qualitative research methods (Angrosino and Mays de Perez, 2000). The use of participant observation as part of the fieldwork component proved to be a valuable addition to data collection. It is recognised that participant observation is rarely used as the sole technique to collect data, but rather in conjunction with other techniques, such as interviews and documentation (Angrosino and Mays de Perez, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000a; Janesick, 2000). The primary aim of the participant observation was to become familiar with the day-to-day interaction between PAMs and CTOs in a protected area. These observations helped contextualise comments and responses given as part of the interviews. Furthermore, it supported the interviews but also clarified casual comments made by some of the respondents.

Ethics considerations

Before commencement of the fieldwork component of this study, an application for Human Research Ethics Approval was submitted to Murdoch University’s Human Research Ethics Committee. Part of the application, the interview questions, a list
of potential participants and the drafted letter of consent were included. I ensured that strict codes of confidentiality, anonymity, right of withdrawal, and the correct storage of collected data were adhered to.

2.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis ‘[i]s the interplay between researchers and data. It is both science and art’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:13). By describing analysis as science, the authors are referring to the rigour with which an analysis needs to be executed, whereas the analytical process should be creative in nature, similar to art. In qualitative research one main tool for analysing data is coding, which is both a science and an art.

Data analysis for this research occurred concurrently during and after the data collection was completed. However, during the process of data collection some analysis occurred while reviewing the interview responses, and there was also ongoing analysis of emergent themes and summarising the interview notes. The process of inductive content analysis was used to analyse the collected data (Neuman, 2000; Patton, 1990; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). In inductive content analysis the process of analysis starts with detailed observations, general ideas of the issue to be studied and some unrefined concepts. Throughout the analysis the concepts start to become clear which allows refining and conceptualisation. This is the stage at which connections and relationships of the different concepts emerge, which leads to the development of theory based on the analysis (Janesick, 2000; Neuman, 2000; Patton, 1990). The responses to the interviews were analysed line by line, question by question, transcript by transcript, through inductive content
analysis, so that the codes could be generated. Here, the fundamental data block for analysis was a word, a phrase or a sentence from the respondents. After transcribing the interviews, the transcripts were exported into QSR Nvivo software, a program specifically designed to help in the analysis and narrative reporting of qualitative research (Creswell, 1998).

Coding was used to label, separate, compile and organise the information from the interview transcripts. To assist analysis, I relied on pattern coding across interviews and across groups to fully describe and illustrate emergent leitmotifs or patterns (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The following example illustrates this process, during coding of the responses to Question three (Appendix 1), which asked the respondents to describe what for them are characteristics of a ‘good’ PAM/CTO. Key words and phrases (e.g. ‘communication’ and ‘friendly’) were selected and grouped together. These key words and phrases formed patterns, which were grouped into discernible themes or relationships, and into codes (e.g. personal attributes). The codes were used to identify emergent themes, configurations, or explanations, and were grouped like responses into more meaningful categories (e.g. interpersonal skills), based on the example, with five different categories describing ‘good’ PAMs/CTOs.

To ease, but also enhance understanding whilst maintaining the full richness of the data, it is important to group concepts (themes) into categories as this process decreases the number of units, creating an index tree. Through the creation of the index tree a hierarchy started to build ranging from main categories to subcategories, and from lesser to greater complexity (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The codes, which were combined into categories, sometimes changed as analysis
progressed to use more descriptive categories. Each new code was compared and contrasted with preceding ones and either assigned to an already existing category or kept as a stand-alone code until a new category was formed. During coding and categorising, the naming of the categories occurred simultaneously. The selected names were based on the concepts already discovered in the transcripts, or descriptive names based on their properties. As analysis proceeded the first transcripts were re-coded as new codes and categories emerged which were not evident at the earlier stages of analysis.

Interview extracts, in most instances direct quotations, are the data and were used extensively in the presentation of this thesis. Quotes from the interviews are used to help describe emergent themes which were the most widely held views to illustrate what most PAMs and CTOs thought (Richards, 2005). Additionally, I created categories which were based on a few responses only to illustrate differences between PAMs and CTOs or amongst PAMs or CTOs where necessary. This form of analysis was appropriate, given the exploratory nature of this research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The quotations are presented in unedited form except for minor grammatical amendments for clarity. When a single quote is used for illustrative purposes based on a single respondent it is clarified in the text.
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Australia’s terrestrial and marine natural areas can be influential in visitors’ decisions when choosing Australia as a holiday destination. Research conducted by the Department of Industry Tourism and Resources determined that 90 percent of Australians and 62 percent of international visitors are interested in and have participated in, nature based tourism (DITR, 2005). This form of tourism, with its associated activities, is growing rapidly and relies primarily on protected areas (Newsome, et al., 2002). Many of the activities take place in national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, marine parks, and world heritage areas. In Australia, including Western Australia, protected areas throughout the State are considered tourism assets (Tourism Western Australia, 2006a; Worboys, et al., 2005).

3.2 PROTECTED AREAS

Protected areas are recognised to be of importance for a myriad of both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons; for example, the protection of biodiversity or recreational activities such as nature based tourism. In recognising the importance of protected areas the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) was established under the auspice of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Its mission is to promote and help establish protected areas (WCPA, 2003). In 1994 the IUCN developed
guidelines for protected area classifications applicable to protected areas worldwide. Currently there are six IUCN protected area categories (Table 3.1) (IUCN, 2006). The classification category for each protected area depends on the management purpose for that area.

Table 3.1: IUCN categories for protected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IUCN Categories</th>
<th>Category Title</th>
<th>Management Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ia</td>
<td>Strict nature reserve</td>
<td>Mainly for science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ib</td>
<td>Wilderness area</td>
<td>Mainly for wilderness protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>National Park</td>
<td>Mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Natural monument</td>
<td>Mainly for conservation of specific natural features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Habitat/species management area</td>
<td>Mainly for conservation through management intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Protected landscape/seascape</td>
<td>Mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Managed resource protected area</td>
<td>Mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Protected areas in Western Australia

Under the Australian Constitution, the declaration of and management responsibility for protected areas rests predominantly with each of the six States and two Territories, and therefore the management responsibilities are placed with the respective state government agencies (Bates, 2002). Western Australia is Australia’s largest state with a land area of 2.5 million square kilometres, comprising 33% of Australia’s total land area, of which 6.8% is managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), previously the Department of
Conservation and Land Management (CALM) (CALM, 2006). In addition to the terrestrial areas, DEC’s management responsibility extends to 12.2% of the State’s marine waters. At 30 June 2005 a total of 96 national parks and nine marine parks were under the management of CALM (CALM, 2006). DEC manages these lands and waters on behalf of the Conservation Commission and Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, statutory bodies in whom these areas are vested (CALM, 2005a; DITR, 2006).

DEC is in the portfolio of the Minister for the Environment and is headed by a Director General to whom two Deputy Director Generals and Directors responsible for different divisions report (DEC, 2006). For the purpose of this research the focus was on the Parks and Visitor Services (PVS) Division in charge of the Park Policy and Services Branch, Visitor and Regional Services Branch and Regional Parks Branch, with input and support being given by staff members from the Regional Services in the Kimberley, Midwest, and South West regions. The Park Policy and Services Branch is responsible for the development of policy and strategies for recreation and tourism and other commercial activities such as commercial tour operators’ licences and permits. This Branch also coordinates visitor research and maintains databases for the PVS Division. The Visitor and Regional Services Branch is responsible for the preparation of management plans for lands managed by the Department, recreation planning in the regions, as well as interpretation programs. It is also responsible for the coordination of community involvement and indigenous heritage programs that are part of their protected area management work (CALM, 2005a; DEC, 2006).
National parks in Western Australia correspond to IUCN Category II, a category with a dual purpose: (a) the conservation of biodiversity, and (b) public enjoyment and recreation. This duality of purpose contains a potential conflict between conservation and recreation. Furthermore, it underpins the way in which the conservation agency in charge of these areas fulfils its management obligations, namely to provide for both conservation and recreation. Conservation parks, another form of protected areas in Western Australia, correspond to IUCN Categories II and III. Conservation parks are defined as land on which some activities, such as mining, may result in possible negative impacts. These parks have the same purpose as national parks but are not considered to have the same level of significance (Bates, 2002; Pouliquen-Young, 1997). Nature based tourism activities in Western Australia primarily take place in national parks.

Marine parks correspond to IUCN category V and VI, although these categories were not specifically designed to be used for marine parks (IUCN, 2006). There is some confusion on the IUCN categories into which marine parks fit, because Australia’s marine parks are divided into zones according to different activities within each zone (Bishop et al., 2004). They have provisions for recreation but also for sustainable use, such as those governing commercial fishing rights.

Marine parks in Western Australia have four management zone options:

1. Sanctuary zone (affords the highest level of protection for environmental values but allows passive recreational use consistent with this level of protection, for example snorkelling)
2. Recreation zone (allows for recreational use but no commercial fishing)
3. General use zone (allows for recreational and commercial use, for example commercial fishing)
4. Special purpose zone created by DEC (requires a stated purpose and is used if other zones are not suitable) (DEC, 2007c).

Additionally, DEC can create marine nature reserves specifically for the purpose of conservation and scientific research, where low-impact tourism may be permitted (DEC, 2007c).

Western Australia has adopted the IUCN’s internationally accepted definition of protected areas:

An area of land/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means (CALM, 2006).

This definition includes two key aspects; firstly, the protection of biodiversity and natural and cultural resources, and secondly, management that is integral to the concept of protected areas.

To manage commercial activities, including tourism, in protected areas, licences to operate on these lands and waters are issued in accordance with the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 WA (section 97a and 101) and the approval of the Minister for the Environment (Government of Western Australia, 1984). The licensing system is used by DEC to manage and monitor commercial tour operations on protected areas to ensure that they are sustainable, and to contribute financially to the management of the resource (CALM, 2004b). At present, DEC uses a two-class licence system based on two different types of licences to conduct commercial operations: ‘T’ class licences and ‘E’ class licences. ‘T’ class licences are issued for general use to CTOs for one year. ‘T’ class
licences must be renewed annually, and are not transferable even in the event of the business sale. They are issued to the person representing the business for which the application is made (DEC, 2007b). However, one exception to the licence duration is in instances where CTOs achieve specified levels of accreditation issued through business accreditation programs, such as the National Tourism Accreditation Program (WA), or an ecotourism activity or product accreditation program such as the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP). This extends their licence to either three or five years, depending on the level of accreditation (DEC, 2007b). Examples include wildflower viewing, sightseeing, four-wheel drive tours, snorkelling and coach tours. These are classified as unrestricted licences and there are an unrestricted number of these licences that can be issued.

In contrast, ‘E’ class licences are restricted licences with only a limited number for issue, based on environmental, management and/or safety criteria (DEC, 2007b). Examples include whale shark tours at Ningaloo Reef, wildlife viewing boat tours at Monkey Mia at Shark Bay, and safari camps at Purnululu National Park. The issuing of ‘E’ class licences is determined by Expressions of Interests (EOI) called by the conservation agency. After allocating the licence/s to the successful CTOs the ‘E’ class licence is valid for a five-year period with an option of renewal for a further five years, provided that all associated licence conditions remain satisfactory to DEC (Quartermain, pers. comm., 2005). At the end of the ten-year licence span, DEC calls for EOIs to allocate the licence to a potential new operator, which does not exclude the previous CTO who held the licence from re-applying.
Like ‘T’ class licences, ‘E’ class licences are not transferable to the new business owner when the business is sold. The new business owner can apply to DEC for a replacement ‘E’ class licence which will expire on the date of the original licence (DEC, 2007b). New or renewed licence holders (‘T’ class and ‘E’ class) are required to complete the web-based Tour Operator Online Education Program on the agency’s website within the first three months. The program is part of the licence and includes a description of licence conditions and a ten-question test based on the licence conditions which need to be completed for the operator to receive a certificate and the licence. At the time of this research DEC had issued 404 CTO licences for conducting commercial activities on DEC managed land and waters in Western Australia (CALM, 2005a).

DEC’s managerial responsibilities are delivered by nine administrative regions (Table 3.2, Figure 3.1). Each administrative region has a regional office responsible for the overall management for that region. Depending on the overall size of the region and its needs, district offices are set up to support the regional office, and are responsible for daily operations. In some regions, local offices are established in addition to the district offices in order to support both district and regional offices. DEC’s corporate and operational Head Office is located in Perth, Western Australia’s capital city.
Table 3.2: DEC's administrative regions (regional/district/local offices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative region</th>
<th>Regional office</th>
<th>District office</th>
<th>Local office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>Kununurra</td>
<td>Broome</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilbara</td>
<td>Karratha</td>
<td>Exmouth</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Geraldton</td>
<td>Jurien</td>
<td>Carnarvon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Denham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfields</td>
<td>Kalgoorlie</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan</td>
<td>Kensington</td>
<td>Mundaring</td>
<td>Dwellingup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wanneroo</td>
<td>Jarrahdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Narrogin</td>
<td>Narrogin</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Katanning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Merredin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Bunbury</td>
<td>Busselton</td>
<td>Kirup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collie</td>
<td>Harvey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nannup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>Manjimup</td>
<td>Pemberton</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Walpole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Coast</td>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>Esperance</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (DEC, 2007a)

This fieldwork was conducted in three DEC regions, the Kimberley, the Midwest and the South West of Western Australia (Figure 3.1), in accordance with the criteria outlined in Chapter 2. Each region differs in geographical characteristics, flora and fauna, attractions and remoteness. To illustrate the regions' importance to tourism, and to link their importance to the conservation agency (DEC) and Tourism Western Australia, the State government body responsible for tourism in Western Australia, the regional descriptions in the next sections were primarily drawn from DEC/CALM and Tourism Western Australia publications.
Figure 3.1: Map of Western Australia with DEC region and district boundaries with the identified research regions (Source: CALM, 2001)
3.3 THE KIMBERLEY

The Kimberley region, in the north-west of Western Australia comprises an area of approximately 424,000 square kilometres with an estimated resident population of 35,000 representing 1.8% of the State’s population (Kimberley Development Commission, 2005). Tourism Western Australia describes and markets the Kimberley region as one of the world’s last wilderness areas due to its remoteness and ruggedness (Tourism Western Australia, 2006d). In addition, the towns of Broome in the West Kimberley and Kununurra in the East Kimberley are well known and recognised tourism centres.

Coastal Broome is considered the primary holiday destination in Western Australia whereas Kununurra is recognised for its water-ways, the Ord River, and its accessibility to various destinations (Figure 3.2) (Tourism Western Australia, 2006d). Broome is located 2,237 kilometres along the coast route north of Perth, with Kununurra a further 1,045 kilometres to the east. The Kimberley region has a tropical monsoon climate with two distinct seasons. The ‘dry’ season, which is considered to be the prime tourism season, extends from May to October, and the ‘wet’ season, characterised by hot and humid conditions, extends from November to April (Kimberley Development Commission, 2006). During the ‘wet’ season the region records approximately 90% of its total rainfall. Due to this seasonality tourism to this region is limited to approximately six months of the year, the ‘dry’ season (Kimberley Development Commission, 2006; Tourism Western Australia, 2006d).
The region’s main attraction is its landscape with its rugged ranges, coastline, and Aboriginal and pastoral histories. Other attractions are the possibility of viewing crocodiles, fishing for the highly sought after barramundi and four-wheel drive opportunities (DEC, 2007a; Kimberley Development Commission, 2006; Tourism Western Australia, 2006d). This region is considered an excellent destination for four-wheel drive enthusiasts as extensive and well known tracks are available (DEC, 2007a). The best examples are the Gibb River Road (Plate 3.1) and the track into Purnululu National Park with its Bungle Bungle Range (Plate 3.2). Visiting Purnululu National Park is only possible via a four-wheel drive vehicle, either self-drive or as part of a tour group, or by taking a helicopter or light plane flight. This type of access is often considered an attraction in itself.
Chapter 3: The places, the people and the tours

Plate 3.1: Gibb River Road in the Kimberley
(Source: A. Wegner, 2004)

Plate 3.2: Four-wheel drive track in Purnululu National Park
(Source: A. Wegner, 2004)
Protected areas in the Kimberley

The research in the Kimberley region was conducted with respondents working in protected areas in the West and East Kimberley based in Broome and Kununurra respectively. Conducting this study across the whole region made it possible to include respondents working in various national parks (Windjana Gorge National Park, Tunnel Creek National Park, Geikie Gorge), a conservation park (King Leopold Conservation Park), and a World Heritage Area (Purnululu National Park).

Windjana Gorge and Tunnel Creek National Parks together with Geikie Gorge National Park belong to the Devonian Reef National Parks and are the closest parks to Broome, Derby and Fitzroy Crossing. Access to this area is from the Gibb River Road and/or the Great Northern Highway.

Windjana Gorge National Park is approximately 145km from Derby and often visited for day trips from Broome or Derby. It is popular for its 3.5km long gorge, the presence of freshwater crocodiles, and its rich vegetation and bird life (Plate 3.3). The centre of the gorge is the alluvial floodplain of the Lennard River, with the gorge walls reaching up to 100m in height. Windjana Gorge National Park offers camping facilities and is regularly visited by CTOs. In close proximity is Tunnel Creek National Park, known for its 750m tunnel (Plate 3.4) and Aboriginal history (DEC, 2007a). Tunnel Creek does not offer camping facilities. Both can be accessed from the Gibb River Road and/or the Great Northern Highway.
Geikie Gorge National Park is the third park within this group and is famous for its 30 metre deep limestone gorge. The Fitzroy River cutting through the gorge can rise up to 17 metres during the wet season, resulting in the staining of the walls of the gorge. The park is rich in wildlife, such as the striped archer fish, frogs and birds (Tourism Western Australia, 2006d). The main tourist activities are boat tours, river and reef walks, canoeing, sightseeing and photography.

The King Leopold Conservation Park covers nearly 400,000ha and is situated approximately 200km east of Derby and 450km west of Kununurra. Access to this park is via the Gibb River Road. The main attraction in this conservation park is Bell Gorge with its staircase waterfall (Plate 3.5). Accommodation is available at the former pastoral homestead and designated camping areas within the park (CALM, 2005b).
To the east Kununurra is close to the Western Australian and Northern Territory border (see Figure 3.2). DEC’s regional office for the Kimberley region is situated in Kununurra. It is the largest town in the East Kimberley with a population of 5,500 and is considered to be the eastern gateway into the region. Tourism in the area is growing and the town is considered an excellent base for various tours, specifically visits to Purnululu National Park, a World Heritage Area (DEC, 2007a; Tourism Western Australia, 2006d; UNEP-WCMC, 2006).

Purnululu National Park is situated 250km south of Kununurra and is known for its orange and black beehive domes, the Bungle Bungle Range (Plate 3.6).
It was declared a national park in 1987, and was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003 for its outstanding universal natural heritage values (DEH, 2006; UNEP-WCMC, 2006). The park is recognised as being of great importance representing significant stages of the earth’s history and displaying records of life forms and ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms (UNEP-WCMC, 2006). The Bungle Bungle Range is identified as a natural phenomenon of exceptional beauty and aesthetic importance. It was also nominated for its rich Aboriginal cultural heritage (DEH, 2006; UNEP-WCMC, 2006). The park is open during the dry season, from April to December, and offers camping style accommodation which is widely used by CTOs and individual travellers (DEC, 2007a).

3.4 THE MIDWEST

DEC’s Midwest region stretches from Moora inland to Jurien Bay on the coast in the south to just below Exmouth in the north and 800km inland (Figure 3.3) (DEC,
Chapter 3: The places, the people and the tours

2007a). The best known tourist attractions are Nambung National Park (the Pinnacles), Kalbarri National Park, and the Shark Bay World Heritage area which includes Monkey Mia and its dolphins. This region is popular for its geological formations, spectacular wildflowers, and wildlife, in particular marine species (DEC, 2007a; Tourism Western Australia, 2004b; Tourism Western Australia, 2006b). The town of Geraldton is considered to be the centre of the Midwest and is approximately 400km north of Perth.

Figure 3.3: DEC’s administrative Midwest region (Source: CALM, 2005)
Protected areas in the Midwest

The research in the Midwest region involved respondents working in protected areas based in the Geraldton regional office and the district offices of Jurien and Denham. Carrying out this research throughout the region enabled me to include respondents from national parks (Nambung National Park, Kalbarri National Park) as well as a marine park and World Heritage Area (Shark Bay World Heritage Area).

The limestone pinnacles within Nambung National Park are among Western Australia’s best known landscapes and widely advertised on tourism websites and brochures (Plate 3.7). The pinnacles are located in the Pinnacles Desert in the middle of the park. The pinnacles reach up to 3.5m and provide a fascinating backdrop to the yellow sand and surrounding vegetation. The park stretches along the coast and, in addition to the pinnacles, features an extensive dune system. Its proximity to Perth allows many CTOs to offer day trips to the park as a popular alternative to self-drive tours.

Plate 3.7: Pinnacle Desert in Nambung National Park
(Source: A.Wegner, 2004)
Some 165km north of Geraldton and 590km north of Perth is the township of Kalbarri with its eponymous national park. Kalbarri National Park is divided into two distinctively different sections: firstly the river gorges formed by the lower reaches of the Murchison River which cuts through the landscape, and secondly, the coastline with several coastal gorges (Plate 3.8) (Tourism Western Australia, 2006b). A variety of attractions are located in the park, with one of the most recognisable features called ‘Nature’s Window’ (Plate 3.9). This national park is mainly known for its river gorges. During the wildflower season, from July to September, the park is visited for its display of flowers and flowering bushes (DEC, 2007a; Tourism Western Australia, 2006b).

North of Kalbarri is the Shark Bay World Heritage Area (850km north of Perth) (Figure 3.3). The area was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1991 and is one
of only a few areas to satisfy all four natural universal criteria:

- as an outstanding example representing the major stages in the earth’s evolutionary history;
- as an outstanding example representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes;
- as an example of superlative natural phenomena; and
- containing important and significant habitats for in situ conservation of biological diversity (DEH, 2006).

The area is renowned for its marine species as it is the habitat of one of the world’s largest dugong populations, extensive seagrass banks, the stromatolites at Hamelin Pool (Plate 3.10), and its high levels of salinity resulting in salt pans (Plate 3.11) (DEC, 2007a; DEC, 2007c; Tourism Western Australia, 2004b).

A main attraction for visitors to the area is the feeding of bottlenose dolphins at Monkey Mia and the Francois Peron National Park. The park provides four-wheel
drive tracks and several overnight camp sites along various beaches and bays (DEC, 2007a). The remoteness of the area is often considered to be an attraction in itself. The only township in the Shark Bay area is Denham, 128km west of the turn-off from the North West Coastal Highway.

3.5 THE SOUTH WEST

Western Australia’s South West region is known as a tourism destination in close proximity to Perth with an estimated population of 141,000 covering approximately 24,000 square kilometres (South West Development Commission, 2005). DEC’s administrative region stretches from Harvey south of Perth to Walpole in the south east (Figure 3.4). The best known town in the region is the township of Margaret River, with a population of 3,000 (Tourism Western Australia, 2006c). Margaret River is approximately 270km south of Perth and 10km from the Indian Ocean. The region is famous for its forests, vineyards, coastline (being recognised as offering some of the world’s best surf beaches), and caves, and is recognised as a biodiversity hotspot (an area which features exceptional concentrations of endemic species and experiencing loss of habitat) (Myers et al., 2000; Tourism Western Australia, 2006c). The South West region is a popular destination throughout the year. Some of the well known protected areas in the region are the Leeuwin-Naturaliste and Wellington National Parks.
Protected areas in the South West

In the South West region the research was conducted with respondents from the regional office in Bunbury, district office in Collie and Busselton and local office in Kirup and Nannup. Respondents worked in the respective offices and the Leeuwin-Naturaliste and Wellington National Parks.

Although the area is mainly known for its vineyards and surf beaches, Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park is most often associated with the region as it encompasses the surf beaches along the coast. The park is long and narrow and stretches 120km from Dunsborough, south of Busselton in the north to Augusta in
the south, with Margaret River situated midway (DEC, 2007a). It features a rugged coastline with pristine beaches, granite headlands and coastal heath (Plate 3.12), Karri forests (Plate 3.13), and limestone caves (Plate 3.14). It is a popular destination for bushwalkers, surfers and cavers. Camping is allowed in the park.

Wellington National Park is located between Bunbury and Collie, south of Perth. Its central feature is the Collie River Valley, approximately 50km inland from Bunbury, with its gorge and lake. The park’s vegetation with its stands of eucalypts, Jarrah, Marri and Yarri (Blackbutt) trees is another highlight of visiting Wellington National Park (DEC, 2007a). The park offers camping style accommodation and is open all year round.

**3.6 DESCRIPTION OF PROTECTED AREA MANAGERS**

The following section presents the profile and description of protected area managers (PAMs) derived from the interviews (Question 1, Appendix 1). Quotes from the interviews are used to illustrate the most widely held views, as well as to
illustrate differences. Traditionally PAMs’ roles were based primarily on conservation issues, such as species protection, monitoring of flora and fauna and species classification with a minor focus on visitor management (Wearing and Bowden, 1999). To act in these roles many agencies hire staff trained in science (Eagles, 2002). The literature identified that the management of protected areas is fundamentally a social process with PAMs requiring a mix of technical, human, and conceptual skills. PAMs’ roles range from the protection, conservation and monitoring of biodiversity, to maintaining facilities and infrastructure, and regulating access to providing information and education (Eagles and McCool, 2000; Worboys, et al., 2005).

Profiles of protected area managers

Twenty-nine PAMs provided input into this study. The group was comprised of gatekeepers, rangers, district and regional managers as well as policy officers, according to the selection criteria outlined in Chapter 2. The majority of participating PAMs were based in the Midwest, followed by the South West, the Kimberley and head office (Table 3.3). Most PAMs (15) had worked for fifteen years or longer in or in relation to protected areas, followed by another seven who worked between five and nine years, five PAMs who worked less than four years and two PAMs who worked between ten and fourteen years in protected areas. The length of time does not reflect the length of time the PAMs worked in the position at the time of the interview; instead it shows the accumulated years they worked in, or in relation to, protected areas.
Table 3.3: Offices where participating PAMs were based

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/HO</th>
<th>Regional office</th>
<th>District office</th>
<th>Local office</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How PAMs understood and perceived their roles with respect to their work in protected areas was explored in Question 1 (Appendix 1). In the first instance the interviewees did indeed provide a ‘job description’ outlining their duties, as could be expected from an organisational perspective. After probing, they expanded their answers and highlighted what they considered to be their role. All the job descriptions and attributes they provided were coded and categorised (as outlined in Chapter 2) into three categories: task (managerial or operational), communication (purposes and audiences), and balancing (conservation and other uses). These categories were used to collectively describe these roles and are outlined below. Most PAMs mentioned two or more of the categories when they reflected and expanded on their answers.

**Task: managerial.** This category includes the management functions of planning, organising, controlling and leading (Bartol *et al.*, 2005). It encompasses aspects of visitor management, policy development, revenue raising, marketing, and administrative tasks. The different aspects within this category can overlap due to their inherent complexity and interrelatedness. When PAMs talked about planning
being part of their roles, they referred to zoning in national parks, infrastructure and long-term planning, all aspects based on the agency’s vision and mission:

A lot of our work is zoning, allocating areas for use. Areas set aside as natural sites but being still accessible for people. It is really about providing for as broad a range of experiences as possible, and as broad a range of levels of developments, from remote to developed sites.

The biggest thing is administration, what we have that I’m in charge of, we have two caves open to the public but we also have a permit system so that all the caves in the national park in that area are administered by a permit system which puts them into different categories, restricts the group size, how many tours are allowed in per year and those kinds of things. The permit system relies on a booking system which requires an accredited leader and/or abseil, caving accreditation.

With respect to visitor management, they referred to their work relating to visitor risk issues, visitors numbers, and law enforcement. Different aspects of visitor management fit into this managerial category, such as controlling, organising (administration), planning and leading through the development of policies. The following two excerpts from PAMs’ responses outline the different facets of visitor management which relate to controlling and organising, part of the managerial category:

We do a huge amount of work dealing with visitor risk issues; we also have to look after the safety and well-being of the people visiting the park. So we need to do visitor risk management assessments on all the sites.

We are managing people and managing how they interact or how they use the environment at that specific site.
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**Task: operational.** A number of respondents described an operational part of their work. Activities included monitoring, carrying out maintenance tasks, working on specific projects, and providing facilities. Also included were weed and feral animal eradication, and ensuring facilities are in working order. As one respondent commented:

> Campground management, we have quite large camp sites in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park, you get up to 500 people on a weekend, so managing the facilities and the people is quite time consuming.

> Other things we do in the park are foxbaiting [the fox is a feral animal in Australia], that happens four times a year. Approximately 8700 baits a time get thrown out of a plane and we cover the whole park with bait.

**Communication: audiences.** This category addresses being a communicator and describing their role as one of communication. Communication and good communication skills are important for PAMs and are perceived as such (Worboys, *et al.*, 2005). In liaising with a range of stakeholders, for example individual travellers, CTOs, interest groups such as ‘friends of’, local council, tourist bureau, schools, and researchers, PAMs need to communicate effectively. PAMs in head office and regional offices are less likely to have interactions with visitors; however, they interact with various other stakeholders such as other government departments, shire representatives, and pastoralists. While interaction can be on different levels, what is common for all of them is the need for effective communication.

PAMs, specifically those working in the field, have direct encounters and interactions with CTOs visiting these areas. Therefore, communication is of vital
importance, as Worboys et al. (2005) point out, the role of PAMs is primarily a social one. PAMs will be contacted by CTOs when they have specific questions, to provide information and updates on the parks; they are the ‘public face’ of the conservation agency. It can be expected that tourism to protected areas in Western Australia will increase even further (CALM, 2006) and therefore interactions with stakeholders in the parks will become more frequent and good communication skills more important.

**Communication: purposes.** PAMs communicate for a variety of reasons, including providing information and education, encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour in people visiting protected areas, and collaborating with CTOs. For PAMs, perceiving themselves in a communication role had different meanings for different individuals, meanings that often depended on their role and their perception. For PAMs working directly in the parks it meant to communicate the conservation message to stakeholders, including CTOs. For them, effective communication was perceived as a means to educate visitors, for example in talking about the area they are visiting and about the regulations in place for the park:

> There are lots of public interactions, just explaining to them why we do things that we do and ask them to do the things that we ask them to do.

It also involves communicating practical and additional information outside the immediate area of interest. For example, informing visitors about current road conditions was described by PAMs as part of communication. This type of information is valuable for visitors travelling long distances covering different
regions with different seasonal weather patterns. For example a CTO running a tour throughout Western Australia in summer will experience good conditions in the South West and Midwest but information about parks or road conditions ahead of time is important, especially further north.

PAMs also considered communication as a means to develop working relationships beyond their immediate need. The following two excerpts highlight this understanding:

I’m trying to create partnerships and get people [CTOs] to work with us [DEC]. We try to develop effective communication. We talk to the industry; we talk and listen to their issues.

I visit every tour group and collect the docket. With some of the tour groups that come in regularly, we have a good relationship.

In taking on a communications role, these PAMs aim to build partnerships and relationships with the CTOs with whom they work.

For respondents, fostering effective communication has perceived personal rewards which are less tangible. As illustrated, communicating can build good relationships, but it can also provide a sense of satisfaction and achievement. As one respondent (PAM) pointed out:

People like to see a face and they go away with a good feeling. I also get a good feeling; I feel I achieved something with the people visiting the area.

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4 An agency supplied docket book to CTOs for fees to be paid on entering a protected area. Operators are required to fill out a docket each time they enter a park, listing the correct number of passengers on the tour, and pay a per head fee.
Balancing. Some PAMs described their role as balancing conservation with other uses. These respondents see their goal as instilling a sense of appreciation for the area in their visitors. For them, the aim lay in recognising and appreciating the associated values of protected areas, and considering the broader issue of conservation or specific features of a particular park. They perceived a close link between the need for protection of the environment and providing recreation opportunities and enjoyment. The requirement for balance to cater for this duality is consistent with the purpose of national parks in accordance with the protected area IUCN category II (see p. 40, Section 3.2, Table 3.1). As one respondent commented:

And again, our role is about balancing the conservation imperative with the need to provide recreation opportunities for people coming and appreciating these areas.

As noted in Chapter 1, these PAMs did not consider conservation and tourism in protected areas as an either/or scenario. For them, a balance of these demands is possible and indeed part of the role they strive to achieve. The four emergent categories, managerial, operational, communication and balancing covered the breadth of PAMs views how they perceived their roles.

3.7 DESCRIPTION OF COMMERCIAL TOUR OPERATORS

Commercial tour operators (CTOs) throughout the study regions took up the invitation to become part of this study. The following section presents the profile and descriptions of CTOs that were derived from the interviews (Question 1, Appendix 1). The CTOs were selected for this study according to the selection criteria described in Chapter 2.
A brief description on the role of CTOs in the literature follows in order to clarify the roles of CTOs and guides. To be competent and successful, a CTO must be multi-skilled (McKercher and Robbins, 1998). This is particularly important as CTOs are often small businesses and therefore responsible for all aspects of the company. They need to have “the right personal qualities, business planning and management skills and they must also have appropriate operational skills to be able to deliver the products” (McKercher and Robbins, 1998:186). These attributes also include ethical obligations when visiting protected areas, and a strong affinity with the area.

The roles and desired attributes of tour guides differ from those of CTOs, as their close encounters with customers require additional attributes and skills. Interpretation and education skills as well as leadership, motivational and entertainment skills are a necessity. Tour guides are often required to act as mediators and facilitators in order to build a cohesive group. In summary, the key role of tour guides is to provide a quality experience for their customers. For a quality experience, interpretation, particularly face-to-face interpretation, has been recognised in the literature as the most important ‘ingredient’ of guiding (Black and Weiler, 2005; Fennell, 2003; Ham and Weiler, 2002; Newsome, et al., 2002; Weiler and Davis, 1993; Weiler and Ham, 2001; Worboys, et al., 2005).

Profiles of commercial tour operators

Twenty-one CTOs working in the same three regions as PAMs (Kimberley, Midwest and South West) and three officers from Tourism Western Australia participated in this study (Table 3.4). The group of CTOs was comprised of owner/operators, or
people employed as tour guides, or those in a management position within the company. Because many owner/operators run their own tours, this research does not differentiate between a tour guide and CTO. The majority of participating CTOs were small businesses, with owners running and guiding their own tours without the help of additional staff. During this research the interviews and associated questions focused on the notion of CTOs rather than tour guides, but it was understood that CTOs fulfil the tasks of tour guides as well as the business aspects of the operation. Seven CTOs worked for more than 15 years in protected areas, with another six CTOs working between five and nine years, and five CTOs between 10 and 14 years. Three CTOs worked for less than four years in protected areas. Two of the Tourism Western Australia officers worked for less than four years in protected areas and one officer worked between five and nine years in, or in relation to, protected areas.

### Table 3.4: The regions in which participating CTOs and Tourism WA staff were based

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>CTO</th>
<th>Tourism WA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the CTOs and Tourism Western Australia officers were asked what they considered to be their role and how they would describe it (Question 1, Appendix 1), their responses were very broad. Many of them said they were running a tour and showing people around. However, after probing and encouragement to be
more specific, three categories became apparent which collectively describe these roles: task (managerial, or operational), communication (purposes and audiences), and experiential. The first two categories, task and communication were identical with those of PAMs.

**Task: managerial.** CTOs who perceived their tasks as managerial were mainly owner/operators or respondents employed in a management position, for example as managing director or chief executive officer (CEO), or Tourism Western Australia officers. Their role ranged from planning, administration, product development, finance and marketing to visitor management. Their descriptions of the managerial tasks are according to the definition of management provided in the literature (Bartol, et al., 2005). The following excerpts are from an officer of Tourism Western Australia and a CTO CEO:

My work in protected areas is not on the ground, but I’m involved in providing input into the planning and development aspects in those areas. One such example is working on an Expression of Interest for a tour operator’s licence. During that process I’m working closely with CALM [DEC]. I’m also having input into draft management plans covering protected areas.

My role, the buck stops with me basically. I’ve got an overall directorship role and I’m in charge of development of Aboriginal tourism businesses and at the moment putting together an Expression of Interest for a safari camp.

When CTOs mentioned visitor management as part of their role, they considered it from an instrumental point of view. From their perspective visitor management is not associated with the notion of ‘how’ to manage visitors, as PAMs do, based on their visitor management strategies such as infrastructure. Rather, their objective
is to use their position, both prior to and on tour, to influence and therefore manage their customers. Some CTOs have the objective which is to instil environmental awareness in their customers and work with them to follow DEC’s rules and regulations:

At the pre-departure workshop we emphasise the fact of being environmentally friendly and everyone needs to consider their rubbish disposal. We ask them [customers] to bring cans, not bottles, or a bladder of wine instead of bottles, because it is hard to dispose of bottles.

Maintaining and obeying national park rules and ensuring that other people do too. Basically I’m a facilitator and educator on the tour and share the knowledge that I have.

**Task: operational.** CTOs referred to operational aspects to ensure the smooth and safe running of their tours. Some of the examples given were hands-on tasks such as setting up camp, cooking, and vehicle maintenance. Others referred to the general coordination and implementation of the tour itinerary. This was particularly the case for longer tours, where a tour group is required to be at a certain place at a certain time due to bookings such as accommodation, or add-on or booked activities.

I guess my role really is to coordinate and implement the tour. You have people in the office who plan the tour, the accommodation and activities but my driver and I as the tour director basically implement what’s in the brochure. We have a guideline to do what’s in the brochure as long as it’s feasible. I have to organise everything on the tour, for example when we go for lunch to a winery in Margaret River I have to ring them and let them know what time we will be there and that sort of thing, making sure our contact meets us and confirming bookings.

CTOs offering adventure tours highlighted their operational role. For example, a CTO offering caving tours requires a cave leader, a similar situation to an abseil
tour where a certified person is compulsory. Employing a certified cave leader or
abseil person is a necessity when operating such a tour.

**Communication: audiences.** Not surprisingly, CTOs emphasised their
communication role. Communication is an integral part of a tour’s and CTO’s
success and client satisfaction. For CTOs, good communication skills are an
essential requirement for their audiences, who expect to gain information,
education and interpretation of the parks they visit:

Basically we show them [customers] the sites, mainly the natural
features, such as the Pinnacles. We go into a lot of depth talking
about the wildlife and the flora you find in those areas. We talk
about what is happening in those protected areas. So basically we
make people aware of our national parks. We talk quite a lot about
the value of the land.

Similarly, CTOs highlighted their role as facilitators on their tours, with
communication being an integral part of this process. Some run leadership and
team building tours, in which the role of facilitator was prominent and vital in
ensuring the success of the tours. For other CTOs the role of facilitator was not as
distinct; however, as the contact person a CTO often needs problem-solving skills.

**Communication: purposes.** CTOs’ communication role also encompasses the need
to collaborate with others, such as other operators, tourist bureaus, local
organisations and PAMs. Several CTOs saw their role as communicator based on
the concept of building rapport and good relations with each other.

As one CTO commented:

Part of my role and business is to create long term relationships, be
it with CALM [DEC], Aboriginal people or my clients. Let’s say if I plan
a program idea I contact the ranger in the area and run my idea with them first to get an idea of what to expect, what the conditions are and where to get information. Communication and environmental awareness is very important for us; we aim for ongoing communication to keep updated with changes but also to maintain the relationship.

**Experiential.** Some CTOs considered themselves ambassadors for protected areas, being in the position of showing their customers special places. One CTO clearly stated that for him visiting some of the protected areas on the tour gives him the possibility to bring his customers to places where others do not go. In addition, some CTOs perceive their role as providing more to their customers than merely a guided tour. Their aim is to give their customers a long lasting experience, something they will remember, something special:

> My role is to create memories and help people to enjoy the place and learn about it.

This aim is the ‘essence’ of good guiding and interpretation as described in the literature (Black and Weiler, 2005; Ham and Weiler, 2002; Weiler and Davis, 1993; Weiler and Ham, 2001; Worboys, et al., 2005), with the focus being on providing customers with an enjoyable experience.

### 3.8 THE TOURS

The 21 CTOs who participated in this study offered a diversity of tours, ranging from seniors’ tours, coach tours in 48 seater buses offering sightseeing in protected areas, to specialised tours, such as boat cruises, four-wheel drive tag-along tours, and adventure tours such as abseiling (Plates 3.15 – 3.19). These
tours represent a broad cross section of tours to protected areas offered by licensed CTOs in Western Australia.

CTOs offering different tours market these to appropriate groups. For example, CTOs offering adventure tours such as caving or abseiling seek and expect customers who are reasonably fit and healthy. In contrast, other CTOs cater specifically for seniors. In general, respondents targeted a certain clientele according to the tours they offer. Table 3.5 presents an overview of the participating CTOs’ target groups, by region.
Table 3.5: The type of tours offered by participating CTOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Coach tours</th>
<th>Specialised tours</th>
<th>Seniors tours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4WD tag along</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>helicopter flights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>sightseeing</td>
<td>4WD</td>
<td>sightseeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abseiling</td>
<td>wildlife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>canoeing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pearling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wildflower</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>sightseeing</td>
<td>caving</td>
<td>sightseeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>wildlife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A focus on ‘specialised tours’ (Table 3.5) illustrates the broad spectrum of tours offered by the participants in this study. For example, one CTO in the South West runs management and team building tours. As part of this tour customers rely on their own teams and survival skills. The tours are accompanied by an experienced tour leader who is minimally involved in group activities. According to this CTO, prospective clients are large companies, overseas government agencies and senior management. Another example of a ‘specialised tour’ was a tour in the Midwest to a pearl farm pontoon, in which customers were taken by boat to the pontoon to view and learn about an operating pearl farm. The last example was a CTO offering four-wheel drive tag-along tours. Customers in this tour self-drive their own four-wheel drive vehicle as part of a group, and the owner/operator leads
a convoy of several four-wheel drive vehicles. The CTO remains in contact with customers via a two-way radio which allows him to pass on information while driving.

The advertised tours aim to sell a CTO’s perceived strengths. For example, a CTO with extensive four-wheel drive experience will be in the position of passing on these skills, but can also provide a sense of security for inexperienced four-wheel drive enthusiasts. Another perceived advantage was for CTOs to live and operate locally; they often pride themselves on having insider knowledge of, and local interests in the protected area. This strong linkage to their local area was highlighted as a component of several tours and used by the participating CTOs as a marketing tool. In particular, one CTO from the Midwest developed a tour as a result of unforeseen heavy rainfalls in 2004. This CTO, who normally runs hiking tours in Kalbarri National Park and four-wheel drive camping tours, designed, advertised and ran a tour called ‘canoeing in the desert’. This new tour was only offered for a few weeks but was very successful during its operation.

To inform this research it was considered important to develop and build a profile of the participating PAMs and CTOs. The aim was to ‘introduce’ the reader to the participants, specifically illustrating how they perceived and described their roles with respect to protected areas. In order to obtain a sense of the values they hold, it was important to gain insight into their personal understanding what their role is rather than their job description. In the light of the crystallisation model presented in Chapter 2, their individual perspectives are important as they influence their perception of not only their own role but also of each other, as well as their expectations of each other.
To provide a richer description and therefore enhance our understanding of the factors influencing the working relationships of PAMs and CTOs, their ethical stance and values will be explored in Chapter 6. The following two chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) present the results of the interviews, which in turn will be used to inform the theoretical understanding and to explore different facets of their working relationships.
CHAPTER 4

DISCOVERING WHAT MATTERS: MANAGERS’ VIEWS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Having outlined in Chapter 3 how the protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs) perceived and described their own role the following two chapters explore how they perceive each other. This chapter will address, PAMs’ views of CTOs, and in Chapter 5, we turn to CTOs’ views. Their views and expectations with respect to each other and protected areas were explored, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of their relationship based on their perceptions of each other. Sociograms were used to explore and analyse how the respondents see and place themselves in relation to others working in protected areas.

4.2 EXPECTATIONS: WHAT IS A ‘GOOD’ TOUR OPERATOR?

PAMs were asked to describe what constitutes ‘good’ CTOs (Question 3, Appendix 1). In doing so they listed various skills and characteristics that they expect from CTOs. These were coded and categorised into the five categories described in Chapter 2: interpersonal skills, operational skills, liaison skills, business skills and value-based attributes. Interpersonal skills referred to an individual’s personal characteristics when dealing with others. Operational skills encompassed skills necessary for the day-to-day running of a business. Liaison skills included collaborative abilities and skills necessary for working together. Business skills

5 The complete list of categories is listed in Appendix 4.
included the ability to work strategically, combined with a business understanding and associated business knowledge. The last category, value-based attributes, covered attributes which described PAMs’ expectations based on values, for example having respect for the place and people, environmental awareness and having a sense of ownership.

**Interpersonal skills and characteristics**

PAMs expect excellent interpersonal skills from CTOs. Their expectations included the ability to communicate with them, their customers and other stakeholders, the ability to educate their customers, and to provide information about, and interpret, the protected areas they are visiting in an enthusiastic way to their customers. Furthermore, they expect CTOs to provide them with feedback, to be progressive in their role as operators, and to be caring towards their customers and for the environment.

**Communicative.** The ability to communicate effectively with their clients, but also with PAMs, in a friendly manner, were considered a necessity for CTOs working in these areas. In recognising that nature based tourism to protected areas is continually increasing, and that therefore more and more visitors become interested in visiting these areas, excellent communication skills between PAMs and CTOs were seen as of great importance:

[Operators] should also have strong communication with the protected area agency. One who communicates with us if there are issues, talks to us if he finds there are issues or problems in the area that we need to address and has a good communication level, if you like, with us [DEC] at a local level as well as a departmental level.
It was important for PAMs that CTOs communicate the information provided by the agency to their clients, what they considered the ‘right’ message. They expect CTOs to act as an extension between the protected area and the agency, and, in a broader view, conservation itself. By following this sequence of obtaining the information from the agency and then passing it on, PAMs felt the information passed on to visitors would be more accurate than information collected from other sources. Through such informal interactions between CTOs and PAMs, and CTOs’ customers, PAMs felt that the information CTOs’ customers receive is more likely to be based on the agency’s guidance:

> It is important for us [DEC] to know that the messages and information that are passed on are accurate and the message we want to see is delivered, but also that it is delivered in such a way that people are actually getting the good experience out of it. I want to see that they are mindful of other park visitors’ needs and rights.

The majority of PAMs expected CTOs to be able to educate, and provide interpretation and information, to their clients. According to PAMs, CTOs as tour group leaders have an excellent opportunity to communicate with and educate their clients about the area they are visiting. They expect CTOs to educate their clients by giving them insight into why these places need protection. An underlying reason for this expectation was CTOs’ scope to pass on the conservation message to their clients as part of their tours. CTOs should also be knowledgeable of the area, and should be able to pass on this knowledge and educate and inform clients on the history, geology and human dimension of the area. PAMs felt that CTOs have a good opportunity to use interpretation as a technique for instilling an interest in protected areas in their clients, resulting in them gaining added knowledge and information.
PAMs anticipated that ‘good’ CTOs promote the area. Ideally, they explain and interpret the values of the area in a positive way whilst instilling conservation values in their customers. Promotion of an area, providing accurate information and instilling conservation values were not the only reasons PAMs expect good communication abilities from CTOs:

They would have good interpretation and information skills and be striving to bring a different perspective to their client’s view of the world, the natural world. This saves us [PAMs] a job as well. Not that we need to, or need their assistance, but what they tell people saves us some heartache later.

Interestingly, the quote indicates that this PAM is not interested in a relationship of interdependence, according to her/his comment of not needing CTOs’ assistance in order to pass on the ‘right’ message. Nevertheless, this respondent still prefers that CTOs use their interpretation skills to do just that, a preference that reflects a pragmatic outlook of ‘saving time’ in PAMs.

Good CTOs are expected to collaborate with, and encourage customers to act and behave in an environmentally responsible manner while visiting a protected area. PAMs thought that CTOs should also impart the rules and regulations regarding how to act appropriately in protected areas to their customers. They expect CTOs to explain to their clients what they can and cannot do because:

We [PAMs] can’t be out there all the time. They should encourage their customers to act appropriately. We do need to provide enough information so that they can tell the life stories, that they can encourage the correct behaviour for that particular area, which obviously goes towards lessening impact on site but also reducing the risk to the users. So there’s a whole range of things there which we need to work closely with the operators, or the operators needs to work closely with us, so that we end up with a good delivery of an appropriate package.
CTOs are considered to be an extension to PAMs in helping and working towards the agency’s goals because of their direct and ongoing contact with their customers. PAMs expect ‘good’ CTOs to work towards the agency’s conservation goal.

Feedback. A good CTO should provide feedback to PAMs, who like to receive information on conditions in the park:

He [CTO] also provides great feedback, he visits the area every day and he always goes right down into the gorge, takes his people right near the river and he gives us feedback on what’s happening.

Because CTOs are in the park most days, they spend more time than most PAMs in the area during their tours. PAMs do not necessarily visit the area on a daily basis, or at least not all parts. PAMs from all three regions therefore rely on the feedback provided by CTOs on road and track conditions, facilities, native and feral animals, wildflowers and so forth. Unsatisfying conditions are to be reported to PAMs in charge and can be dealt with in a timely and responsible manner. Additionally, CTOs’ feedback provides PAMs with insight into visitors’ behaviour but also that of other CTOs. CTOs sometimes report on each other. This type of feedback was taken up positively by PAMs who considered it as a form of communication helping them to address issues of concern for CTOs and for them as land managers. On another level, sometimes CTOs’ positive feedback on certain aspects of park issues, such as the management of camp sites or facilities, was perceived by PAMs as praise and support.

Progressive. From PAMs’ perspective CTOs should be open to new ideas and new ways of communicating with their clients and with DEC staff. They expect CTOs to
see the ‘broader picture’ when operating in protected areas, to consider new business opportunities and approaches. One such example was highlighted in the Shark Bay World Heritage region in the Midwest of Western Australia. According to statements by PAMs, the majority of CTOs within this area did not take up and market the World Heritage status as part of their businesses. Similar statements were made by PAMs in other regions, who expect good CTOs to take up and incorporate additional business opportunities.

In being progressive, PAMs furthermore expect CTOs to be aware of, and consider, issues outside their immediate interest. After probing, they expanded their answers and explained that CTOs need to acknowledge the agency’s dual mandate of providing for recreation as well as conservation. What they expect of a good CTO is:

... [t]o understand that protected areas are a resource which can only be used if managed sustainably. They should have respect for the agency when we are having different opinions and still maintaining a positive attitude. They also need to be fairly visionary in what they do, in an educational sense, and be open to new ideas in what they do, be able to tell a story. But also they need to be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things, seeing the broader picture.

‘Progressive’ as a category encompassed a holistic understanding of different values and beliefs. PAMs expect CTOs to be progressive and open-minded, recognising and acknowledging differences in values and beliefs from an individual, organisational and political perspective. These different perspectives will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters.
Operational skills and characteristics

PAMs expect ‘good’ CTOs to possess operational skills, namely practical skills and safety consciousness in order to run and operate a business and undertake their work tasks. Operational skills are the necessary hands-on skills required on a day-to-day basis, but also when unforeseen incidences occur. The ability to make critical decisions is also an element of operational skills. Some examples of operational skills were: assessing and acting in a dangerous situation such as an encounter with an animal (e.g. venomous snake or crocodile), vehicle repair, maintenance work, setting up camp, provisioning when on tour, and so on. In addition to these skills, PAMs expect an essential understanding of agency procedures and conservation issues, combined with sound judgement in being able to deal with situations. CTOs should also have a good knowledge of the area and their licence conditions and preferable be accredited.

Practical skills and safety consciousness. PAMs consider sound practical skills and safety consciousness as being very important skills for CTOs to have when working in the field, particularly in remote locations where help may be far away. In addition, being safety conscious and self-reliant can save lives. PAMs expect CTOs to be inventive when a situation requires inventiveness but not recklessness. They feel safety awareness and risk management are of ever increasing importance. In instances where CTOs offer abseiling, rock climbing or caving tours, they are required by the agency to have an additional leader’s licence prior to applying and obtaining their commercial operator’s licence (CALM, 2004b).

Accreditation. PAMs expect ‘good’ CTOs to be accredited through one of the accreditation providers, such as Ecotourism Australia or the Tourism Council of
Western Australia. Accreditation is perceived as a means of improving the standards of the industry, and as a basis for meeting predetermined standards or qualifications. PAMs referred to accreditation programs which were established to assess individuals through programmes and institutions. The objective of accreditation programs is for educational and instructional providers to achieve ‘best practice’ environmental management, education, contribution to local communities, ethical marketing and product delivery consistency (Dowling and Fennell, 2003; Fennell, 2003; McKercher, 1998a; Newsome, et al., 2002). CTOs obtaining accreditation have the option to extend their ‘T’ class licence (see Chapter 3). In contrast, CTOs applying and obtaining an ‘E’ class licence must have accreditation as this is a pre-requisite of the ‘E’ class licence and will be gained as part of each renewal or expression of interest process (DEC, 2007b).

**Knowledgeable.** PAMs furthermore expect CTOs to be knowledgeable in (a) the agency’s park regulations, and (b) the protected area they are visiting. It was important for PAMs that CTOs know, respect and follow the agency’s policies and regulations. Associated with CTOs’ knowledge of the agency’s policies and regulations, PAMs expect them to also follow these regulations. This was a key component of their descriptions of what being a ‘good’ CTO means for them:

A good CTO is one who I suppose does the right thing legally, collaborates and complies with the conditions of his lease or his licence. Respect the rules and regulations that we put down as part of their licensing but also when we ask them something not to do, they could do it but we would like them not to.
Liaison skills and characteristics

PAMs expect ‘good’ CTOs to have the ability to work with a range of stakeholders, and to have an understanding of, and acknowledge, their sometimes divergent views and values, rather than merely pursuing their business benefits. PAMs thought this understanding will help in liaising with all stakeholders involved in protected areas. According to them, CTOs should strive towards collaboration, cooperation, liaison, and working in partnerships.

Collaborative. PAMs expect CTOs to actively aim for effectiveness in their collaborative efforts with them but also with the agency at large. They mentioned their desire to work in closer collaboration with the CTOs coming into the protected areas they manage:

[CTOs] should work and collaborate effectively with the agency. Someone who is working with us, not see us as the enemy. If they cooperate and work with CALM [DEC] as the managers they can develop an ecologically sustainable tourism operation; that would be a good working relationship.

In PAMs’ opinions there are currently not enough collaborative efforts made by CTOs. When they spoke about collaboration they referred to collaboration between CTOs and themselves, as individuals, but also with other representatives of the agency, for example people working in the administration dealing with their licence inquiries, or special requests.

In stating their desire for increased collaboration, PAMs expect CTOs to become directly involved in DEC’s programs and projects. Some of the PAMs visualised
CTOs helping them, in these instances they referred to one-way collaboration. One
PAM outlined his/her expectations of a good CTO with respect to collaboration:

Good operators should be involved in monitoring their own impacts or contributing to protected area programmes. They should try to achieve the desired outcome of maintaining the resource.

Reflecting on this form of collaboration, PAMs expect CTOs to essentially do parts of their work, for example monitoring, and trying to achieve the agency's objective of maintaining the resource. Nevertheless, they feel that it will result in their mutual benefit as well as being beneficial for the protected area.

**Business skills and characteristics**

This category includes working with objectives and goals, a conceptual understanding of situations, problem solving skills, and the ability to think and act strategically. All these aspects should add to CTOs' financial and business understanding, which PAMs expect from CTOs.

**Business understanding.** A sound financial and business understanding is another skill PAMs seek in a ‘good’ CTO. Previous research has found that many small CTOs do not have a formal business background and have no prior experience in the tourism industry (McKercher and Robbins, 1998). When PAMs spoke about ‘business understanding’ they expected CTOs working in protected areas to run an economically sustainable business. They did not believe CTOs would be able to operate their business over the long term without having some business knowledge. This was a concern held by several PAMs, whose expectation was that good CTOs are able to see and take up business opportunities, for example
developing new products aligned with possibilities available in specific areas. Moreover, they expect CTOs to be flexible and to establish a financially sound business in order to be able to cope with changing demands. Changing demands can arise through outside interference, for example on the international market through diseases, terror attacks, wars or oil crises. PAMs expect CTOs to have business knowledge and skills when dealing with national issues such as changing demands due to transportation incidents, a slow down in travel patterns, economic decline and so on.

Value-based attributes

Some of PAMs’ expectations of what constitutes a ‘good’ CTO were value-based attributes. It can be assumed that these attributes reflect PAMs’ underlying worldviews and perspectives, as people’s interaction with the environment is based on their values, principles, and worldviews (Hudson and Miller, 2005), and as such they seek in CTOs similar values to their own. PAMs expect CTOs to have a commitment to good environmental practices, respect, and passion with respect to their work.

Environmental commitment. PAMs expect CTOs to be environmentally aware and to behave in an environmentally responsible manner. A good CTO should be sensitive towards the environment and strive for a low energy footprint. Having these expectations of CTOs implies that PAMs may consciously or unconsciously

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6 The term is based on the concept of ‘ecological footprint’ first coined by Professor William Rees in 1992. A person’s ecological footprint can be calculated based on one’s use of energy, food, water, and other consumables which will be converted into a measure of land area based on the productive land area and water required to produce what is consumed. The energy footprint is based on the energy part of the total ecological footprint.
look for good environmental practices as part of CTOs’ operations as the following comments illustrate:

They would get a balance between the business side of things and environmental requirements. They would be striving for a low energy footprint.

I don’t believe they have to be conservationists as such, but they’ve got to be very aware of the effects of their activities on the environment, being environmentally aware.

These quotes demonstrate that PAMs do not necessarily expect CTOs to be conservationists, but rather to be environmentally conscious and aware, and aiming to balance their business interests with their environmental practices.

Respect. Some PAMs expect CTOs to have, or develop, respect for the place in which they operate and the people with whom they work. They believe that having respect for a national park leads to a desire in CTOs to care for the area and the associated values, and that therefore the CTOs would be more likely to behave according to the licence conditions and regulations. In their view, respect provides a platform for professionalism and maintaining a positive attitude, even in situations of disagreement between PAMs and CTOs.

Passion. CTOs should be passionate about the area, their job and their customers. PAMs expect good CTOs to take interest in their clientele, and their special needs and their requirements. Furthermore, PAMs believe that if a CTO is passionate about an area, he/she loves and is enthusiastic about the place and therefore acts responsibly. If CTOs are passionate and enthusiastic, these attributes are expected to make it possible to provide their customers with an interesting and enjoyable time and enhanced experience. Being passionate about the job relates directly to
being passionate about their customers. Customers are the key ingredient for a CTO’s business, therefore PAMs expect that if CTOs are passionate about their customers they will aim to develop a good product:

I suppose a sense of passion and enthusiasm for the place and it rubs off on their [CTOs’] customers. They impart that knowledge to their paying customers. That way they will always try to come up with interesting things to tell them but also create a good tour, their own good tourism product.

One of the last comments PAMs made in relation to what constitutes a ‘good’ CTO related to the status of being an owner/operator. Their perception is that owner/operators have a greater passion, involvement, and interest in the business, but also in the viability of the resource than someone who is employed (e.g. tour guides). The PAMs who made this comment already had good working relationships with owner/operators. This view and expectation held by PAMs was based on their experiences with, and observations of, local owner/operators' knowledge and passion for the area, and their often greater commitment than some of the guides employed by a large company. It can be assumed that a CTO owning and running a tourism business will have a high financial and personal investment in the business and therefore may have a stronger personal drive to succeed and make business relationships work.

4.3 REALITY: HOW MANAGERS PERCEIVED THE OPERATORS

The aim of asking the next question (Question 5, Appendix 1) was to gain an understanding of the current working relationships between PAMs and CTOs, and to move beyond PAMs’ expectations of what constitutes a ‘good’ CTO. PAMs were
invited to select the most appropriate attributes to describe CTOs from a prompt card (Appendix 2), which featured a range of different attributes, in order to describe the CTOs with whom they work. This question was intended to obtain a complementary view of how they perceived CTOs. The attributes listed in Table 4.1 were derived from their responses.

The most commonly selected attributes listed by PAMs from the three regions and head office were: knowledgeable, collaborative, revenue oriented, experienced, and competitive (Table 4.1, complete set Appendix 5).

Table 4.1: List of attributes PAMs selected to describe CTOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes*</th>
<th>Kimberley PAMs (5)</th>
<th>Midwest PAMs (15)</th>
<th>South West PAMs (6)</th>
<th>Head office PAMs (3)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue oriented</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy-going</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfish</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service oriented</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single minded</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservationist</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pessimistic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Note: *Attributes are presented in descending order]
PAMs from all three regions and head office considered the CTOs with whom they work as collaborative. Additionally, they thought the CTOs are knowledgeable but also revenue oriented. However, these attributes were not mentioned by respondents from head office. One explanation is that PAMs at the head office have only limited contact with CTOs in the field, therefore the likelihood of directly observing these attributes is limited. Assessing a CTO’s knowledge is primarily through observing the interaction between the CTO and her/his customers, or in encounters between themselves and CTOs.

The notion of being revenue oriented was mentioned but within the context that CTOs need to be revenue oriented because their livelihood depends on the income generated through the tour business. Attribute differences were evident between the Midwest and all the other regions. PAMs from the Midwest described the CTOs as stubborn, pessimistic, and competitive, all of which were not selected for CTOs in the other regions (Table 4.1). Two other negative attributes were selected to describe CTOs with whom they currently work: single-minded and selfish. PAMs from head office selected both attributes, with PAMs from the Kimberley choosing single-minded and those from the Midwest choosing selfish.

To gain further insight into how PAMs perceive CTOs, they were asked to describe a memorable experience (Question 6, Appendix 1). The question intentionally addressed a ‘memorable’ experience, rather than a ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ one, to avoid leading respondents’ answers, and to obtain ‘neutral’ insights. Then, the scenarios the respondents shared with me were categorised as positive or negative. More than one-half of PAMs (sixteen of the twenty-nine) remembered and sketched a negative experience, with the remaining thirteen presenting a
positive experience. Table 4.2 represents the separation of PAMs with their responses according to regions.

Table 4.2: PAMs’ memorable experiences with CTOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Positive experience</th>
<th>Negative experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley (5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest (15)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (6)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office (3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Positive experiences.** In situations where PAMs remembered and sketched positive experiences they referred to CTOs’ enthusiasm. They experienced the difference between a CTO who is passionate and enthusiastic about the place and his job and a CTO who is not. For PAMs this enthusiasm and passion is passed on to the CTO’s customers in how they conduct their tours. The following excerpt illustrates how this CTO uses interpretation and education combined with his enthusiasm to communicate with his customers:

He provides a great mix of environmental information and history. He used to be a ranger and shows great passion and enthusiasm. It really comes across to his customers how passionate he is about what he does, he is able to turn the information he provides to his clients into entertainment.

Other positive examples were based on good communication as well as CTOs’ collaborative efforts with PAMs. Particularly in smaller communities, PAMs highlighted their positive experiences based on CTOs’ willingness to help and
participate in rescue missions, for example visitor rescues or emergencies such as fighting bush fires:

With a lot of our rescues the operators are closely involved with the rescue operations, which are coordinated with the police, SES, CALM [DEC] and others. Like when we have an injured person in the gorge for instance, they show cooperation and participation. They even help us out with their gear, which is great.

The above quote was from a PAM in a small community from the Midwest. In this township both PAMs and CTOs are members of the SES and work together and help each other in situations of need. Safety awareness and operational skills play an important role in this context, because CTOs helping out in emergency situations need to be aware of safety issues and act according to safety standards and regulations. Furthermore, CTOs who were safety conscious in their tours and in dangerous situations and aimed to reduce potential risks were highlighted as positive experiences. From the above quote by the PAM it is evident that PAMs not only say they look for operational skills and safety in a ‘good’ CTO, but also highly value these skills in CTOs.

Some PAMs remembered individual CTOs due to their friendly and open personality and positive behaviour, which went beyond their expectations. Other positive memorable experiences included situations were CTOs where helpful, assertive and knowledgeable, but also respectful to their customers and PAMs.

**Negative experiences.** These experiences involved situations in which there was a lack of communication between a CTO and his customers or CTOs and PAMs. One
PAM remembered an occasion which proved to be memorable because the CTO did not communicate with his customers, at least not to the expected extent:

Being out on the boat for one of their [CTOs’] wildlife cruises and something special happened. I can’t remember exactly what it was but what I do remember is that it was not passed on to the people on board. The operator saw some really interesting social interaction between dolphins or something like that and he and his staff didn’t pass it on. They didn’t give the people the wonderful experience they could and should have done.

Another aspect which PAMs perceived as negative and therefore remembered was some CTOs’ behaviour as part of their operational practices. They outlined instances in which a PAM perceived a CTO to be aggressive and abusive towards the PAM and/or with respect to the protected area:

A CTO picked up a goanna to show it to his customers. After he showed the goanna around he threw it into the water. Another operator reported him to CALM [DEC] as no ranger was present at the time and I reported him to the head office, the licensing division. The operator who witnessed the incident also put it in writing and we forwarded it to the head office. The people who witnessed it, his customers, were upset about the incident and told my ranger about it.

The operator reacted aggressive, loud and anti-CALM [DEC] in front of all his visitors. He tried to push our staff around to get his bookings up. Putting up more advertising, hassling staff, yeah, things like that.

Further examples given included safety issues in situations in which CTOs were irresponsible, and situations in which they were rude to their customers or provided the customers with wrong and misleading information. Other negative experiences were non-compliances or lack of understanding of DEC regulations, such as the example of a CTO trying to come into a park without a current licence, and of a CTO who let his customers climb the pinnacles in Nambung National Park.
In many instances the negative experiences presented included multiple aspects, but PAMs mostly perceived the lack of understanding and lack of collaboration as negative. The following quote illustrates the incident of a road closure in a national park and the PAM’s frustration on-site based on the CTO’s perceived lack of understanding of the situation:

Unfortunately, it [the road closure] was well signposted and we were down there working and this chap [CTO] comes down with a busload full of passengers. We had to say, look turn around and go back because this is pretty dangerous, we can’t accept the risk if a bobcat backs over a car or a tour group. He was rather irate. Before we started with all the work, information was sent out to the tourist bureau, every operator in our area, and everywhere else, to inform everyone that the Loop walk and path will be closed for two days, but there is one chap still coming out. And he was furious when we told him he had to turn back, he yelled at us and carried on.

From this PAM’s perspective, the CTO showed no understanding of the situation and possible risks, and no willingness to cooperate with the agency by finding an alternative tour or cancelling the scheduled tour. As the above quote illustrates, both the PAM and the CTO were frustrated with the situation.

**4.4 BARRIERS WORKING TOGETHER**

PAMs were asked to describe what they perceived as current barriers between themselves and CTOs (Question 4, Appendix 1). They mentioned a range of barriers: operational constraints, personal behaviour, insufficient communication and liaison, different priorities, issues with the agency, financial constraints and lack of knowledge and information (Figure 4.1). Several of the mentioned barriers were the attributes PAMs expect from ‘good’ CTOs, they closely link their expectations with the perceived barriers between themselves and CTOs. One PAM from the Midwest commented that, in his opinion, there are no barriers at present.
Chapter 4: Managers’ views

Figure 4.1: Identified barriers between PAMs and CTOs which hinder effective working arrangements (listed in order of significance; as seen by PAMs)

Perceived barriers between PAMs and CTOs working together

- **Operational constraints:**
  - Time restrictions; local level; lack of compliance; low standards; competition

- **Personal behaviour:**
  - Aggressive; bad manner; disrespect; stubborn; reluctance; lack of interest for people and area

- **Insufficient communication & liaison:**
  - Lack of communication; uncooperative; lack of consultation

- **Different priorities:**
  - Different needs and priorities

- **Issues with the agency:**
  - Lack of direction; head office; administration; divisional discrepancies; licensing procedures

- **Financial constraints:**
  - Licence fees; lack of financial resources within the agency

- **Lack of knowledge & information:**
  - Lack of knowledge (area, business, industry); form of information
Operational constraints. PAMs from all three regions and from head office identified a series of operational constraints as the main barriers for CTOs and themselves working together. These constraints included CTOs’ time restrictions when accessing an area, working difficulties on a local level, CTOs’ lack of compliance, CTOs’ low standards, and competition amongst some CTOs.

CTOs’ time restrictions and working within a tight time schedule when coming into a park was perceived to be an omnipresent constraint. PAMs repeatedly assumed CTOs’ negative behaviours to be a result of time pressure because CTOs have to follow a strict tour itinerary. Additionally, given this tight time frame, PAMs thought that CTOs might not take the required time to gather all information about the area in order to be able to inform and educate their customers appropriately. Having previously identified their expectations of a ‘good’ CTO as providing education and information to their customers, CTOs’ limited time availability was perceived as having a negative effect.

PAMs from one township in the Midwest identified operational difficulties on their local level as a barrier. These PAMs perceived many members of the community as hostile towards DEC, which resulted in animosity and reluctance to work collaboratively with PAMs. As part of the community, CTOs were perceived by PAMs as deliberately uncooperative, resulting in a lack of compliance with protected area management regulations. Non-compliance was raised as a barrier by PAMs from the Midwest, South West and head office. Their understanding was that, in some instances, non-compliance was due to CTOs’ lack of understanding or misunderstanding of the existing regulations, but that in other instances, CTOs deliberately choose to disobey the regulations. They referred to instances in which
CTOs entered a national park without a licence, or with an expired licence, and in which CTOs refrained to pay the required per head entrance fee, resulting in a mismatch between their actual passenger numbers on the docket and those on the docket book they are responsible to complete and submit to the PAMs (see Chapter 3).

CTOs’ perceived low standards with respect to their staff and products were mentioned by PAMs from the Midwest and Kimberley. In their views, the fluctuation of people working as tour guides or CTOs that they were able to observe over time frequently led to low standards in CTOs. By ‘low standards’ PAMs referred to unqualified and inexperienced CTOs without the knowledge and experience to run and operate tours, provide quality experiences to their customers, or operate a tourism business. As previous research has highlighted, many owner/operators are not experienced in running a business (McKercher and Robbins, 1998), and/or have none of the interpretive skills considered to be very important in delivering a high standard tourism product (Ham and Weiler, 2002; Weiler and Ham, 2001).

Competition was identified as another operational constraint by participating PAMs: firstly, competition between CTOs, particularly competing owner/operators working and servicing their local area, and secondly, PAMs competing with each other for funding for their region and/or district. In perceiving competition amongst CTOs in the Midwest as a barrier, PAMs referred to CTOs working in very close proximity to each other and offering a similar product. According to PAMs’ comments, daily confrontations between these CTOs trying to secure customers are a reality. In some instances, one CTO tried to involve the PAMs in order to gain
their support, which caused additional friction amongst all parties involved. Another level of competition identified as a barrier, was created by PAMs competing for funding for their region or district, either within the conservation agency or externally:

By financial constraints I’m also talking about our [DEC’s district] financial constraints. We have to compete with other regions and districts for funding for our works programs and to be able to be more out there we would need more money.

**Personal behaviour.** CTOs’ aggressiveness, bad manners and attitude, disrespect, stubbornness, reluctance to take up suggestions, and lack of interest in PAMs’ work goals were all barriers identified by PAMs from every region. Examples of aggressiveness, bad mannered and negative attitude related to instances were CTOs reacted abusively when asked to comply with DEC rules and regulations, or when asked to refrain from activities resulting in environmental impacts. Furthermore, PAMs from the Midwest commented that local CTOs act aggressive towards the conservation agency, and that they voiced and discussed the conflicts between themselves and the agency with their customers:

I even know of operators up there who quite openly discuss the conflict with their customers in terms of bad mouthing CALM [DEC] and things like that. They don’t realise that it’s cutting also into their livelihood; people don’t want to hear those things. I don’t know why that is, they are so tied up in their situation that they can’t see it is counterproductive for everyone being almost to a hostile degree critical of CALM [DEC]. It has a negative effect on everyone, it’s not just CALM [DEC]. Nobody wants to hear about conflict. People want to know what makes a place tick. You can’t hide the fact that there is conflict I guess but you certainly don’t make a big thing of it. Or you put it into perspective but I guess that’s why there is conflict, there is a lack of putting it into perspective.
This openly displayed aggressiveness shows some CTOs’ disrespect for their customers and PAMs. As such, disrespectful CTOs were identified as another barrier by PAMs, who pointed out that some CTOs had no respect for PAMs, their own customers, the protected area, animals and others’ needs.

CTOs’ reluctance to take up suggestions or information provided by PAMs, combined with stubbornness, were other personal behaviours which were perceived as barriers. Some PAMs referred to CTOs as opinionated, reluctant to approach PAMs and new situations open-mindedly, but also CTOs as stubbornly doing what they have always done, and being unwilling to change:

[CTOs’] mind set and their attitude, they have been doing this for 20 years, and keep doing it, hence, it’s ok and they think that they can.

PAMs considered CTOs’ lack of interest in them, their work and the conservation agency to be another barrier. They viewed the CTOs’ perceived lack of interest in PAMs’ work as linked to CTOs’ lack of effort in understanding their positions and motivation when working in protected areas. Additionally, CTOs’ lack of interest was also mentioned in relation to protected areas, where PAMs thought that for some CTOs their visit in a national park is often no more than a brief stop.

**Insufficient communication and liaison.** PAMs identified insufficient communication, or lack of communication, between the agency and CTOs as originating from both. They recognised that communication poses challenges to the sender as well as the receiver. This was often the case with difficult issues which needed to be communicated, such as those concerning regulations and
restrictions. They commented that some CTOs prefer to receive more information, better communication, or these being delivered in different ways. Several PAMs stated that they thought that the way the agency communicates with CTOs is ineffective and needs improvement.

PAMs linked communication barriers to a perceived lack of staff in the field. This was raised by PAMs in the Kimberley region, specifically in parks which provide overnight stays for CTOs. During peak season a park sometimes has over two hundred people camping at one time with only one staff member present. This created an unsatisfying situation not only for the visitors but also for the PAMs, who felt that they had not enough time to effectively communicate with all visitors, individual travellers and CTOs and their customers. During these busy times PAMs thought that there is not only a lack of communication but also a lack of contact, and believed that they did not have enough time to liaise with CTOs and their customers.

PAMs from head office, the Midwest and the South West mentioned lack of consultation, in addition to poor communication, as a barrier. They felt that CTOs did not use the opportunity to obtain information or input which might add to their product and avoid adversaries, such as unknowingly entering culturally sensitive sites or disturbing breeding sites. However, one PAM pointed out that a lack of consultation is also an issue for the agency, noting that in some instances there is insufficient time to consult with CTOs before specific work or conservation programmes are put in place. This barrier is closely linked to, and consistent with, PAMs’ outlined memorable experiences which were based on a lack of, or poor communication and liaison.
Different priorities. PAMs stated that, in their opinion, a few CTOs have their ‘own agenda’ and priorities, and consider their interests only in relation to protected areas. In saying that, they meant that CTOs’ primary focus and priority is generating income without considering other aspects, such as conservation, good environmental practices, or their customers’ well being. PAMs thought that this is based on CTOs’ lack of awareness or willingness to understand others’ (i.e. PAMs and/or customers) perspectives, needs and their priorities, which results in conflicts and barriers when working together.

The agency. PAMs identified issues within the agency itself as being barriers. Lack of clear direction, divisional discrepancies, and ‘detached leadership’ from head office with respect to remote areas, were reported as resulting in barriers hindering effective working relationships between CTOs and PAMs. A perceived lack of clear direction was highlighted by a PAM from the South West presenting a situation in which a CTO did not follow DEC regulations on several occasions, resulting in other CTOs reporting him to the agency’s head office. However, after the head office received the complaints no actions were taken. The PAM in the region felt in an awkward position as no actions were taken and no direction was given as to how to address the complaint. In another instance, a lack of direction was perceived as a barrier in a situation in which new procedures or rules were introduced. The PAMs in the field were required to implement them to the best of their abilities, without directions on how to do so. This posed difficulties at times, as they tried to maintain their relations with the CTOs while at the same time imposing the procedures and rules.
Divisional discrepancies as barriers or potential barriers were outlined by PAMs from the Kimberley and South West, who highlighted internal organisational discrepancies as being a result of limited (or lack) of communication and consultation between divisions within the agency. The discrepancies these PAMs referred to were based on their different objectives and values with respect to protected areas:

As far as the department goes [DEC], there is a lot of empire building within the department and there are a range of values, for example researchers go out without consultation with us [in the region], there is no consultation at all. Within the department we lack communication; different divisions have different objectives. We want communication, it is a problem down in Perth, and everyone has their vested interest and not much else. The PVS [Parks and Visitor Services] people are looking at things in different ways than the nature conservation people. Many of us are ‘Jack of all trades’ we don’t have a scientific background, we have no degree. There is no communication and consultation and also the goal posts keep moving, there is so much re-inventing the wheel.

PAMs felt that different divisional objectives sometimes resulted in conflicts between the divisions, but additionally that this influenced their working relationships with CTOs. As one PAM highlighted, for the Nature Conservation Division within DEC the conservation of biodiversity is a primary objective, but in order to achieve this objective it is necessary to manage the people visiting the area. According to this PAM, to manage people in a protected area it is necessary to cater for them, for example in upgrading facilities or improving the existing infrastructure. This is the responsibility of the Parks and Visitors Services Division, but often resulted in conflicts with the Nature Conservation Division. However, conducting work on facilities or infrastructure in order to improve an area for

7 ‘Jack of all trades’ is a well known aphorism describing a person who is competent with many skills but is not very good with one particular skill. It implies that the individual knows enough from many learned trades and skills to be able to bring their disciplines together into a practical finished product.
visitors meets CTOs’ expectations. This PAM clearly identified the difficulties in
serving the needs of both CTOs and other divisions within the agency, in order to
achieve a satisfying balance.

PAMs from head office and the Midwest described the licensing requirements and
procedure as confusing, as they thought it has too many ‘grey areas’ which can be
misleading and misunderstood. Furthermore, the internal administrative licence
record keeping did not fulfil their expectations. Currently there is no record system
in place to show how many, and which, CTOs access specific protected areas.
PAMs highlighted the problem in CTOs being able to obtain a commercial
operator’s licence for every national park they wish to, because the licence fee is
not linked to the number of national parks CTOs plan to visit. Officially, CTOs can
acquire a licence to operate in all national parks within WA as part of their ‘T’ class
licence without ever visiting some of them. Because of this procedure, PAMs in the
regions and districts do not have true records to determine how many CTOs visit
their parks, and are unable to plan accordingly.

Financial constraints. PAMs from all regions and head office identified financial
constraints as barriers hindering their working relationship with CTOs. They
referred to operational costs and the lack of financial resources for both CTOs and
DEC. Furthermore, they perceived financial constraints to be linked to CTOs’ lack of
informed knowledge of the protected areas in which they operate:

That [to educate CTOs on protected areas with its different aspects]
is something that has not been done very well from our [PAMs’]
point of view and the operators don’t have the funds or people
available to do that themselves. I think a lot of these things come
down to departments, like CALM [DEC], not having enough funding
for it.
PAMs did not necessarily consider the licensing fee structure (the ‘T’ and ‘E’ class licence fee and the additional per-customer entrance fee with each visit) as a barrier in itself; instead they noted it from the CTOs’ perspective. PAMs thought that for CTOs the fees were a barrier and therefore influence their working relationship. Many PAMs thought that friction and conflicts between them and CTOs are the result of some CTOs trying to avoid paying the required customer entrance fee when entering a national park. They referred to situations where CTOs entered a park without a current licence, without paying the required per customer fee, using alternative access roads, or entering a park outside its opening hours.

**Lack of knowledge and information.** Lack of knowledge included, specifically lack of knowledge of the area of operation, of business knowledge with its associated responsibilities, and of knowledge of the tourism industry. PAMs from every region perceived CTOs as lacking knowledge of the area they visit and, because of this lack, they did not believe CTOs to be in the position of providing a good product to their customers. PAMs’ concern was that customers missed out on a positive experience and did not gain an understanding of the protected area they visit. It is important for PAMs that visitors to protected areas gain an understanding of the associated values of, and appreciation for, the area. According to them, this cannot be achieved if CTOs lack the knowledge or necessary information to communicate these values to their customers:

> Often you see an operator with their clients and basically giving them what we [PAMs] perceive a pretty bad time in terms of the way they present the area, not knowing the subject and the area. Their customers are probably not gaining an understanding, which is important to really appreciate and value the place.
Insufficient, or lack of, business knowledge in CTOs was mentioned by PAMs, which was based on many CTOs being owner/operators running small businesses. The PAMs thought that a sound business knowledge and understanding is often minimal in some CTOs. They stated that, in their opinion, CTOs were often unaware of ways to improve their business, and lacked the vision to move forward and take up new business opportunities. This occurred to the extent that one PAM, a respondent from the Midwest with respect to local owner/operators servicing the local area, commented that CTOs are ten to fifteen years away from operating in a professional manner.

PAMs recognised the importance of making information ‘palatable’ for CTOs to be understood, and highlighted that currently the agency’s procedure for distributing information can be considered a barrier. They specifically referred to the way in which licence conditions, stipulations, changes and amendments, and visitor risk issues are made available to CTOs. On another level, they also referred to the way in which CTOs deliver information to their customers, referring to both the manner of delivery and the type of information delivered. In PAMs’ opinion, the delivery of information is not always done in what they understood as being the best possible way, and is not always aligned with the agency’s, and PAMs’, values in relation to protected areas.

**4.5 HOW MANAGERS PLACED THEMSELVES WITHIN THE SYSTEM – SOCIOGRAMS**

To help describe the interactions between PAMs and CTOs, respondents were asked to draw a sociogram in which they positioned themselves and all other
stakeholders whom they could think of, who are involved in protected areas (e.g. working, managing, having a vested interest) (Question 7, Appendix 1). The sociograms were used to visually determine the participants’ perceived interactions, and the directions of these interactions (one-way versus two-way) with other stakeholders and with each other. Twenty-six of the twenty-nine PAMs agreed to draw a sociogram, with the remaining three (two from the Midwest and one from the South West) declining.

The sociograms were used as representations of the participants’ cognitive understanding, and mapping, of the relationships between the person and other individuals or groups within the context of the question asked (Scott, 2000). The following three sociograms (Figure 4.2 – 4.4) represent how the participating PAMs placed themselves in relation to others in protected areas. To enhance the readability of the sociograms, I have superimposed an orange circle to highlight the PAM’s position, a green circle to show the CTO’s position, and a blue line, where appropriate (Figure 4.3 and 4.4), to distinguish between DEC divisions or DEC staff and other stakeholders.
Chapter 4: Managers’ views

Figure 4.2: PAM's sociogram (Kimberley)

Figure 4.3: PAM's sociogram (Midwest)
PAMs’ sociograms were complex and comprehensive, as they included various stakeholders ranging from other government departments to the greater community. The stakeholders PAMs included in their sociograms, and the frequency with which they were mentioned in each of the study areas, are outlined in Table 4.3.
Surprisingly, none of the PAMs from head office included Aboriginal groups, NGOs or researchers in their sociograms. PAMs from the South West did not include landholders and researchers, whereas all other stakeholders were included by respondents from the Kimberley and the Midwest, although not every individual included all. One explanation for omitting stakeholders by PAMs could lie in their misunderstanding the task, or in their inclusion of only those stakeholders with whom they directly work, rather than all stakeholders involved in protected areas.

The visual representation of PAMs’ sociograms was centric. When looking at the location where the individual PAM placed him/herself, it can be seen that it was in the centre of the sociogram (see orange circle, Figures 4.2 – 4.4). PAMs’ sociograms were complex and extended out from the individual PAM in the centre, surrounded by the other stakeholders and/or other divisions within DEC. The sociograms from the Midwest (Figure 4.3) and South West (Figure 4.4) include...
other DEC divisions which I have indicated by a blue line. On viewing the positions of the other stakeholders, it became apparent that the PAMs indicated a sense of separation between themselves, including DEC divisions, and the other stakeholders (the blue line helps to visually illustrate this). That is, they placed the CTOs primarily in the peripheral ring.

Furthermore, the sociograms help identify how the PAMs perceived their interactions with other stakeholders. PAMs were asked to include the interactions (connections) with the stakeholders they chose (Figure 4.5). The interactions could have been one-way, two-way or non existent. For the purpose of this research, the focus was on the interactions between PAMs and CTOs. In Figure 4.2, the Kimberly PAM drew a one-way interaction going from himself to CTOs. In contrast, the two PAMs, one from the Midwest and one from the South West (Figures 4.3 – 4.4), drew a two-way interaction between themselves and CTOs. Figure 4.5 illustrates how all PAMs’ graphically represented how they perceive their interactions with CTOs.

Figure 4.5: PAMs’ interactions (one-way/two-way/none) with CTOs, based on all sociograms
Seventeen PAMs included two-way interactions between themselves and the CTOs; five drew a one-way interaction with their position as starting point going to the CTOs, and four PAMs included CTOs in their sociograms, but not in interaction with each other. The sociograms and their applicability with respect to the notion of power and level of collaboration will be further explored in Chapter 7, in order to illustrate the respondents’ relationships.

### 4.6 THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTED AREAS

In order to identify what PAMs’ values are with respect to protected areas, they were asked what they considered to be the main purpose of protected areas (Question 2, Appendix 1). All twenty-nine respondents noted the conservation of biodiversity as the main purpose, very closely followed by recreation and enjoyment (Table 4.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of protected areas</th>
<th>From 29 PAMs identified by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of biodiversity</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and enjoyment</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain naturalness</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact minimisation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of people and area</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important in their own right (intrinsic)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education on protected areas</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All except one PAM stated that it was important for them that visitors come to protected areas to enjoy and appreciate them.
They saw a number of potential benefits generated through visitors to protected areas:

- Change in one’s environmental practices, such as improved water or waste management;
- Gaining of support, either by word, deed, money, or action, to further protect these areas, or leading to the protection of other areas that are not yet protected;
- Awareness-raising to ensure the area’s survival for future generations;
- Offering opportunities for people to explore, or to carry out hobbies such as wildlife viewing;
- Providing key social benefits, to value and experience the landscapes and serenity associated with natural systems;
- Creating an understanding and developing a sense of stewardship in visitors;
- Fostering public education, public knowledge and public enjoyment;
- Help with the protection of cultural sites and cultural stories; and
- For spiritual and inspirational purposes.

Conservation of both biodiversity and recreation and enjoyment were the most frequently mentioned values, with all other values identified by approximately half to one third of PAMs (Table 4.5). Maintaining naturalness was mentioned eleven times, followed by impact minimisation. When PAMs referred to maintaining naturalness this meant maintaining the area in the best possible environmental conditions. When an area is declared protected it can be expected that impacts will be minimised through governmental regulations. In identifying the management of people and area as a purpose, PAMs acknowledged that management is an integral part of a protected area, in order to protect biodiversity, maintain naturalness, minimise impacts and ensure sustainable use. By including a protected area’s importance in its own right and education on protected areas as
values, the PAMs referred to the importance of protecting an area’s intrinsic value regardless of potential benefits. Six PAMs considered education on protected areas to be their purpose.

Identifying conservation as the main purpose of protected areas was expected, given the agency’s legislative mandate under Sections 33 and 56 of the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA) under which the primary role and function of PAMs is to ensure the conservation of the area (Government of Western Australia, 1984). In identifying recreation and enjoyment as a secondary purpose, PAMs recognise the agency’s dual mandate and understand that protected areas need to also be accessible. However, when they identified the personal attributes they expect from people working in these areas, a strong conservation ethic received the highest rank.

4.7 ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES MANAGERS SEEK IN PEOPLE WORKING IN PROTECTED AREAS

Having described PAMs’ perceptions of what they consider the main purpose and values of protected areas are, the next stage was to identify which personal attributes and values they considered important in individuals working in protected areas. This question (Question 8, Appendix 1) was designed to determine whether there were any similarities or differences between PAMs’ and CTOs’ personal values, with the aim being to develop a rich and complex description of the participants’ overall expectations of each other.
Chapter 4: Managers’ views

PAMs were asked to list what they personally considered the five most important attributes and values, and to rank them from one (the most important) to five (the least important). The task was not to outline attributes for a particular group, for example attributes for CTOs only, but instead to provide and name attributes and values for anyone working in these areas. It was specifically mentioned that it did not matter in what capacity this person would be working. The reason for this was to gain insight in respondents’ values regarding people working in protected areas.

The attributes PAMs considered as most important for those working in protected areas covered a myriad of values and attributes. Table 4.6 presents the attributes which PAMs identified as their ‘number one’ (a complete list is presented in Appendix 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values and attributes</th>
<th>Frequency of mention: (n=29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation ethic</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion (job, area, people)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (area)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourcefulness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional work ethic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An underlying conservation ethic, encompassing environmental awareness and conservationism, whilst also having a passion for one’s job, the area and the people, were values and attributes identified by PAMs as most important in those working in protected areas. Good communication skills and knowledge of the protected area and people were followed by collaboration and dedication (three and two responses respectively, and a positive attitude, resourcefulness, commitment to sustainability (environmental, social and economic), wisdom and a professional work ethic were mentioned once.

The results presented here provided a wealth of information which allows analysing from different angles, whilst developing an insight into PAMs’ views and values, analogous to the different angles from which a crystal can be viewed, as described in Chapter 2. The angles on which this research will focus are the participants’ and public policies’ underlying values (Chapter 6), cultural influences and the notion of power (Chapter 7), and the range of perspectives of PAMs and CTOs (Chapter 8). To be able to put PAMs’ perspectives and values into context it is important to examine the CTOs’ expectations, perceptions and views, which are presented in the following chapter.
5.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to gain a balanced view from the participants, protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs), this chapter presents the CTOs’ descriptions of ‘good’ PAMs, how they described and perceived the PAMs with whom they work, what they considered to be barriers as part of their working relationships with PAMs, the purpose of protected areas, how they placed themselves relative to others working in protected areas, and the attributes and values they seek in someone working in protected areas. As in Chapter 4 – Managers’ views, sociograms were used to explore and analyse the positions in which CTOs placed themselves and PAMs with respect to others working in protected areas.

5.2 EXPECTATIONS: WHAT IS A ‘GOOD’ MANAGER?

Although the same five categories of skills and characteristics describing CTOs’ expectations of a ‘good’ PAM were used in the analysis, their specific expectations differed from those of PAMs. These categories were interpersonal, operational, liaison, and business skills and value-based attributes. The themes of the descriptive material were combined into the imposed categories, as described in Chapter 2. However, due to the broad nature of the categories they reflect
differences in the two groups. For example, CTOs’ expectations were influenced by their need to operate a business and ensure an income.

**Interpersonal skills and characteristics**

CTOs expect from PAMs excellent interpersonal skills, specifically communication skills, in combination with being liberal, approachable, friendly and helpful. With communication being an integral part of every CTO’s interaction, they consider it a basic requirement every PAM should have.

**Communicative.** From CTOs’ perspective, being a good communicator goes further than merely talking to each other. Their expectations are that ‘good’ PAMs will also recognise existing communication problems and practice public relations skills:

> But you have to have somebody who is also a good communicator, who does understand that there are problems with communications. Someone who also has good public relations (PR) skills; the department [DEC] as a whole doesn’t practice good PR, they have more police mentality than PR mentality. In an ideal world that’s what I would expect from a good protected area manager.

As this quote highlights, this CTO linked perceived communication problems to the lack of good public relations skills. Communication as seen by the CTO in this context is more than just talking, he/she considered it as being part of public relations. The definition of public relations is ‘[t]he practice of creating, promoting, or maintaining goodwill and a favourable image among the public towards an institution, public body, etc.’ (Collins Dictionary, 1999:1193). In accordance with this definition the CTO referred to creating and maintaining goodwill, as stated in
the quote ‘who understands that there are problems with communication’, indicating his/her expectation from PAMs and the agency at large.

**Liberal.** CTOs referred to the need for PAMs to recognise and accept different perspectives and views with respect to protected areas and their purpose, to be liberal, open-minded and tolerant. CTOs’ expectations were not just what they seek in PAMs but also within the community, landholders, other government departments, and Aboriginal groups. In expecting PAMs to be liberal and accepting, they were hoping that PAMs would not view tourism as the enemy, instead showing understanding of others who have a vested interest in protected areas’ needs:

> Also I think they need to have a greater understanding of the park and of the people involved in those areas, like researchers. You are going to have tourists but you’re also going to have the locals which have a different perspective. Perhaps they have to have an open mind in the way people use parks. They need to be understanding of the needs of both, not only of the environment that they’re protecting, but also needs of visitors to the area.

**Approachable.** For some CTOs it was really important that PAMs were approachable. They expected PAMs to be available for them, visible and willing to communicate and discuss ideas, issues and concerns. Being friendly and helpful was also identified by CTOs as important, and was included as part of this category. Also, CTOs expect ‘good’ PAMs to have a positive attitude when contacted by them, whilst showing a willingness to provide assistance. As one CTO highlighted:

> Good managers should have positive signage, they are protectors not policemen.
The CTO based this statement on PAMs’ reactions when approached, and expects PAMs to be friendly, welcoming and not displaying a policy mentality. The notion of ‘police mentality’ will be returned to later in this chapter, in presenting what CTOs perceived as relationship barriers between PAMs and themselves.

Operational skills and characteristics

CTOs expect various operational skills from ‘good’ PAMs, such as to be knowledgeable, practical and present and visible. Operational skills and characteristics in this context are the abilities CTOs consider necessary for PAMs to fulfil their day-to-day work requirements in protected areas.

Knowledgeable. CTOs expect PAMs to be well educated, with a high level of background knowledge of the area, flora and fauna, and of the history of the place. Additionally, PAMs are expected to know and have a good understanding of the reasons why the protected areas they are responsible for gained protection. CTOs expect PAMs to know the facts and be able to explain and demonstrate why the parks have protected area status and, with good interpersonal skills, communicate this information to them and to their customers:

A good manager should be well educated and knowledgeable about the area, who knows the area, the flora and fauna, and the history of the place. Each ranger should be well educated. We certainly try to instil in our tour guides, that they ask and utilise the ranger’s knowledge.

Practical skills. CTOs expect PAMs to undertake their job in a practical manner and possess practical skills such as maintaining facilities, site-works, and providing
park access in practical ways. Furthermore, they expect PAMs to be practical not only in the way they approach tasks and projects, but also when dealing with each other. By practical skills, CTOs meant hands-on tasks, but on another level, they associated practical skills with PAMs’ approach to conservation issues and how they enforce the agency’s rules and regulations:

[A good PAM is] one which provides conservation in a practical manner. Some people work to rules, and some people work from rules. Rules I believe, are a guide and yeah, just some people, because they feel they are the rules, that’s the end of it, there’s no way around it, for them it’s black and white. I don’t believe that should be the case.

As the above quote highlights, the CTO’s focus was on the attitude PAMs showed in working in protected areas and enforcing the agency’s rules and regulations. This quote also addressed the concern and expectation that good PAMs should not stringently enforce rules and regulations, instead they should do so in a ‘practical’ or pragmatic manner, whilst being understanding and tolerant when the situation requires it. Some of the CTOs’ concerns were that some PAMs were stringent and strident in their approaches when demanding that CTOs behave in a certain way.

**Present and visible.** One might expect that CTOs preferred being left alone when visiting a protected area, particularly since some CTOs made comments regarding PAMs working strictly to rules. However, this was not the case. The CTOs who complained about PAMs’ enforcement style were those who expect ‘good’ PAMs to be not overly controlling, possibly meaning that these CTOs do not want to see more PAMs. However, for the majority of the CTOs interviewed, it is important that ‘good’ PAMs are present and visible in the park. They preferred seeing and meeting PAMs when they visit a protected area. Some of the CTOs’ reasons were
that they hoped to get information from PAMs on the area that they themselves might not know, and which they can in turn pass on to their customers. Another reason was that PAMs being present and visible in the park are able to control its use, for example, in regulating where people, particularly independent travellers, are allowed to go. From the CTOs’ point of view, PAMs who are visible and present will therefore be beneficial to them and to their business, but also to the environment as they expect an improvement of people’s behaviour as a result of PAMs’ greater presence.

Liaison skills and characteristics

Collaborative. CTOs identified the need to improve existing levels of collaboration between themselves and PAMs. They expect PAMs to attempt to increase collaboration, which was based on their feeling that PAMs currently did not make enough collaborative efforts. CTOs thought that improved collaboration in working more closely together to try to achieve outcomes, such as maintaining the resource, would result in mutual benefits:

They should be able to work with other organisations, working together with stakeholders, operators, or the shire. In addition they need to be able to work with tourism. Being cooperative is probably how they should be because at the end of the day it is the same we want, we want to keep the parks how they are, we need them, and they need us and all the other stakeholders involved.

Another level of liaison was raised by CTOs with respect to PAMs’ conservation work. Prior to taking specific and targeted conservation actions, CTOs expect PAMs to provide them with information on the agency’s future planning and
management of a particular area, to ensure that they understand the underlying reasons:

If species are threatened the area should be closed off but they [PAMs] don’t communicate why they close off certain areas, so people are upset about it. CALM [DEC] locked up areas which resulted in community outcries because no reasons and explanations were given.

Understandably, CTOs want to liaise with PAMs as they expect PAMs to be visible and present in the park when they are there. This desire for forming closer working relationships was highlighted by most CTOs.

**Business skills and characteristics**

When CTOs mentioned that they expect PAMs to have a basic business knowledge, they referred to PAMs’ conceptual skills and the need for them to show an understanding of CTOs’ financial requirements.

**Business understanding.** They expect PAMs to have an awareness of CTOs’ position and associated business requirements as business owners. One CTO noted that he/she expects PAMs to help CTOs build a successful tourism business. This CTO perceived her/his own role as that of financial benefactor of the local town, and therefore PAMs should collaborate with local CTOs with the objective of bringing business to the town:

I’m bringing business into town. They [PAMs] should be helpful; they should help to build a successful business and not just mine. They need to recognise what other businesses do and acknowledge their role in tourism.
Not surprisingly, some CTOs expressed their desire for PAMs to be supportive of tourism:

I mean they [PAMs] need to be progressive, they need to look at sustainable tourism, being supportive of tourism. Interpretation on the ground is too limited. Rangers are not adding to the tourism experience they are restricted to providing firewood and cleaning toilets. They are not working with the tourism industry at all, instead all they do is maintenance work.

This quote illustrates that CTOs seek PAMs’ furtherance of, and assistance with, their activities in protected areas, and want PAMs to accept their activities and support tourism.

In their view, CTOs offer a sustainable tourism product in protected areas, and PAMs have the potential to add to their product by working together. They felt PAMs’ role should not focus exclusively on conservation and maintenance work, instead they should also work together with the tourism industry in providing assistance to, and input into, tourism. CTOs expect PAMs to play an active role in tourism, and for them it is important to have a good relationship with PAMs in the fields. They seek contact and communication with PAMs:

One who comes and approaches the group and wants to have a bit of a relationship with me. Information is a key to me; I prefer getting someone who tells me exactly what I need, all the information and also information updates. They [PAMs] should have a very good working partnership with us and vice versa.

As the last quote highlights, having a PAM join a CTO’s tour group will provide them and their customers with current information on the park or the agency. Having a higher level of communication and contact with the PAMs in the field therefore adds to the CTOs’ products and results in greater customer satisfaction.
CTOs expect PAMs to work with, and in accordance to, their management plans, and to take specific management actions when needed, such as limiting access to certain areas to reduce threats to species. They showed an understanding of the need to take specific and targeted conservation measures when required. In the context of planning and the management of these areas, the ability to set priorities, together with the capacity to balance competing demands, were further expectations of CTOs. There was an underlying noticeable sense of dissatisfaction when CTOs spoke about different priorities and standards, and different rules for different types of visitors:

Need to be clearer the sort of standards they try to impose. It’s only really effective to impose those standards when they also are met across the board by other tourism operators, by government agencies, by the community, and by the general public. It seems they are trying to impose a very high level of standards on CTOs simply because it’s easy to do. And then they leave 15,000 self-drivers into the park pretty much uncontrolled. Setting the right target in terms of who they are trying to control and how they are controlling rather than just control one part of it extremely tightly. Working out where the real priorities are is extremely important. We are given a great deal of guidelines before going into the park but there is only limited control of individual travellers.

In their opinion, PAMs should be fair and equitable in how they deal and work with different stakeholders.

**Value-based attributes**

When considering values, CTOs expect PAMs to commit to good environmental practices. In contrast to PAMs’ expectations that CTOs show environmental
awareness, CTOs stated their expectation that they associated specific tasks with PAMs, tasks that arose from their values.

**Value related tasks.** The tasks they referred to involved implementing and running monitoring programmes, trapping feral animals, protecting flora and fauna, and the control and management of protected areas – all tasks that are required to maintain the value of an area. The CTOs understood and acknowledged the need for management for protected areas to maintain the areas’ values. They connected the conservation and protection of the natural estate with maintaining this estate for its longevity. However, in CTOs’ views, conservation and protection should not be used to prohibit access:

> A good manager protects the natural estate; retain it so it’s not damaged for future generations. It is important for people in this generation to enjoy area and facilities without damaging them. I think that is the role of good management for natural areas.

**Sharing.** As part of value-based attributes, CTOs expect a willingness to ‘share’ from PAMs. The context CTOs used when they referred to ‘sharing’ was, first, sharing of the protected area, and secondly, sharing of information. According to CTOs, good PAMs acknowledge that tourism can have a place in national parks, are accepting of tourism and willing to share the resource. They expect ‘good’ PAMs to welcome people into the park. Furthermore, PAMs should willingly share their information and knowledge, specifically information about the protected area, conservation issues, or other aspects with respect to parks.
Passion. As a desirable attribute, some of the CTOs closely linked a willingness to share with passion. CTOs felt that, if PAMs are passionate about the protected area they look after it may increase the likelihood of their desire to share it with others. According to one CTO, good PAMs should be proud of the area they look after and feel honoured to show visitors how wonderful the place is:

I would say someone who has a real love of the bush, a love particular of the area they are involved with. Someone who cares for the area he is in charge of welcomes people and ensures that people visiting it do not do any damage.

As highlighted by this quote CTOs expect PAMs to be passionate about the area and therefore caring.

5.3 REALITY: HOW OPERATORS PERCEIVED THE MANAGERS

All participating CTOs were asked to describe how the PAMs with whom they engage actually ‘are’ (Question 5, Appendix 1), whilst providing them with a prompt card (Appendix 2) which featured a range of attributes, with the intention being to obtain a complementary view of how CTOs perceived PAMs. In asking this question, the aim was to gain insights into their perspectives through their selection of attributes to describe the working relationship between themselves and PAMs.

The most commonly selected attributes were: collaborative, conservationist, and knowledgeable (Table 5.1) (see Appendix 5 for all responses). Collaborative was selected by the participating CTOs from all three regions and the officers from Tourism Western Australia, whereas the other two attributes were selected by CTOs from the Kimberley and the South West.
Table 5.1: List of attributes CTOs selected to describe PAMs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes*</th>
<th>Kimberley CTOs (7)</th>
<th>Midwest CTOs (7)</th>
<th>South West CTOs (7)</th>
<th>Tourism WA (3)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservationist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature loving</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People person</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service oriented</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Note: *Attributes are presented in descending order]

The participating CTOs from all three regions and Tourism Western Australia perceived the PAMs with whom they currently work as collaborative. CTOs who selected ‘nature loving’ as an attribute to describe PAMs were from the Kimberley, South West and Tourism Western Australia, while all other attributes were mentioned by CTOs from only one or two regions. The CTOs from the South West selected exclusively positive attributes in describing PAMs (Table 5.1), and were the only ones who included ‘service oriented’ as an attribute. Further, the PAMs in the Kimberley and South West were identified as being ‘people persons’.

To obtain additional information on how CTOs perceive PAMs, they were asked to describe a memorable experience (Question 6, Appendix 1). The intention was not to lead their answers in order to obtain positive or negative accounts of events; rather a ‘neutral’ question was posed to provide the respondents with the opportunity to freely select their responses. The events CTOs described have been
categorised as positive or negative. One CTO from the South West and one representative from Tourism Western Australia did not provide an account, stating that they could not remember any specific situation and therefore were unable to answer this question. Twelve of the twenty-two participants remembered and presented a positive experience, with the remaining ten recounting a negative experience. Table 5.2 represents the separation of CTOs’ responses according to regions.

Table 5.2: CTOs’ memorable experiences with PAMs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Positive experience</th>
<th>Negative experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley (7)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest (7)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (6)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism WA (2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Positive experiences.** When CTOs described positive experiences they referred to instances where they collaborated and communicated successfully with PAMs. The collaboration they referred to was mainly based on operational activities. Two such examples where PAMs provided assistance to CTOs were during the CTOs’ burn-off procedures of an area used as a helipad in Purnululu National Park at the beginning of the season:

At the beginning of the season when we started setting up we needed to burn off the area for the helicopters to start and land. During the wet our helipads overgrow and each season we have to slash the grass. The boys here [PAMs] helped us and we all worked together.
I had a problem at Windjana Gorge last year, I left my trailer there, my group and I drove to Tunnel Creek. When we came back someone had taken the trailer pin that I had left on my trailer. So what do you do, you don’t carry a spare pin because nobody steals that. So when you have something stolen at Windjana Gorge, you walk around to the ranger’s house which most people are not welcome to do but because we built a relationship over the last few years it was possible. You walk around, knock on the front door, “Hi, how’re you going” and I told him that the trailer pin has been stolen. “Well let’s go and see what we can do, let’s find something”, so he goes. He found in his workshop a bolt that fitted which he gave to me, so off we went.

When CTOs said they remembered an occasion which was positive because of the good communication they had with PAMs, they referred to the extent to which PAMs provided them and their groups with information, the time they took to explain the area, and their willingness to talk to their customers and answer their questions. Some CTOs remembered individual PAMs because of their friendly personality, enthusiasm and the compassion they showed towards them and their customers:

My first tour to the Valley of the Giants, I felt a bit uncertain, as I haven’t done this tour before. I read up on it to be able to tell my passengers about it but it’s different if you’ve done it before. When we arrived I informed the ranger that it was my first tour and asked for consideration from his side. He was great, he was very understanding. In addition to giving his usual speech he also gave more information and he willingly answered all questions the passengers asked him. He spent more time with us than usual.

These experiences demonstrate the perceived success of PAMs in being approachable, visible and willing to come and join their tours, some of the expectations the CTOs have raised as described earlier.
Negative experiences. Accounts of negative experiences were based on situations when CTOs perceived PAMs to lack understanding of their position and objectives, for example their need to generate income. Other negative examples stemmed from instances where PAMs used their authority to place restrictions on CTOs, and how PAMs reacted to CTOs’ requests. Also mentioned were CTOs’ negative experiences based on a lack of communication between PAMs and themselves.

One CTO outlined a confrontation which happened at Nambung National Park in the Midwest region of Western Australia, in which he referred to the PAM as being on a ‘power trip’ and lacking understanding of other people’s needs:

After our [CTO’s] tour through the Pinnacles, on the way out, an elderly passenger was missing. We couldn’t find the person, so we were about 20 minutes late. I asked the gatekeeper if I as the bus driver could borrow CALM’s [DEC’s] 4WD to be able to drive through and look for the missing person as I couldn’t take my vehicle [coach]. She [PAM gatekeeper] wouldn’t give me the 4WD. By then I got pretty desperate, after several minutes of heated discussion the gatekeeper eventually closed up the gatehouse and drove off to search for the missing person. Eventually she found my customer and returned to the coach. What I’m saying is that you need to be able to rescue people and you need to have access. Again, the decision if I’m allowed to take a government car to search for this person was sort of a monumental decision. That person could have had a heart attack or something in the meantime.

The above incident was remembered by the CTO as negative because he/she perceived the PAM following the rules too closely, but also the negative manner in which the PAM behaved. From the CTO’s perspective, the PAM was commanding and authoritative without showing compassion.

Other aspects highlighted by CTOs when talking about their experiences included a lack of communication and collaboration by PAMs. One such incident occurred
when the Tourism Western Australia officer in the region planned a visit to meet a PAM in one of the parks in the Kimberley in order to gain a better understanding of PAMs’ on-ground work in a park. Despite several approaches to contact the PAM, and leaving telephone, telefax and e-mail messages, the PAM never replied or acknowledged being contacted and the Tourism Western Australia officer gave up.

5.4 BARRIERS WORKING TOGETHER

Previously illustrated examples of CTOs’ memorable experiences indicated perceived barriers between PAMs and CTOs from the CTOs’ perspective. To obtain a richer presentation of CTOs’ perceptions of current working arrangements between themselves and PAMs, they were asked to describe what they perceived as current barriers (Question 4, Appendix 1). The participating CTOs mentioned a range of barriers: operational constraints; one’s personal behaviour; insufficient communication and contact; administrative requirements and procedures; financial constraints; different priorities; and lack of business knowledge. Several of the barriers mentioned related to the attributes CTOs expect from ‘good’ PAMs, thus they closely link their expectations with the perceived barriers between themselves and PAMs. All these barriers were categorised and are summarised in Figure 5.1. Note that one CTO from the South West said there were no barriers to working together.
Figure 5.1: Identified barriers between CTOs and PAMs which hinder effective working arrangements (listed in order of significance) as seen by CTOs
Personal behaviour. What CTOs perceived as negative personal behaviour displayed by some PAMs when dealing with each other was also identified as one of the barriers. Situations where PAMs’ behaviour appeared to be antagonistic and underlined by a police mentality and the negative manner in which they enforce park regulations led to CTOs feeling disempowered and helpless. CTOs felt that some PAMs use their authoritarian powers to raise issues or forbid activities, instead of discussing them with the CTOs:

If we so much as look like we have done something wrong they [PAMs] would be down here in an instant. What they want is policing and nothing else, they only want to police everything. Generally they have more police mentality than communication.

CALM [DEC] managers have the power to turn off and turn on our businesses, because they say where we can go and where we can’t, which is fine, we understand that, it’s all about safety and things like that. But it is a bit of a power trip for them to be honest and most operators up here don’t have a good feeling for CALM [DEC] at all. All the operators think they [PAMs] are arrogant, they know that they have this amazing icon and yeah, are on a bit of a power trip.

The power imbalance was also evident in statements made by CTOs referring to interactions, particularly the ways in which PAMs interact with them. CTOs were under the impression that some PAMs felt that they held a superior position to them, showing a ‘high horse’ attitude when dealing with them. Their perception was that CTOs were monitored and observed more closely during their visits in parks, and more regulations were placed on them than on individual travellers, who CTOs felt were not being scrutinised by PAMs in the same manner as they were. Subsequently, animosity begun to build up between CTOs and PAMs, with CTOs making comments such as that PAMs forgot that they are employed as public servants, that they hate tourism and tourists, and that they behave as if they
personally owned the protected area they work in, as the comment below illustrates:

It seems they [PAMs] are trying to impose a very high level of standards on tour operators simply because it’s easy to do. And then they leave 15,000 self-drivers into the park pretty much uncontrolled. Setting the right target in terms of who they are trying to control and how they are controlling rather than just control one part of it extremely tightly.

One of the biggest issues up here especially is that people who are in charge of the protected areas don’t want anyone else to see them. In fact they hate tourists.

However, they clarified that it is often an individual’s personality which posed problems and resulted in becoming a barrier.

CTOs’ perceptions were that PAMs did not show an interest in their tours or issues concerning them. One CTO made the statement that PAMs are only present in the park to collect fees or hand out brochures. For CTOs these mechanical tasks displayed by PAMs were not enough, and they felt that PAMs were not interested in what they were doing and exhibited this during their encounters. Officers from Tourism Western Australia’s head office commented that the main complaints they received from CTOs were that PAMs in the field did not want anyone, visitors or CTOs, visiting ‘their’ protected areas.

Operational constraints. CTOs from every region highlighted operational constraints, such as PAMs’ inconsistent behaviour at a local level, and legislative requirements as barriers. Identifying PAMs’ inconsistent behaviour as a barrier, CTOs felt that PAMs are not consistent in the way they treat CTOs. This related to
instances where CTOs breached their licensing conditions without being penalised for it even though PAMs were aware of the breach. The CTOs who acted in accordance with the regulations perceived the lack of PAMs’ actions as unjust, resulting in anger and frustration. This sense of inconsistency between different CTOs and PAMs was also experienced by CTOs at a local level in remote locations. Certainly, some local CTOs established better working relationships with PAMs, often resulting in personal contacts and friendships; these CTOs and PAMs developed a good work synergy. However, not all CTOs considered themselves to be part of this synergy and felt excluded and out of favour with PAMs.

The barrier posed by legislative constraints was outlined by staff from Tourism Western Australia’s head office and some CTOs. They recognised that PAMs are required to abide by, and act in accordance with, their overarching parliamentary Act and Regulations: the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA), Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 (WA), and the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 (WA), which outline procedures and restrictions with respect to protected areas. Nevertheless, CTOs felt that the rules and regulations for commercial operations in protected areas were too harsh and restrictive. The regulations, or rather the ways, in which PAMs implement them, were perceived as lacking in flexibility. The public policy background is further discussed in Chapter 6.

**Insufficient communication and contact.** One key complaint from CTOs from every region was that work operations such as road closures or maintenance work were conducted without giving CTOs advance notice. According to some CTOs, areas or roads were closed off without warning, and the reasons for doing so were not given. They perceived this lack of communication and contact as impinging not
only on their work but also on their relationships with PAMs to the degree that one CTO said that he/she started to feel reluctant to talk to, and work with PAMs at all.

Insufficient communication was also mentioned as a barrier, where CTOs thought PAMs are not communicating enough with them and their customers. As one CTO commented:

I would like to have more communication with rangers in the field, have closer contact with them so they can tell us different things, what’s happening in the Park. They should be available to answer questions some of our customers might have. I think that is very important, it would make the trip for our customers so much more exciting.

From an organisational point of view, comments with respect to DEC’s lack of consultation were evident and perceived as such by an officer from Tourism Western Australia who pointed out:

I think there is no consultation really. We always ask CALM [DEC] for comments but they never ask us, it’s only really a one-way street. In the past they [PAMs] haven’t shown they are very good at coming out and collaborating with people like us to make things happen. They want to do and control it all themselves. CALM [DEC] could benefit from collaborating with organisations like us, especially with our Aboriginal involvement. They are bad communicators; again that is a power trip and they think they have the powers to do what they want without consulting anyone else.

The perception of an unbalanced power relationship between DEC and the tourism industry, specifically PAMs and CTOs, prevailed with respect to tourism in protected areas. CTOs felt helpless and in no position to change this situation on their own. To overcome these conflicts and divides they suggested increasing collaboration to the extent that CTOs could become a valuable part in the
management of protected areas in contributing resources, for example through interpretation.

**Administrative requirements and procedures.** The greatest barrier within existing administrative requirements were licensing related. CTOs considered the validity period for a standard licence to not be long enough (see Chapter 3, section 3.2). To obtain a one-year ‘T’ class licence was perceived by CTOs a barrier, primarily because of the need for them to invest into their businesses to either upgrade or meet the initial set up costs in addition to the ongoing need to re-apply for their licence. Another issue raised with respect to licences was the lack of stipulation and control of how many standard ‘T’ class licences can be issued for a certain area, in contrast to the ‘E’ class licences. The licensing and renewal procedures required from the agency were identified as another barrier by CTOs:

I personally feel that CALM [DEC], together with some tourism body, and I’m deliberately being a bit vague, here should play a bit more of a role here in the control of licences, together with the Department of Transport because anybody can buy a LandCruiser,\(^8\) have it registered as a TC, a tourist coach vehicle, get their licence and, if they are very good, they might go and get a First-Aid course and have a First-Aid certificate, that’s very good. Then they get a CALM [DEC] licence and can take tourists anywhere they like. Whether they go to the Pinnacles for the day or Wave Rock or down south or another tour operator to Monkey Mia or Ningaloo Reef, whatever they like. I couldn’t estimate how many seats are available to Ningaloo Reef for example, but it’s just incredible how many seats are available, far more than what are needed.

Other minor barriers closely associated with, and based on, the agency and administrative procedures were identified by CTOs from the Kimberley and the

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\(^8\) Car type manufactured by Toyota. The Toyota LandCruiser is available as an eleven seater and is a four-wheel drive vehicle often the preferred choice by CTOs as a tour vehicle.
South West. Their complaints were that the people in head office were bureaucratic and the administration processes were slow and time consuming. According to one CTO, administrative procedures take too long and the time frame is not in tune with the industry’s need. One such example was the timing for the submission of an expression of interest (EOI) to obtain an E-class licence. The submission closing date set out by DEC coincided with the timing to print new marketing brochures advertising the following year’s tours without knowing whether they were even successful in obtaining the E-class licence they applied for.

**Financial constraints.** CTOs mentioned two levels of financial constraints as barriers: the first level was the financial constraints of the conservation agency, and the second level was the financial requirements which were part of their licence conditions. On a departmental level, regarding the first level of constraints, some CTOs perceived the lack of the agency’s financial resources as a barrier. According to them, due to financial constraints PAMs were unable to conduct monitoring programs or provide effective interpretation programs or to employ additional staff, particularly field staff.

When CTOs identified financial requirements as a constraint (the second level), they referred to the existing fee structure, in particular the park entrance fees which the agency raises in addition to the CTOs’ licence fees. The entrance fee is a per customer head fee that must be paid on every entry to a park (CALM, 2004b).

**Different priorities.** CTOs from all regions identified differences of priorities between themselves and PAMs as barriers. They recognised that PAMs had a
different but vested interest in the parks they are managing, but they referred to
barriers resulting from the way in which these priority differences influenced and
affected their relationships with each other. CTOs felt that PAMs were not prepared
to accept or take up other people’s input, in particular input from CTOs with
respect to planning or management of protected areas. One such example was
given by a CTO advocating the widening and improvement of the existing track
through the Pinnacle Desert in Nambung National Park in order to cater for larger
vehicles. Apparently he/she forwarded this suggestion to the department with the
justification that the provision of better vehicle access would lead people to lose
interest in wandering around and potentially climbing on the pinnacles, therefore
resulting in a win-win situation of better conservation whilst providing for visitors.
This CTO’s personal understanding and perception was that DEC was not willing to
change its views and priorities to accommodate others’ position.

The agency’s underlying legislation and policies were also mentioned as a barrier.
CTOs were aware that the agency and PAMs operate under government legislation,
but felt that the park management is predominantly driven by bureaucratic
processes:

When CALM [DEC] wants your opinion I think they have some
obligations, if they are going to do stuff that they have to go and ask
for input. It’s almost that, you know, that there is a procedure they
must go through, but you also know that there is very little chance of
any changes being made to what’s been put up. They don’t live in
the real world, they are not prepared to accept or pick up other
people’s input.

They perceived the agency and some PAMs as acting as ‘political puppets’
following guidelines of the leading political party in the management of protected
areas. Some CTOs mentioned that the agency is always reacting to government
decisions, instead of having an advisory role to the government on conservation issues.

**Lack of business skills.** Some CTOs perceived PAMs lacked understanding of, and associated skills in, operating a successful tourism business. Their view was that the agency does not work in a cost and time efficient way. They based this view on their experiences of the way the agency and individual PAMs act in their dealings with them:

As a commercial operator working with a government department you see so many things that are inefficient, costly, and when you discuss these issues with them you'll always get the nod. Yeah I understand what you are saying, but really nothing gets done. They are coming from a bureaucratic point of view, not a business point of view. It’s a different view of the world.

**5.5 HOW OPERATORS PLACED THEMSELVES WITHIN THE SYSTEM – SOCIOGRAMS**

To explore how the CTOs placed themselves in relation to all other stakeholders they identified as being involved in protected areas, they were also asked to draw sociograms as part of their interview (Question 7, Appendix 1). Some of the CTOs appeared reluctant to accept the invitation to draw a sociogram. Out of the twenty-one CTOs and three Tourism Western Australia officers, eighteen participants engaged in drawing a sociogram, with the remaining six (three CTOs from the Midwest, two from the South West and one from the Kimberley) declining. The following sociograms (Figures 5.2 – 5.4) are typical of all the sociograms drawn by the CTOs and representatives of Tourism Western Australia. For consistency I used the same colour coding as with PAMs’ sociograms: a green circle was
superimposed to highlight the CTO’s position; an orange circle to indicate the PAM’s or agency’s position, and a blue line to distinguish between DEC and the other stakeholders.

Figure 5.2: CTO’s sociogram (a) (South West)
Chapter 5: Operators’ views

Figure 5.3: Tourism Western Australia officer’s sociogram (Kimberley)

Figure 5.4: CTO’s sociogram (b) (South West)
Chapter 5: Operators’ views

The CTOs’ sociograms were hierarchical and linear in nature. The CTOs and Tourism Western Australia officers placed the PAMs at the peak, or immediately below the top of, the hierarchical structure they drew, and themselves at a lower level amongst the other stakeholders (Table 5.3). Table 5.3 presents the stakeholders CTOs included in their sociograms, including how often they were mentioned. Not every respondent included all of these stakeholders and in some instances some of the stakeholders were not included at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Kimberley CTOs (6)</th>
<th>Midwest CTOs (3)</th>
<th>South West CTOs (6)</th>
<th>Tourism WA (3)</th>
<th>Total (18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAMs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agencies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism WA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist bureau</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal groups</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholders</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Commission</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this study specifically considered the interaction between PAMs and CTOs, it should be noted that one CTO from the South West did not include PAMs, or the agency itself, in his/her sociogram. Surprisingly, none of the Tourism Western Australia officers included the Conservation Commission, even though they are
involved in policy issues in working with the agency. The Conservation Commission was mentioned once only by a CTO from the Midwest. CTOs might not necessarily be aware of the Conservation Commission’s role with respect to protected areas, or even of their existence, which might explain why they did not include them in their sociograms.

Aboriginal groups were not at all mentioned by CTOs from the Midwest, even though Aboriginal groups are involved in tourism and operate cultural walks in the Shark Bay area where part of this research took place (Tourism Western Australia, 2005; Wula Guda Nyinda, 2006). Only one CTO and one officer from Tourism Western Australia included Aboriginal groups in their sociograms. Four CTOs from the Kimberley included Aboriginal groups, which may be based on more frequent encounters with these groups during their tours. Also, the relative population size (i.e. the proportion of Aboriginals) is significantly higher in the Kimberley than in other regions in Western Australia (ABS, 2002). Similar to PAMs’ results, some CTOs may have misunderstood the question and only included the stakeholders with whom they have encounters in these areas, instead of all stakeholders which are involved in, managing, working or have a vested interest in protected areas.

In exploring how the CTOs considered their own and PAMs’ placement in relation to others working in protected areas, their relative positioning in their sociograms is important. In considering how the individual CTO positioned herself/him, it can be seen that this was mostly at the bottom of the sociograms (see green circle, Figures 5.2 – 5.4). The CTOs’ sociograms were hierarchical and linear, with stakeholders placed either vertically along a gradient (Figure 5.4), or in vertical ‘layers’ of different tiers (Figures 5.2 and 5.3). The CTOs positioned the PAMs or
Chapter 5: Operators’ views

the agency at the peak of their structures, moving downwards to other stakeholders and themselves. The sociograms show an apparent separation between the PAMs and the other stakeholders (the overlaid blue line aims to visually illustrate this point (see Figures 5.2 – 5.4).

The other important function of the sociograms was to determine the interactions between PAMs and CTOs, and the direction of these interactions as perceived by the CTOs (Figure 5.5).

![Sociogram showing interactions between PAMs and CTOs](image)

**Figure 5.5: CTOs’ and Tourism Western Australia officers’ interactions (one-way/two-ways/none) with PAMs (based on all sociograms)**

Eight CTOs drew two-way interactions between themselves and PAMs. Seven CTOs drew one-way interactions, with the starting point directed from the PAMs to the CTOs, and one Tourism Western Australia officer drew a one-way interaction, with the starting point directed from the CTO to the PAMs. One CTO from the Midwest and from the South West included PAMs in their sociograms but did not include any interaction (connection) between themselves and the PAMs (Figure 5.5).
The direction of the interaction, from PAMs to CTOs, indicates that the CTOs perceived their interaction as ‘getting told’ what to do; they considered it a one-way communication. To help place the respondents’ sociograms into context, the sociograms will be further explored and analysed with respect to power and the relationships between CTOs and PAMs in Chapter 7.

5.6 THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTED AREAS

When CTOs were asked what they considered to be the main purpose of protected areas, the aim was to identify what they value with respect to protected areas (Question 2, Appendix 1). The CTOs identified a range of values they thought important (Table 5.4). As expected, all CTOs identified the recreational and enjoyment aspect as the main purpose of protected areas, followed by the conservation of biodiversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of protected areas</th>
<th>From 21 CTOs and 3 Tourism WA officers identified by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and enjoyment</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of biodiversity</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain naturalness</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact minimisation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education on protected areas</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All but five CTOs stated that the conservation of biodiversity is highly important for protected areas. They expected various benefits in conserving biodiversity in
protected areas, such as:

- The protection of fragile environments with their flora and fauna species against impacts to ensure their survival,
- The protection and conservation of biodiversity for future generations,
- The provision of enjoyment for their customers, and
- The potential of increased protection if people know and therefore appreciate an area, which can be achieved through their involvement in showcasing national parks and educating people about the area.

CTOs’ identification of recreation and enjoyment as the main purpose of protected areas was expected, given their business interest. In identifying the conservation of biodiversity as the second most important purpose, and therefore value, the CTOs showed their understanding that conservation is important as based on values but also as a means of ensuring the viability of the resource and therefore their business.

To maintain the naturalness of an area was mentioned by more than one-half of all CTOs, and impact minimisation was mentioned ten times as ‘other purposes’ for protected areas. CTOs expressed their understanding that a protected area should be kept in as natural state as possible, with only minimal impacts. Similarly to PAMs, when CTOs mentioned maintaining the naturalness of the area as a value, they spoke about managing and maintaining the protected area in excellent environmental conditions. They were aware that, for protected areas, the conservation agency has the legal mandate to conserve and protect the area.

The last value, education on protected areas, presents CTOs’ view that they thought people are an integral part of protected areas. CTOs considered
themselves to be an excellent ‘vehicle’ for educating and informing their customers about these areas:

A tour is an ideal way to get people in a protected area. Going with an operator is going with someone who does understand the area and knows what’s right and what’s wrong and can educate people about it.

In educating people on their tours, CTOs believe that a greater understanding of why these areas are protected can be achieved, and therefore they can raise their customers’ appreciation. Even though recreation was the value which all CTOs and the officers from Tourism Western Australia identified as the main purpose, they also thought that the areas, as well as the people visiting it, need to be managed to ensure minimal impacts and to retain the resource.

5.7 ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES OPERATORS SEEK IN PEOPLE WORKING IN PROTECTED AREAS

The attributes and values CTOs seek in people working in protected areas reflect their personal values and were of great importance when trying to understand their worldviews, which will be discussed in Chapter 6. The CTOs were asked to provide what they considered to be the five most important attributes and values, ranked from one as the most important, to five as the least important attribute (Question 8, Appendix 1). To maintain consistency with PAMs’ interviews, the question they were asked was identical, and they were asked to name attributes for anyone working in these areas who is not in a particular profession.

The attributes CTOs considered as important were wide ranging, and included interpersonal attributes, operational characteristics as well as personal behaviour
and attitude. Table 5.6 presents the attributes that CTOs identified and ranked number one (a complete list is given in Appendix 6).

Table 5.5: Most important attributes and values CTOs identified for people working in protected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important attributes</th>
<th>From 21 CTOs and 3 Tourism WA officers identified by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation ethic</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal/Communication skills</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion (job, area, people)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational responsibility</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (area)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attribute most CTOs seek in a person working in protected areas was conservation ethic. One-third of all CTOs emphasised the need to be environmentally aware, to behave in an environmentally friendly manner, and to show an understanding of conservation issues. The next attribute CTOs identified was good interpersonal/communication skills. CTOs felt that everybody working in protected areas should have these skills, particularly since there is an increase in the number of people who visit national parks, and more encounters between different groups can be expected. A positive attitude, combined with having a passion for the job, the area and the people while behaving in an operationally responsible manner, were further values some CTOs seek. The last attribute mentioned for someone working in protected areas was being knowledgeable of the area.

The empirical findings of this research, as presented in this and the previous chapters, build a foundation on which the theoretical underpinning is based. The
next chapters (Chapter 6, 7 and 8) present the analysis of the results. Chapter 6 illustrates the importance of values, personal and policy values with respect to tourism in protected areas within the context of these findings.
6.1 INTRODUCTION

How protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs) relate to the environment in which they work and to each other is influenced by their ethical stance and their values. These influences, and their importance in tourism settings, are currently not well explored or fully acknowledged (Fennell, 2006; Holden, 2003; Holden, 2005). It is necessary to address ethics and values in this context because ‘[e]thical disputes are much more than simply differences of opinion about what is right and wrong; they are rooted in different ‘forms of life’ and indicative of social expectations and aspirations’ (Smith and Duffy, 2003:15).

Recognising the significance of an individual’s values regarding protected areas, this chapter also explores the public policies values underlying the participants’ daily operations.

With different interests of stakeholders, as well as their potentially conflicting values and ethical stance, the possibility of disputes arises. Ethics and values are essentially linked to the social world and should be considered and fully incorporated in tourism management and public policies (Fennell, 2003; Holden, 2000; Macbeth, 2005), because a person’s ethical stance and values essentially guides how this person views and approaches nature and activities in a natural environment (Rolston, 2005).
6.2 TOURISM ETHICS

There are several features of ethics and values relevant to tourism in protected areas that are central to this thesis, ethical positions steering individual values, organisational values, and public policy values. One important aspect which must be considered is determining how PAMs and CTOs ‘use’ protected areas, and the implications of their ethical stances towards tourism for their working relationships. In addition to ethics, personal values, organisational values and policy locations, the power dynamics between individuals also have action guiding functions. The notion of power, with its facets of dominance and resistance power and perceived hierarchical differences with respect to PAMs and CTOs, will be explored in Chapter 7.

Interaction with the physical and cultural environment raises ethical questions of how these environments are understood and used by the respondents within the context of nature based tourism. Holden (2000:52) defines tourism ethics as: ‘[t]he study of the moral adequacy of the interaction between humans and the environment for the purpose of tourism’. This definition raises the notion that people should adopt a morally acceptable conduct when interacting with the environment. Starting to include ethics in tourism is a step forward; however, it needs to be further expanded to include the relationship between humans, based on the implication from individuals’ ethical stances or moral adequacy, and their interactions with the environment.

Ideally, tourism ethics should include both human–environment as well as human–human based on human–environment interactions. It may not appear
relevant at first glance to include human-human interactions when addressing
tourism ethics, but the importance in doing so is based on the understanding that
values are fundamental to everything humans do. As such, a person’s value builds
the foundation for, and guides, this person’s behaviour, and therefore needs to be
addressed when considering moral adequacy and ethical stance.

The need to include ethics in tourism was also recognised by the World Tourism
Organization (WTO) as providing a framework that guides the activities of the
tourism industry. In 1999, at the 13th WTO General Assembly in Santiago, Chile,
the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism was approved unanimously, and was
officially recognised by the UN General Assembly through its resolution in 2001
(Fennell, 2006). The WTO’s Code of Ethics statement reads in part:

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism sets a frame of reference for
the responsible and sustainable development of world tourism. It
draws inspiration from many similar declarations and industry codes
that have come before and it adds new thinking that reflects our
changing society at the beginning of the 21st century. ... [m]embers
of the World Tourism Organization believe that the Global Code of
Ethics for Tourism is needed to help minimize the negative impacts
of tourism on the environment and on cultural heritage while
maximizing the benefits for residents of tourism destinations. ... [to]
safeguard the future of the tourism industry and expand the sector’s
contribution to economic prosperity, peace and understanding
among all the nations of the world.

[Francesco Frangialli,
Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization]

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism is underpinned by principles documented in
ten articles. The first nine articles address general principles on how tourism
should be considered, with the tenth article providing for a voluntary
implementation mechanism (WTO, 2005). The principles aim for tourism to
contribute to mutual understanding and respect between visitors and communities, and to act as a means for individual and collective fulfilment. Tourism should also be considered as a factor for sustainable development and see its responsibility to be in the role of contributor to enhance cultural heritage. Furthermore, the aim of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism principles is to offer beneficial activities for host communities, as well as obligatory functions for stakeholders in tourism development. The last principles address the liberty of tourist movements, stating that tourists should not be subjected to excessive formalities or discrimination and should be allowed to travel and have access to cultural sites, and describing the rights of workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry (WTO, 2005).

Due to the increased inclusion of ethics in tourism, as well as the guiding function of ethics on conduct and actions, it is important to examine the concept of values. This need is based in the notion that ‘[v]alues serve to act as the basic premise of ethics because they presuppose an entity that acts to achieve a goal in the face of alternatives’ (Fennell, 2006:57). Values can be defined as a person’s or group’s central belief system and purpose which is informed by one’s ethical ideals (Jary and Jary, 2000). The ethical dimension informs values in decision making processes and guides everything humans do, and is a cornerstone of moral philosophy. An important part of ethics is that of value clarification (Hudson and Miller, 2005), as a shift in ethics inevitably results in a shift in values.
6.3 THE ROLE OF VALUES

When considering tourism ethics in relation to protected areas, the question arises as to what values influence one’s behaviour and actions. There are many kinds of values relevant to tourism, with the following groupings by Smith and Duffy (2003) providing a useful summary:

- **Ethical values** – evaluating the moral worth of a thing, an action or a person;
- **Aesthetic values** – appreciating and passing judgement about a thing’s beauty; and
- **Economic values** – valuing those material things we produce and consume in everyday life (Smith and Duffy, 2003:9).

All these values are interlinked and part of a complex relationship which is sometimes difficult to clearly separate. The authors consider these three main value groups as different spheres of values (Figure 6.1) (Smith and Duffy, 2003). It should be noted that the importance of each value, and therefore the amount of overlap, does not necessarily have to be equal, as changing requirements result in a shift of their relative importance. Different people will prioritise these values differently; for example, enthusiastic nature lovers may hold aesthetic values in higher regard than economic values. Smith and Duffy (2003) point out that over the last few decades the importance of economic values relevant to tourism have grown, whereas ethical and aesthetic values have decreased.
Values underpin everything humans do; they govern the way people behave. They are the foundation of a person’s standards which influence that person’s actions and behaviour, but values are also used to judge others’ behaviour. Values are modes of conduct, they are central and embedded within a person’s central core (Braithwaithe, 1998; Fennell, 2006; Harshaw and Tindall, 2005; Higham and Carr, 2002; Milbrath, 1989; Rokeach, 1973; Rokeach, 1980). Values are perceived as stable, fundamental and as providing the basis for individuals’ or groups’ worldviews, justice and social and moral orders (Ajzen, 1988; Reser and Bentruperbäumer, 2005; Rokeach, 1973; Rokeach, 1980). Humans base their decisions on their values; as such, their value system determines how important protected areas are for them, and their individual attitudes and actions towards these areas.
Protected areas are of value to society for various reasons. The central foundation of one’s values can be based primarily in philosophy, psychology and economics as well as sociology and anthropology, depending on one’s viewpoint (Lockwood, 1999). With respect to values for a nature based tourism setting, philosophers such as Rolston (1983 and 1988) aimed to generate an environmental value theory for which environmental values (e.g. preserving biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources) were of importance. In comparison, psychologists focused on the individual and her/his value orientation. A value orientation from a psychological position is an individual’s stance regarding her/his values whereby some values have higher priority to the person than others (Lockwood, 1999). These differences in positioning oneself (philosophy, psychology, economics, sociology and anthropology) when considering values, referring to actual features and attributes as in environmental values, and/or referring to a human belief system which resides within humans, frequently pose difficulties when addressing values (Reser and Bentrupperbäumer, 2005). Analogous to the metaphor of a crystal used in earlier chapters, depending on the different angles, each individual makes the decision what is of value to them and what is meant by it.

From an economist’s perspective, the aim is to find techniques to determine protected areas’ economic values (e.g. economic benefits to a local community) (Carlsen and Wood, 2004). Economic values, part of Smith and Duffy’s (2003) spheres of values, are values which refer to attributes, such as income generated through protected areas. In contrast to ethical values, economic values are quantifiable (Smith and Duffy, 2003).
It is insufficient to consider only tourism values (ethical, aesthetic and economic) when addressing the respondents’ values regarding protected areas, because consideration of the environmental context is needed as well. As such, the two broad value categories regarding nature – instrumental values and intrinsic values – need to be considered (Fennell, 2006; Lockwood, 1999; Putney, 2003; Worboys, et al., 2005). A variation to this categorisation has been recently provided, for biodiversity, by Wallace (2003, 2006). Values depend on (a) the benefits people obtain from nature (e.g. consumptive and productive use values), and (b) the benefits for human well-being and key human needs (e.g. amenity values and ecosystem service values) (Wallace, 2006; Wallace et al., 2003). The former categorisation applies more directly to tourism and is explored further below.

Instrumental values can be best explained by looking at a resource. If a resource is considered as having an instrumental value it means that this resource has the potential to provide, attain or result in something else which is considered of value to humans (i.e. the resource is not necessarily considered of value for itself) (Fennell, 2006). Instrumental values can be viewed as the ‘tool’ to reach another outcome of value, where something will be ‘extracted’ from the resource to obtain the new value. Instrumental values assigned to a resource serve as a means of influence to gain something which is perceived as ‘better’ and more desirable by people. Instrumental values frequently relate to economic values.

Different types of extractive instrumental values relating to protected areas are recognised: direct extractive values, ecosystem services, and indirect extractive values. Direct extractive values relate to the extraction of commodities or on-site use of the resource, examples include iron-ore mining, commercial fishing, or gas
drilling (Worboys, et al., 2005). The meaning of ‘on-site use of a resource’ in this context extends beyond visitors coming to an area to ‘use’ the area as part of their experiences and enjoyment, although one might call this ‘use’; instead it refers to examples of extraction of commodities to gain economic benefits, or for medicinal uses, but also to activities such as recreational fishing. If the ‘use’ of protected areas is based on extractive instrumental values, they are turned into commodities where something can be bought or sold, in this instance the resource (Smith and Duffy, 2003).

The next type of extractive instrumental values are ecosystem services, values that contribute to ecological functions which are necessary to sustain the environment and, in a broader sense, life (Wallace, 2006; Wallace, et al., 2003; Worboys, et al., 2005). The last type of extractive instrumental values are indirect, and are called relational intangible values. These indirect values relate to the relationships people build with a protected area (Fennell, 2003; Putney, 2003; Rolston, 1983; Rolston, 1988; Rolston, 2005; Stenmark, 2002; Worboys, et al., 2005).

The definition for relational intangible values highlights how protected areas have the potential to enrich people’s lives, defined as ‘[t]hat which enriches the intellectual, psychological, emotional, spiritual, cultural, and/or creative aspects of human existence and well being’ (WCPA 2000 in Putney, 2003:4). People have the ability to appreciate and enjoy nature on all these levels, not only in relation to a biological understanding. Developing a sense of place or sense of ownership are two examples of relational intangible values.
Relational intangible values are of particular importance with regards to protected areas, due to their complexity and their influence on people’s lives. Their importance was also recognised by the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Cultural & Spiritual Values Task Force, which published an extensive list of relational intangible values of protected areas:

1. Recreational values – nature’s intrinsic qualities impacting on humans visiting a natural area
2. Spiritual values – nature’s qualities that inspire humans to relate to the sacredness of nature
3. Cultural values – the qualities ascribed to natural, cultural and mixed sites that fulfil humans’ need to understand and connect to the environment
4. Identity values – sites that link people to the landscape
5. Existence values – the satisfaction and symbolic importance derived from the knowledge that landscapes have been protected and exist as spaces where all forms of life and culture are valued
6. Artistic values – nature’s qualities that inspire imagination and creativity
7. Aesthetic values – appreciation of the harmony, beauty and profound meaning found in nature
8. Educational values – nature’s qualities that enlighten the observer with respect to human relationships with the natural environment
9. Research and monitoring values – natural areas’ function as refuges, benchmarks and baselines that provide science with relatively natural sites less influenced by human-induced change
10. Peace values – the function of protected areas to foster regional peace and stability through cooperative management across boundaries, or as intercultural spaces to foster understanding between traditional and modern societies or cultures
11. Therapeutic values – the relationship between nature and humans that creates the potential for healing and enhanced well-being (Putney, 2003:7-8).
Often these values overlap and it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between them. Some authors place relational intangible values as a separate category under instrumental values (Worboys, et al., 2005); however, as the essence of these values is in the broadest sense extractive because they are indirectly ‘used’ by, and provide humans with, various benefits (e.g. healing, inspiration, relaxation), they are best considered as part of instrumental extractive values (Barnes, 2003; Davis et al., 2003).

In contrast to instrumental values, from which humans gain benefits, intrinsic values are of value in themselves. Intrinsic values exist autonomously and independently of a ‘valuer’ in nature, they can be described as ‘essential nature’ (Lockwood, 1999; Rolston, 1983). This means a resource which is viewed as having intrinsic values should be conceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of possible benefits to humans. From an abstract point of view, intrinsic values exist independently of humans and are present whether or not they are recognised or acknowledged (Fennell, 2003; Rolston, 1983; Stenmark, 2002; Worboys, et al., 2005). However, as the concept of values is conceptualised by humans, a conscious decision is made in assigning and valuing nature or aspects of it. Who assigns which values to a resource is a decision made by humans, and is the result of humans’ reasoning and judgements (Reser and Bentrupperbäumer, 2005).

Rolston (1988) suggests that, through people’s increased appreciation of an area based on the area’s intrinsic values, these intrinsic values may transform to become instrumental values, because people start developing a connection to this area. It needs to be recognised that instrumental and intrinsic values are
connected, and that they can change and transform into each other. Intrinsic values can also evolve into relational intangible values, providing humans with the above mentioned benefits (Rolston, 1988).

With respect to this research, when asking what values the respondents assign to protected areas it is important to consider instrumental and intrinsic values, in conjunction with the three spheres of tourism values (ethical, aesthetic and economic). In Figure 6.2 nature values and tourism values were combined to illustrate these linkages.

![Figure 6.2: Tourism value spheres combined with nature values (Source: author)](image)

Ethical and intrinsic values can be linked as both are concerned with the worth of an action or entity in its own right, in this instance the resource, the worth of protected areas without benefits to humans or other species. In the abstract, intrinsic values as ethical values should exist autonomously. Although it may seem
that aesthetic values are intrinsic values, they are more closely related to instrumental relational intangible values, because they relate to relationships people build with a protected area. Economic values are clearly associated with instrumental extractive values based on the extraction of commodities. To gain insight into PAMs’ and CTOs’ values, I asked them what they considered to be the purpose of protected areas. To date there has been only limited information on PAMs’ and CTOs’ values regarding protected areas in the literature and as such, insight into the values guiding their actions was considered a necessity in order to understand the influences to their relationships.

6.4 RESPONDENTS’ EXPRESSED VALUES REGARDING PROTECTED AREAS

The participants’ responses could not be clearly differentiated into tourism values (ethical, aesthetic and economic) and nature values (instrumental and intrinsic) due to the coarseness of current frameworks. Each of these single frameworks did not allow sufficient differentiation. However, as the tourism value spheres including the nature values (Figure 6.2) illustrate, values are inextricably meshed. From an ethical perspective, it needs to be acknowledged that each value has to be considered as part of a complex fabric within the social and political system.

The respondents mentioned a range of values (see Table 6.1) they thought important as the purpose of protected areas in response to Question 2 of the interview (Appendix 1). PAMs and CTOs had very similar values when asked what they considered to be the primary purpose of protected areas. PAMs’ mentioned the conservation of biodiversity, closely followed by recreation and enjoyment,
whereas a larger number of CTOs mentioned recreation and enjoyment as the main purpose, closely followed by conservation of biodiversity. It should be noted that both identified the same two key values for protected areas with only minor differences. Table 6.1 presents the first three values regarding protected areas as mentioned by PAMs and CTOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of protected areas</th>
<th>From 29 PAMs identified by:</th>
<th>From 21 CTOs and 3 Tourism WA officers identified by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of biodiversity</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and enjoyment</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain naturalness</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individuals make value judgements, which are based on their personal and organisational value hierarchy, when they make decisions, and this occurs either explicitly or implicitly (Stenmark, 2002). When asking this question I specifically alerted the respondents to my aim to obtain their personal values and not what they believe society or their agency or organisation assigns to protected areas. However, it is not absolutely certain if, and to what extent, their responses were influenced by external values. It can be assumed that the values the respondents mentioned are the values of that person in the role in which he/she operates and not necessarily purely their personal value. It is the question of personal versus professional values which is difficult to differentiate.

The majority of values held by PAMs and CTOs regarding protected areas are instrumental values (conservation, recreation, impact minimisation) (Table 6.1),
covering all three tourism value spheres, with predominantly aesthetic and economic values. The instrumental values mentioned were relational intangible values, and reflect previous research with respect to the values of protected areas (Bentrupperbäumer et al., 2006; Hull et al., 2003; Manning et al., 1999; Ritchie, 2000; Rolston, 1983). Specific extractive values were not mentioned by the respondents. This finding is in accordance with the literature; nevertheless, it can be argued that the statement ‘to provide income for many people’ as the purpose of protected areas, made by one CTO, is indirectly extractive and explicitly economic in the tourism value sphere. One manager saw a commercial benefit as the purpose of protected areas to help tourism.

Overall, the respondents’ values were in accordance with the intangible values identified by the WCPA Task Force. For example the purpose of ‘conservation of biodiversity’ relates to WCPA’s intangible value ‘existence’. Table 6.2 presents the values as interpreted by the researcher using a combined framework to offset the weaknesses of each individual framework, based on PAMs’ and CTOs’ responses to Question 2 (Chapter 4, section 4.6 and Chapter 5, section 5.6), regarding the purpose of protected areas and how their values relate to tourism values, nature values, and the WCPA’s intangible values.
Table 6.2: PAMs’ and CTOs’ values relating to tourism, nature, and WCPA’s intangible values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ values</th>
<th>Type of tourism values</th>
<th>Type of nature values</th>
<th>WCPA’s intangible values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of biodiversity</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and enjoyment</td>
<td>Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Recreational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain naturalness</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact minimisation</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Research &amp; monitoring Aesthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic values</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental improvement</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Research &amp; monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental – extractive</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Ethical, Aesthetic, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Ethical, Economic</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Research &amp; monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The WCPA’s list of intangible values is representative of range of intangible values people can have regarding protected areas. However, it is important to recognise that, although the same values were mentioned, the respondents’ understanding of them and meanings assigned to them may differ. The phenomenon of differences in understanding, and different perspectives when referring to a concept, will be further discussed in Chapter 8 – It is all a matter of perspectives.

For the purpose of this study, the WCPA’s framework is the most useful and richest framework for interpreting the respondents’ values, with the greatest explanatory
power, in contrast to the nature and tourism values. Both the nature and tourism values do not provide the detail needed in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of values held by the respondents. The WCPA’s value list provides a more fine grained categorisation.

All but four (spiritual, artistic, peace, and therapeutic) of the eleven WCPA’s instrumental values were mentioned by the respondents. The reason why none of the PAMs or CTOs mentioned the missing values is not clear. One explanation may be that the respondents based their answers closely on their role; for example, PAMs understand ‘research and monitoring’ as reflecting a value related to their job requirement. As previously noted, it is very difficult to distinguish between the respondents’ personal and professional values, indeed it seems that they themselves are unable to draw this distinction.

The difficulty of separating one’s personal values from one’s professional values is also reflected in the value ‘conservation of biodiversity’. PAMs understand the need for conservation of biodiversity on an existential basis. For them it is necessary to conserve biodiversity to protect these areas and ensure the longevity of their species. This is a key part of their job role. In contrast, for CTOs it is also important to conserve biodiversity, but they perceive it from a more instrumental point of view. CTOs need a functioning ecosystem and intact biodiversity as part of their business (this is particularly true as this study was directed towards CTOs operating a nature based business). If biodiversity is lost in the protected areas they run their tours through, their business will most likely suffer. This difference in motive is furthermore reflected in, and even originates in, their respective guiding
public policies. Consequently, PAMs and CTOs fulfil their role in their work as well as taking up their organisations’ respective values. A more detailed analysis of the values and goals of the respective conservation and tourism policies in Western Australia is presented in the next section (section 6.5).

Respondents, in addition to being questioned about the purpose of protected areas, were asked about the important attributes for someone working in protected areas. The key attribute both PAMs and CTOs expect is a conservation ethic. In pursuing a conservation ethic the respondents referred to an individual’s understanding of, and contribution to, conservation as part of their daily work in protected areas. The respondents believe if a person has a conservation ethic it will reflect in their behaviour:

Someone who has a conservation ethic and shows good environmental practices, and leaves the environment in good or even better conditions and is equipped to meet all environmental requirements.

[Someone working in protected areas should be] a conservationist who is caring towards the environment.

This understanding of a close link between conservation ethic and behaviour was also reflected in PAMs’ statements with respect to the idealised attributes of a ‘good’ CTO. They mentioned environmental commitment (Chapter 4, section 4.2). That PAMs expect CTOs to have conservation ethic and environmental commitment is not surprising, particularly given that the conservation of biodiversity is highly valued by all PAMs. However, their expectations of CTOs were not reflected in their view of reality (Chapter 4, section 4.3), only three of the
twenty-nine PAMs selected ‘conservationist’ when they described the current roles of CTOs. Similarly, CTOs expect good environmental practices from PAMs (Chapter 5, section 5.2). The notion of how the respondents’ expectations reflect and match their view of reality will be further discussed in Chapter 8.

One question is why both PAMs and CTOs seek a conservation ethic in someone working in protected areas. Identifying instrumental intangible values (conservation of biodiversity and recreation and enjoyment) as the purpose (values) of a protected area, the respondents saw a conservation ethic as necessary to maintain the areas’ values in order to provide for, attain, or achieve something which they considered of value. A conservation ethic is seen as a means of achieving desired outcomes and therefore desired values, such as maintaining the areas’ naturalness, minimising impacts, and conserving flora and fauna. Furthermore, a conservation ethic in someone working in protected areas is of importance if that person’s value coincides with the value of ‘existence’ as of the WCPA’s framework. As such, the value of ‘conservation of biodiversity’ as mentioned by PAMs falls in this category (see Table 6.2).

For CTOs, a conservation ethic is the tool to ensure that the resource (i.e. the park) is sustained without degradation, and therefore retains the attraction which is the feature of their tours. In most instances, their livelihood is tied to their business and the resource’s availability and state affects their income. For CTOs it is very important to access protected areas to run their nature based tours. All participating CTOs stated that they saw recreation and enjoyment as the main purpose of protected areas, but that this required an environmental awareness and associated behaviour. In their view, a person with a conservation ethic
‘serves’ the resource, ensuring it retains a desirable state, and therefore enables the continuation of their business. Research conducted over a decade ago identified that CTOs select their destinations on the basis of the features of natural areas, thus they prefer the areas to remain in good condition. To achieve this, they need to behave and act accordingly (Finucane and Dowling, 1995). The respondents from the earlier research, as well as the CTOs interviewed in this study, stated that they remove litter, educate their visitors on correct behaviour and try to minimise their impact.

CTOs’ actions and expectations are financially driven, their objective is to generate income and therefore it can be concluded that economic and not only environmental values play an important role in their value system. Therefore, PAMs and CTOs are not always guided by the same motivation or code of ethics (Dowling, 1991):

My business is an economic driven business but also a tourism business and it brings business into the town.

Many CTOs aim to operate a successful business and sustain the resource, which in turn gives rise to the value (conservation ethic) they expect from people working in protected areas:

Operators and other businesses working in protected areas are often accused of wanting to maximise profits. I don’t agree with that, I think both realise that a well managed area is beneficial to a good business [i.e. profits].

It is important to recognise that one of the CTOs’ objectives is to operate a successful business to provide them with an income.
This worldview guides what is in essence a cost-benefit analysis. The ‘cost’ for CTOs is essentially to demonstrate an environmental awareness, behave in an environmentally friendly manner, and possess conservation ethic while working in protected areas, to the ‘benefit’ of the resource, the protected area, so it remains in good condition. An associated ‘cost’ is following the conservation agency’s rules and regulations, with the ‘benefit’ being the ability to obtain and keep a licence to operate. Overall, the costs are to act in accordance with what is expected and required by the agency, with the resulting benefit of being able to run a successful tour business.

CTOs are aware that if they do not obey the regulations, the cost will be not only losing their licence, but also the degradation of the resource. However, in this scenario the costs are greater and outweigh the benefits, as their objective is to run a successful business. In most instances, the CTOs showed awareness of the consequences or potential impacts of their actions. To retain the perceived benefits, such as good working relationships with PAMs, the sustainability of the resource, and satisfied customers, some CTOs reported the misconduct of other CTOs to the agency. As one PAM noted:

He [CTO] is also good in bringing things to our attention which they don’t need to, we ask all people to give us feedback and some don’t, he maintains a 2 way communication. Some of them are taking on ownership for the site and look after the site.

This cost-benefit analysis seems to be done unconsciously but it clearly guides the respondents’ value system and conduct.
CTOs’ are not exclusively motivated by their business needs. Many CTOs hold intangible values which motivated them in the first place to enter the nature based tourism industry:

But probably more importantly to provide something for future generations because with national parks, you are not supposed to change things so the next generation will see the same as this generation. Our children and children’s children will see something [nature] and not a big concrete jungle.

Furthermore, several CTOs developed a close bond with the areas they visit and as such are aware of their impacts and try to minimise these and educate their customers accordingly. One CTO specifically mentioned her/his intention to improve existing environmental conditions in the places they visit.

PAMs also seek a conservation ethic as a tool to maintain the resource without degradation, but for them conservation ethic is required to work towards the conservation of biodiversity. Their view is based on the notion that conservation ethic builds the foundation of that value. Many PAMs’ objective and aim is the conservation of the resource, to protect biodiversity and retain the area for future generations:

Well, my thoughts are really to maintain them [protected areas] for future generations in a similar way it is today. And at the same time catering, wherever we can in an appropriate way, for visitors to come and enjoy those natural experience without compromising the Departmental values of the protected areas.

There should be no activities taking place in there. It should be preserved without outside interference, like people and whatever. Natural events like fire are part of ecosystems. Protected areas are protected because of some reason, there might be plants, rare animals, something of significance, what comes to mind are Aboriginal sites, something delicate that needs managing so it doesn’t get destroyed. Because we are trying to preserve the park
for future generations, what we have got now is what we always have, and if we don’t manage it properly it is going to change all the time, it is not going to be the natural area it was. We got impacts from people coming into an area, there is always some sort of degradation; it is really hard to control people.

Problems arise when PAMs consider CTOs and their visitors to protected areas as intrusive (see above quote). Not all PAMs are aware that people may hold intangible values, and can have a strong bond with, and build relationships with protected areas. Most PAMs recognised that recreation is an important aspect with regards to protected areas that should not be dismissed (Buckley, 2002; Worboys, et al., 2005). However, with their values in mind, they seek a conservation ethic in someone working in these areas, mainly in order to work towards and achieve the conservation of biodiversity but not necessarily to build a bond with the area. Thus, PAMs tie the value they look for in an individual to their understanding of the greater purpose of protected areas.

6.5 LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC POLICY PERSPECTIVE

In order to understand the working relationships between PAMs and CTOs in the field, it is useful to explore the broader policy context of the government agencies responsible for protected areas and tourism in Western Australia. Effective protected area management with respect to tourism is essentially based on appropriate legislative and public policy direction (Fennell et al., 2001). Tourism is frequently considered ‘as a guarantor for economic growth and employment’ (Pforr, 2004:135). Government agencies are involved in tourism and their policies guide people’s behaviour according to the specific values which are the foundation for these policies.
Values build the foundation of legislation and therefore they are embedded within, and are essential to, legitimising, defining and identifying particular attitudes on which public policies are based (Davis et al., 1993; Hall, 2003; Hall and Jenkins, 1995; Simmons et al., 1974). This is particularly true because ‘values underlie our political behaviour’ (Davis, et al., 1993:2). If values inform our political behaviour, they also inform people’s actions and beliefs on a day-to-day basis. Values form the core of policies and the behaviour of individuals within the working arena. Knowing that PAMs and CTOs act in their respective roles, the different value positions from their respective public policy perspectives need to be considered, since the participants’ roles are also defined and shaped by their respective institutional values (Smith and Duffy, 2003).

It needs to be recognised that it is not only policies and the values they are based on which shape and influence individuals, but that individuals also shape policies (Davis, et al., 1993; Fennell, 2002; Hall and Jenkins, 1995; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Pforr, 2006). The embedded values in policies impact on and influence how a policy is implemented by individuals (e.g. PAMs and CTOs) operating under the value and belief system of the political philosophy of their respective agencies (Elliott, 1997; Hall and Jenkins, 1995). In a tourism context, this may be based on economic benefits creating a value shift and potential political changes, because the delivery path of policies depends on socio-political interests and values (Pforr, 2004; Pforr, 2005).

The management and safeguarding of protected areas in Western Australia lies with the conservation agency, and is based on their legal mandate. With the conservation agency having the mandate and therefore regulatory power to
manage protected areas, the underlying set of policy values can lead to difficulties based on the exercise of power as dominance of one set of values over another (Hall, 1994). Power plays an important part in protected area management (see Chapter 7). Although this research focuses on the analysis of the relationships and interactions between PAMs and CTOs, they need to be seen in a wider policy context based on the interplay and interactions between the ‘actors’ (PAMs and CTOs) working and participating in the same setting (Pforr, 2005).

In developing legislation and public policies, it must be remembered that the underlying values of the institutions will always be embedded within them. Underlying values, explicit or implicit, determine the priorities of government and guide how resources are distributed and used within the public jurisdiction (Simmons, et al., 1974). They form the core of policies and the conduct of individuals. In 1992, at the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, it was declared that tourism to protected areas should be a conservation tool to foster biodiversity, public awareness, and enhance the local community’s life (IUCN, 1993). It has been asserted by tourism researchers that there is a need for the conservation and tourism industries to join forces to gain political and market power, as tourism is often a justification for declaring areas as protected (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Goodwin, 2003; IUCN, 1993; Worboys, et al., 2005), and one way to achieve this is to incorporate conservation and tourism values.

The management agency’s legislation and policy framework

Considering protected areas from a legislative perspective, the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA) builds the foundation allowing for the
establishment of the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, and all general provisions and operations under the Act (CALM, 2004b; Government of Western Australia, 1984). On behalf of the Conservation Commission and Marine Parks and Reserves Authority, the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is charged with managing the State’s protected areas, as well as its wildlife and flora. The Act makes provision for the protection and management of public lands and waters, as well as the flora and fauna, as identified by the agency. Furthermore, the Act includes provision for the appropriate use of these lands and waters. In addition to this Act, the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002 (WA) are in place, addressing specifics with respect to DEC managed land. The Regulations cover, for example, issues relating to camping and pollution (Government of Western Australia, 2002).

DEC’s functions with respect to protected areas are outlined in Section 33 Part IV, and Section 56 Part V, of the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA). These are:

- to manage the land to which the Act applies;
- to be responsible for the conservation and protection of flora and fauna throughout the State;
- to promote and facilitate public recreation, in accordance with this Act, on land to which this Act applies, and
- through the establishment of management plans, to fulfil as much demand for recreation by members of the public as is consistent with the proper maintenance and restoration of the natural environment, the protection of indigenous flora and fauna, and the preservation of any feature of
archaeological, historic or scientific interest (Government of Western Australia, 1984).

It should be noted that these functions are subject to the control and direction of the Western Australian Minister for the Environment. The Act outlines the agency’s dual mandate of conservation and provisions for public recreation.

In addition to the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA), DEC operates under a set of public policies, which include the agency’s vision and mission statement. DEC’s vision aims for: ‘A natural environment in Western Australia that retains its biodiversity and enriches people’s lives.’ (CALM, 2002:2; CALM, 2005a:4). Their institutional mission expands on their vision, and states that: ‘In partnership with the community, we conserve Western Australia’s biodiversity, and manage the lands and waters entrusted to us, for their intrinsic values and for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations.’ (CALM, 2002:2). Also, DEC’s Corporate Plan identifies four main strategic directions for the department: conserving biodiversity, creating sustainable community benefits, maintaining community involvement and support, and improving the way DEC does business (CALM, 2002).

On a policy level DEC’s Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services, Policy No. 18 has been released for public comment (DEC, 2007a). This policy, subject to final consultation, outlines the objective of the Parks and Visitor Services Division on recreation and tourism on DEC managed land (CALM, 2004a). Being a division in charge of parks and visitors, unsurprisingly DEC’s objective is ‘to provide world-class recreation and tourism opportunities, services and facilities for visitors to the
public conservation estate, while maintaining in perpetuity Western Australia’s natural and cultural heritage.’ (CALM, 2004a:1). The primary foci of this policy are recreational provisions and to provide a basis for planning and management. However, as outlined in the document, this policy needs to be considered in conjunction with the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA) and the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002, which is the legislative base.

**The tourism authority’s legislation and policy framework**

Tourism Western Australia is a statutory authority, which operates under the Western Australian Tourism Commission Act 1983 (WA) under the portfolio of the Tourism Minister of Western Australia. Similar to the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA), this Act allows for the establishment of the Tourism Commission (Government of Western Australia, 1983). Furthermore, it covers all general provisions and operations under the Act, as well as the functions of the established Tourism Commission.

The Commission’s functions with respect to protected areas as outlined in Section 13 of the Act are:

- to promote or to support and co-ordinate the promotion of Western Australia as a holiday, event and convention destination and to do so within Australia and overseas
- to develop or to facilitate the development of new tourist facilities, and to improve or facilitate the improvement of existing tourist facilities in Western Australia
• to develop or to facilitate the development of proposals for events and conventions
• to organize and administer or to assist in the organization and administration of events and conventions
• to promote tourism generally and to market travel
• to advise the Minister on any matter relating to tourism or travel within Western Australia that is referred to the Commission by the Minister (Government of Western Australia, 1983).

The Commission’s functions are predominantly geared towards tourism growth throughout the State. It should be noted that Tourism Western Australia has no management responsibility for any land and/or waters in Western Australia. Its main function is the promotion of tourism and associated events within the State.

Similarly to DEC, Tourism Western Australia has policies in place which include the Commission’s vision and a mission statement guiding their operation (Western Australia Tourism Commission, 2003). Tourism Western Australia’s (2003:2) mission is to ‘accelerate the sustainable growth of tourism for the long term benefit of Western Australia’, to achieve the vision of making ‘Western Australia the world’s natural choice’. The mission and vision statements clearly aim to increase tourism to the State. In addition to these statements, Tourism Western Australia’s main objectives address visitor experiences, as well as improving the authority’s profile through recognition and partnerships. Their objectives are to:

• grow Western Australian tourism faster than the national average
• increase recognition of our iconic tourism experiences
• enhance visitor experiences in Western Australia
• grow regional tourism through partnerships and local empowerment
• make Western Australia a natural choice for tourism investment
• achieve recognition for the tourism industry as a leading economic contributor to the State (Tourism Western Australia, 2006a).

Recognising the importance and growth of the nature based tourism sector, the government of Western Australia established a Nature Based Tourism Advisory Committee to develop a strategy addressing the immediate, short-term and long-term needs of the industry. The Advisory Committee was appointed by the Board of the Western Australian Tourism Commission and was comprised of a broad representation of public and private sector organisations involved in nature based tourism in Western Australia, including DEC and Tourism Western Australia. The objective was to review the Nature Based Tourism Strategy of 1997 and align it to current needs with respect to nature based tourism (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a).

**A Nature Based Tourism Strategy for Western Australia**

The ‘Keep it Real – A Nature Based Tourism Strategy for Western Australia’ was launched in December 2004 and identified itself as the ‘Pathway Forward’ for nature based tourism in the State. It is divided into three parts, with each part addressing a different key theme and vision:

- **Part 1 The Vision and Guiding Principles** – sets out the long term vision, guiding principles, and a model for sustainable nature based tourism
- **Part 2 The State of Play**, a detailed statement of actions identified in a variety of strategies and plans – as this is a dynamic document it will be updated regularly to track the extent of Government policy initiatives impacting on nature based tourism
Chapter 6: Underlying values: the ‘directory’ behind actions

- **Part 3 The Pathway Forward for Tourism Western Australia** - a three year outlook of Tourism Western Australia’s commitment to key policy initiatives and key performance indicators for nature based tourism (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a:3).

The overarching vision statement of the strategy is ‘that nature based experiences offered to visitors are real and sustainable’, and its mission statement is ‘to encourage the sustainable development, promotion and management of quality visitor experiences which are spiritually uplifting and environmentally enhancing’ (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a:5). Similarly to Tourism Western Australia’s policy documents, the vision and mission statement of this strategy do not explicitly address the conservation of the land; rather, it includes the term ‘sustainable development’ which is generally taken to include environmental integrity (Hunter, 2002; Worboys, et al., 2005). As a side note, the term ‘sustainable development’ within the tourism field is a much debated notion in terms of what it encompasses and means, therefore its use is contentious (Duffy, 2002; Hunter, 1997; Hunter, 2002; Selin, 2000). The focus of this strategy is the development and promotion of quality experiences in the overall policy context of increasing tourism.

The strategy is a guidance document and should not be considered as prescriptive or used as a checklist of activities (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a). It provides broad strategic directions for government and the tourism industry. The guiding principles cover the conservation of the natural environment as a first principle, flagging the need for nature based tourism to protect natural assets, the involvement of, and benefit to, local communities, knowledge improvement, the provision of quality products and services, and the fostering of an effective and
efficient industry (Tourism Western Australia, 2004a). The model of nature based
tourism in this strategy centres on the visitor experience, but recognises the need
to be environmentally sensitive, socially responsible and economically viable.

**Comparison of DEC’s and Tourism Western Australia’s policies**

In comparing the legislation and policies of DEC and Tourism Western Australia, it
becomes evident that there are different emphases in their primary objective:
conservation versus the accelerated growth of tourism. Although the legislation
guiding DEC is based on the agency’s dual mandate, the key function of PAMs with
respect to national parks is their responsibility for the conservation and protection
of flora and fauna (Government of Western Australia, 1984). Because of this
dichotomy, conservation agencies face the challenge of balancing access with
conservation (Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Buckley, 2000b; Buckley and Sommer,
2001; Cole, 2001; Cole and Hammitt, 2000; DITR, 2003; Eagles, et al., 2002;
Worboys, et al., 2005). The conservation agency’s role is complex, and places
different emphases on different parts of their estate, depending on the type of
land to be managed (e.g. national parks versus nature reserves), as well as
different levels of protection (see Chapter 3).

Another major difference relates to the management responsibility for protected
areas. The conservation agency has the legal mandate to manage these lands,
whereas the tourism authority has no management responsibilities. Table 6.3
outlines the similarities and differences of provisions, objectives and benefits of
their policies.
Table 6.3: Comparison of DEC’s and Tourism Western Australia’s policy provisions relating to tourism in protected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>Tourism Western Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of controlling bodies</td>
<td>Yes (Conservation Commission Marine Parks and Reserve Authority)</td>
<td>Yes (Tourism Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management provisions</td>
<td>Direct responsibility for the management of protected areas</td>
<td>No direct responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary objective</td>
<td>To conserve Western Australia’s biodiversity</td>
<td>To accelerate sustainable growth of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions for recreation/tourism</td>
<td>Yes (secondary objective)</td>
<td>Yes (primary objective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim for long-term benefits</td>
<td>Manage the lands and waters for their intrinsic values and for the appreciation and benefits of present and future generations</td>
<td>Sustainable tourism growth for Western Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparison to DEC’s role, Tourism Western Australia’s key responsibility is unambiguous: the promotion of the State as a holiday destination. To fulfil this responsibility and achieve its goals, the authority’s role is to increase the development of tourism as an industry. To do so, Tourism Western Australia considers it important to increase domestic and international visitations to Western Australia and their length of stay (Tourism Western Australia, 2006a). Targeting an increase in visitor numbers requires industry developments in order to be able to accommodate this rise. With nature based tourism playing a key role in the tourism sector in Western Australia, the requirements to accommodate growing visitor numbers, through additional tours, facilities, infrastructure and so forth, potentially creates direct impacts on protected areas.
The policies of both agencies highlight their aim to work toward long-term benefits. DEC’s goal is to achieve the long-term benefit of maintaining the intrinsic values of biodiversity, as well as for the appreciation of present and future generations. In contrast, Tourism Western Australia’s aim is to encourage tourism growth, for the long-term social and economic benefit of the State. Consistent with their policy objectives, the long-term benefits of the latter aim are fundamentally different to those of DEC. While DEC recognises that people, both present and future generations, and communities are an integral part to their mission, their key value and objective is the conservation of biodiversity. Tourism Western Australia does not explicitly address the need for conservation of biodiversity rather focusing on tourism growth.

The legislative and policy primary objectives of DEC and Tourism Western Australia were reflected in the values identified by the respondents. Based on this finding, it can be assumed that policy values influence individual values when working within a certain public policy context. It is important to recognise the difference, which is only minor, in the value PAMs (conservation of biodiversity) and CTOs (recreation and enjoyment) hold regarding protected areas. However, this distinction is not crucial for their working relationships and arrangements. For effective public policies in protected areas, it is important that PAMs and CTOs know that they share many values, and that they need to collaborate to work together in pursuing a more constructive relationship.

Public policy may have an influence of how both individual PAMs and CTOs and groups of PAMs and CTOs, work together. Similar values are often held by individuals in one cultural group or as part of a society. The functional inter-
relationship between ethics and society: ethical values are an integral part of each society and cannot be understood outside that context’ (Smith and Duffy, 2003:34). The next chapter addresses cultural aspects of PAMs and CTOs and how these influence their relationships. Influenced by the legislative and policy dominance of the conservation agency, CTOs from the Midwest congregated as a cultural group seeking to exercise power over PAMs. Chapter 7 takes the investigation of the challenges and difficulties in working together one step further, by examining different cultural groupings and groupthink and their respective use of power.
7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter argues that the dynamics of cultural groupings and associated groupthink provides group members with a sense of belonging and power and as such hinders collaboration. Individual values (as discussed in Chapter 6) are not held in an isolated manner; rather, they are influenced by cultural aspects of the individual’s working environment due to individuals being susceptible to take up the associated behaviour. Individuals sometimes have slightly different values than those in the policy context of their work, even though they may generally agree with the underlying policy values. As such, their value differences can lead to the rise of organisational groupings and groupthink. Organisational dynamics influence the level of collaboration and relationship between protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs). Organisational dynamics have been found influential in the success of protected area management (Togridou et al., 2006).

In order to better understand the possibilities for collaboration between PAMs and CTOs, it is important to address cultural groupings, which can be the result of geographical locations, specific teams/workgroups, and/or individuals with shared functions and experiences. In doing so, further insights can be gained into the determinants of why PAMs and CTOs act the way they do within their role. As part
of organisational cultures, different cultural groupings can form to evolve into a discrete cluster (Gordon, 1997; Schein, 1999; Thornton, 1997). Based on members’ shared values, views and goals, individuals collectively strive to achieve their respective objectives, which can be different to the organisations’ objectives. Members of cultural groupings follow the group’s injunctive norm as to what is expected from each other and, as such, build the foundation of the values, ethics, and visions held by the whole group (Cialdini et al., 1999; Hare and O’Neill, 2000). The concept of culture is applied in a holistic way to describe the way of life of a human group (Maull et al., 2001) or, as in the context of this research, the interaction between PAMs and CTOs.

This research uncovered organisational groupings amongst CTOs and PAMs, and that these groupings use and exercise power to achieve their specific goals. The importance of power being recognised as ‘[a]t the heart of the interplay of values, interests and tourism policy’ (Hall, 2007:264), it is necessary to un-package the PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships in the light of power. Very limited information on the account of the precise tactics individuals use when exercising power as part of relationships in tourism, particularly in this setting (PAMs and CTOs), is to date available (Coles and Scherle, 2007; Hall, 2007). Cultural groupings and groupthink were specifically identified in parts of the Midwest and Kimberley region, and it was found that they influence the participants’ working arrangements. Based on this finding, it became evident that power, as a process, actively influences PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships and plays an important part in the management of protected areas. Through the exercise of power, dominance of one set of values (for organisational groupings and individuals) is gained over the other (Hall, 1994).
7.2 CULTURAL GROUPINGS AMONGST PARTICIPANTS

People working together for a period of time begin to share common experiences, loyalties and work-related knowledge, which have the capacity to form the basis of mutually held expectations of how issues need to be dealt with. They tend to seek approval, want to be recognised and respected, and often feel this status can occur through becoming part of a cultural group (Cohen, 1997). The development of cultural groupings often evolves through individuals who have similar views, beliefs or interest, often based on the functions, geography, loyalties, and experience of individuals, or whole units, within an organisation and therefore associated with the individuals identifying themselves as part of such groupings (Cohen, 1997). The emergence of ‘group standards’ of a shared frame of reference is considered as the emergence of a new cultural group. Becoming part of a cultural group can involve individuals inevitably constructing a new reality for themselves and sharing prevailing ideologies with other group members.

Cultural groupings are condemned to and/or enjoy a consciousness of ‘otherness’ by being different. Their members are identified as being a minority of the dominant culture based on their smaller numbers, or by their sometimes different or controversial views and values (Jary and Jary, 2000; Thornton, 1997). Cultural groupings work at two levels: firstly, they promote certain ideologies, attitudes, ideas and beliefs that members of a cultural group are supposed to hold, and secondly, they specify certain behaviours and practices (Vanclay and Lawrence, 1995). Cultural groupings are not prescriptive and allow for diversity. People can belong to different cultural groupings at different stages of their lives, and many experience difficulties in fulfilling the group’s expectations. Members of cultural
groupings tend to adopt a particular identity in addition to certain sets of behaviour, attitudes and values, and it is expected that group members will comply and adopt these (Vanclay and Lawrence, 1995). The continued serviceability and therefore viability of solutions by a cultural group gives rise to group solidarity and compliance.

Compliance of members within a group is often achieved through peer pressure, as part of the enforcement of members’ expectations (Vanclay and Lawrence, 1995). Peer pressure explains why individuals may act in certain ways which might not be in accordance with more widely accepted behaviour. However, Bartol et al. (2001) consider peer and group pressure as being one of the main factors which can positively influence goal commitment. They found that peer and group pressure enhances goal commitment when everyone’s efforts are focused, because enthusiasm and commitment can become ‘infectious’. Nevertheless, infectious enthusiasm may also lead to negative effects. If the cultural grouping’s members’ values do not match the organisation’s values and goals, their enthusiasm may work against the organisational goals and potentially hinder their achievement. Peer and group pressure can therefore have positive but also negative effects for an organisational culture as well as for cultural groupings within the broader organisational culture. To fully understand cultural groupings it is important to examine the broader concept of culture, as cultural groupings emerge from existing cultures.

Because culture plays an important role in guiding the behaviour of individuals and groups, it is important to identify these elements. How an individual PAM or CTO behaves inevitably influences their relationship, affects their working arrangement,
Chapter 7: Culture matters

and impacts on their respective goals and objectives. Furthermore, how they perceive each other is strongly influenced by their respective cultures; as Schein (1999:14) notes, ‘[i]f we want to make organizations more efficient and effective, then we must understand the role that culture plays in organizational life’.

Schein (1999:14) points out that:

Culture matters because it is a powerful, latent, and often unconscious set of forces that determine both our individual and collective behavior, ways of perceiving, thought patterns, and values. Organizational culture in particular matters because cultural elements determine strategy, goals, and models of operating.

Cultures and cultural groupings can form and exist at different levels, for example in families, small teams, workgroups, or different departments within one organisation. Organisational cultures arise when individuals have a common occupational core and common experience (Schein, 1999). Cultural groupings can develop within the organisation’s overall culture, and as such they will be a sub-division of that culture and, as Gordon (1997) points out, have an impact on the individual. Cultural groupings are defined as a group of people who have something in common, for example a shared interest, a problem or a practice, which distinguishes them from members of other social groups, or cultures (Thornton, 1997).

Culture can be seen as a resource people draw on in order to coordinate their activities, but this ‘belonging’ may also be constraining. Culture in its most minimal definition is a pattern of basic assumptions that are considered valid and which form the property of a group, with the shared understandings that people use to
coordinate their activities. These assumptions are then taught to new members as
the correct and common way to perceive, think and feel, resulting in shared
values, opinions and beliefs (Bartol et al., 2001; Becker, 1986; Cialdini, et al.,
1999; Gibson et al., 2000; Hofstede, 1998; Ivancevich and Matteson, 2002;
Lussier and Poulos, 1998; Schein, 1999; Trice and Beyer, 1993). This definition
includes the interaction between people as necessary in order to form and
maintain a culture. It is a concerted activity where the members of a cultural group
have a shared understanding, a similar idea of things, and are able and willing to
deal with issues and situations in a similar manner. Furthermore, the members
know that they share these attributes (Becker, 1986).

Culture from an organisational perspective, can be viewed in two ways: (1) culture
as a *metaphor* to understand and explain what culture the organisation *is*; or (2)
culture as a *variable*, used to understand and explain the culture an organisation
*has* (Davies et al., 2000; Sinclair, 1993; Smircich, 1983). Organisational culture
considered as a *metaphor* follows the understanding that everyone from top
management to every staff member within the organisation is part of this culture.
This view of organisational culture is not widely accepted and is disputed by
followers of post-modernist theory (Davies, et al., 2000). In considering culture as
a *variable*, the underlying understanding is that organisational culture can be
managed, influenced, formed and changed. The latter view is more widely
accepted and is used to explore and explain organisational cultures. Considering
an organisation or group having a culture in the second sense is suitable for this
research as it is based on the underlying assumption that a shift to a more
productive relationship involves the collaboration of PAMs and CTOs, and as such,
would require a shift in their culture.
Individuals’ assumptions, perceptions, learning and adaptations are included in forming and maintaining a culture. Since organisational culture entails all these components, and since they all exert influence on individuals and/or groups as part of the organisation and organisational processes and practices, it is important to understand organisational culture. Organisational culture covers four main categories:

1. Culture as a learned entity;
2. Culture as a belief system;
3. Culture as a strategy; and
4. Culture as mental programming (Maul, et al., 2001; Parker and Bradley, 2000).

All these four categories can be viewed from the perspective of the culture an organisation has, of culture as a variable.

The main attribute of culture as a learned entity in an organisational context is that members of an organisation teach new staff the prevailing expectations of how to behave. In addition, new employees are also receptive to new ideas and ways of working; they tend to closely observe everything and try to conform. In contrast, culture as a belief system within an organisational context is based on the concept that individuals in an organisation take up and support the organisational goals and values (Twight and Lyden, 1988). Further, many beliefs are learned not by direct encounter with the object of belief but indirectly from other people or groups used as a reference (Rokeach, 1980).
The concept behind culture as a strategy is emphasised by Bate (1995), who views culture as a strategic phenomenon and considers cultural change as a strategic change (Bate, 1995). Considering culture from this perspective leads to the assumption that culture can be formed, developed and changed according to one’s intention. Here culture is used and applied as a management tool with the objective of working towards achieving organisational goals (Sinclair, 1993).

Logical connections can be drawn between culture as a strategic phenomenon and culture as a belief system, because the underlying belief system which is an intrinsic part of an organisation influences the strategy employed to form or develop a culture. The last category, culture as mental programming, incorporates many of the abovementioned elements, but its supporters believe that culture is the collective programming of the mind, which differentiates between different categories or groups of people (Hofstede, 1998; Maull, et al., 2001). Within all these categories an organisation’s culture is used and applied as a variable, the culture an organisation has, which is strategically formed, modified and mentally programmed.

This research is based on the concept that an organisation has a culture, a learned entity that is communicated to new staff members or new CTOs to show what is expected of them and how they need to behave. The aim was to determine if cultural groupings (as previously described) amongst PAMs and/or CTOs exist and therefore new staff members and CTOs are becoming part of this established group. This notion is based on the concept that organisational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration (Schein, 1992).
It can be seen that organisational culture is a multilevel, complex and reasonably stable concept. It appears to be difficult to change because it is comprised of various aspects that have made a group successful (Schein, 1999). Even though it is difficult to change a culture, it needs to be pointed out that organisational culture and cultural groupings are never stagnant, instead they keep evolving (Morgan, 1997). The existing culture in an organisation, or cultural groupings, give new employees directions of what is expected from them and how things are done. They provide meaning, predictability, and stability to all members within an organisation or part of a group.

**Groupthink**

The concept of ‘groupthink’ is useful in explaining the relationships between PAMs and CTOs. Having raised the possibility that cultural groupings are present, it became evident that the ‘members’ of the different cultural groupings applied ‘groupthink’ as part of their practices when dealing with others, for example CTOs with PAMs or PAMs with other PAMs in different divisions. The phenomenon of groupthink has been identified in previous studies which suggested that cultural groupings encourage group thinking (Flippen, 1999; Janis, 1982; Morgan, 1997; Twight and Lyden, 1989). The original theory of ‘groupthink’ was introduced by Janis in 1972 and further expanded by him in 1982 (Flippen, 1999). A range of characteristics are apparent in groupthink: stereotyping, conformity, complacency, perception of invulnerability, ‘we’ feeling, being judgemental, group dynamics, peer pressure, reluctance to admit personal doubts and views, homogenisation of viewpoints and shared illusions/images/visions (Janis, 1982). Decisions made by
members of cultural groupings based on groupthink can be very subjective, biased and prejudiced, as the group is unable to perceive and consider evidence, feedback or other information contradictory to their own beliefs. Groupthink is recognised as being a process rather than an outcome, it can occur in almost any type of group, and it can happen in work teams on a daily basis when decisions are made (Flippen, 1999; Manz and Sims, 1982).

Janis (1982) classifies three groupthink syndromes:

- **Type I** is overestimations by the group, its power and immortality; this type gives members of the group the illusion of invulnerability;
- **Type II** is closed-mindedness; this type is based on stereotyped views held by its group members; and
- **Type III** is pressure toward uniformity; here direct pressure on group members will be exerted.

The conformity of members of cultural groupings is an essential ingredient for groupthink to evolve. The more cohesive a group and the more relevant the issue to the goals of the group, the greater is the members’ inclination to reject a nonconformist. Research has found that conformity is the result of group norms rather than their cause (Bartol, et al., 2005; Flippen, 1999; McCauley, 1989). The need to maintain a good relationship with others is often the key incentive for group members to conform. Bartol *et al.* (2001) link group cohesiveness to leadership power. According to the authors, groupthink can occur even when groups are not highly cohesive, reporting that if the leader of a group has stated a particular preference early in a decision-making process it can already result in conformity by other members.
A specific example of cultural groupings showing groupthink was displayed by local CTOs in the Midwest region. During the interviews, some of the local CTOs voiced their anger with PAMs and their reluctance to collaborate:

Everything in Monkey Mia worked so much better before CALM [DEC] moved in. They should just go or we kick them out. Us town-people we stick together, we want the same, and we want them [DEC] out. I tell everyone at our Shire meetings what I think about them. They don’t mingle in town because they are so afraid. They split the town in half.

This quote is a good example of Janis’ (1982) groupthink syndrome Type I (the overestimation of the group) believing in the group’s ability to ‘kick them [PAMs] out’. In thinking so, the group started to construct a new reality. The quote furthermore illustrates aspects of groupthink syndrome Type III (pressure towards uniformity) because the CTO sees herself/himself as belonging to ‘one half of the town’ and that this half ‘sticks together’ and as such, he/she voices her/his opinion in Shire meetings, exerting pressure on members of this cultural grouping but also on PAMs.

This CTO’s behaviour, in campaigning against PAMs at Shire meetings, has the potential to recruit other CTOs to do the same. Situations like these frequently result in potential platforms where peer-pressure and groupthink thrives. Even though groupthink is difficult to empirically examine (Mullen et al., 1994), the results from this research show that the local CTOs shared the same belief with respect to PAMs in the area and engaged in groupthink (see Chapter 5). The group of local CTOs work together against PAMs in their own cultural group which is not linked to other CTOs operating tours in the district. The group of these CTOs display animosity towards PAMs which created pressure for PAMs and their families in the
community. This pressure grew to the extent that consequently some PAMs left the district with their families. Throughout the years, this district has experienced high fluctuations in PAMs staffing, one of the reasons being the resentment and hostility from the CTOs’ cultural group towards them.

As one PAM from the Shark Bay area stated:

Another barrier is how many of the local operators behave here in town. For example, at Shire meetings they bad mouth CALM [DEC]. They form their little groups and tell everyone what CALM [DEC] did to them, for example if we tell them that dogs are not allowed at the beach in Monkey Mia they carry on that we police them. It gets pretty bad; we had staff members who asked to be transferred to other regions because they have had enough. Like for one of our guys, his wife got abused when she went shopping and he was afraid that it filters through to his kids in the local school.

Similarly to the CTOs’ cultural groupings, as a result of these dynamics PAMs working in that locale face different challenges with the local group of CTOs than PAMs and CTOs in other districts. In the Shark Bay area the PAMs also formed a cultural group based on their experiences and beliefs. These PAMs in the district identified the local CTOs as stubborn when asked how they perceive them, which none of the other participating PAMs in all other regions did (see Chapter 4, section 4.3).

One of the reasons why cultural groupings and groupthink in this area formed could be due to the remoteness of their geographical location, as described in Chapter 3. With all local CTOs living and working in this area for decades they share and hold common experiences and beliefs and have formed loyalties to each other. The formation of cultural groupings is frequently linked to the group’s geographical situation (Cohen, 1997). The reasons for PAMs’ cultural grouping in
this district is the result of individuals working within their small group, remote
from the agency’s head office, which provided them with their own experiences
and understanding of the day-to-day situations they are part of.

PAMs and CTOs working in the same protected areas will inevitably encounter and
meet each other and, as a result of their respective groups’ belief and value
system they use authority and exercise power to deal with each other. In the Shark
Bay area it could be seen that a rift has occurred within the community through the
formation of cultural groupings of CTOs working against PAMs, as well as cultural
groupings of PAMs within the agency. The formation of cultural groupings and the
behaviour by its members is regularly influenced by power and power relationships
which can lead to an unwillingness to work together. Cultural groupings and
groupthink are closely linked to power in that their development is frequently
based on a perceived powerlessness by an individual or one of the parties (Clegg,
1989).

7.3 THE NOTION OF POWER

Particularly in Shark Bay the perceived powerlessness of a group of local CTOs
encouraged the formation of a cultural grouping and groupthink. The development
of a cultural grouping with groupthink resulted in power clashes between CTOs and
PAMs. PAMs’ and CTOs’ values, and differences in perspectives, the existence of
cultural groupings, and an unwillingness of individuals to trust and respect each
other in conjunction with explicitly and implicitly exercising power, strongly
influences their level of collaboration. This is observable in the Shark Bay area
where PAMs’ and CTOs’ differences and how they use and exercise their powers, based on pressure tactics, results in ongoing conflicts and tension between them.

Power is not merely observable power. Broadly defined, power has the potential to make, receive or resist change, and can be a possibility that may never be actualised (Lukes, 2005). One view is that power is a dynamic relation, which can be exercised (Flyvbjerg, 2001), whereas another view is that power is a possession, to be held and owned, a capacity (Lukes, 2005). To show the differences between these two notions of power and their importance to this research, it is helpful to explore their characteristics.

**Power as dynamic relation**

Social interactions between PAMs and CTOs within a policy and organisational environment are complex and involve a flow of power. Power can be described as fluid, shifting, and dynamic, often resulting in entanglements (Few, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1986; Ross et al., 2002; Sharp et al., 2000). The entanglement of power is a term used by Sharp et al. (2000:1) to illustrate an image of knotted threads with ‘[t]he deep spatiality of this spinning together of domination and resistance within power’. This description, together with the consideration of power as a dynamic relation (see next section), proves useful in understanding the power interplay between PAMs and CTOs. Power as part of relationships does not necessarily always remain with the same person or group, because the power relationship is unstable and can easily be reversed (Hindess, 1996). Applying this reasoning means that power can be exercised by CTOs,
although PAMs legally ‘possess’ the authority and therefore legitimate power to
manage these areas.

Conceptualising power as a dynamic relation recognises that power is not localised
and ‘owned’; instead, it is dynamic and used in its application as part of strategies
and tactics (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1979; Foucault, 1986; Foucault, 2000;
Sharp, et al., 2000; Thrift, 2000). This view was put forward by Foucault (Flyvbjerg,
2001) who stated that ‘[p]ower is exercised rather than possessed’ (Foucault,
1979:26). Not all power operates through laws, rules, and regulations as this
would mean possession. Considering power as dynamic, circling, shifting and
moving back and forth, is a recognition that power is decentralised. Power and how
it is used depends on circumstances and each individual situation. The key point is
that the act of exercising power is what makes it recognisable as power.
Understanding power as a dynamic relation, being exercised and not owned, is
understanding that power cannot be a structure nor can it take the form of an
institution (Wearing and McDonald, 2002).

Power as a dynamic relation can have different forms, be used as strategies,
processes or discourse (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Foucault, 1986), and as such is
everywhere. Power is present in interactions and relations between groups and/or
individuals. This poses the question: what happens when power is used, what is
the result? Foucault (1979) describes power as productive and positive; according
to him, power produces a new reality and should not be viewed as negative and
restrictive. However, the negative connotations of power stem from outcomes of its
use instead of the concept itself.
Power as possession

Power as a possession, to be ‘owned’ – involves recognising that an individual or group possesses power over, and therefore has control or sovereignty over, someone else. This view, that power can be owned, was advocated in Marxism and authors such as Arnstein, Bachrach and Dahl (Arnstein, 1969; Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1963). Even though some of these authors focus on ‘community power’ their understanding is that the community possesses the power. Arnstein (1969) developed a typology to address the level of engagement and participation between parties. This engagement ladder distinguishes between gradients of power sharing, ranging from non-sharing to full community control. Even though the intention was to determine the level of power and therefore level of engagement, she advocates that power is always held by a group/individual along this gradient and can therefore be considered as a possession.

In considering power as a possession, it is understood that power is centralised with its holder. It can be described that A has power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do (Dahl, 1963). Power in this form is a capacity of one over the other (Hindess, 1996). In such a situation, power is distributed unequally between two parties, and the one in possession of power may use it to dominate the other. In considering power within this context it becomes clear that the focus is on the behaviour of the participants (Lukes, 2005).

Power as possession, as belonging to someone, is its most common understanding when it is discussed. Lukes calls this view of power the one-dimensional view (Lukes, 2005). In the one-dimensional view, participants’ actions
can be categorised as failure or success, depending on their outcomes; participants with the most successes in outcome can then be considered as the most influential. As part of this view, ‘influence’ and ‘control’ are used to describe power and are often used synonymously (Polsby 1963, in (Lukes, 2005).

Superficially, it seems appropriate to think of power in terms of belonging to someone. In relation to this research, at first glance it appears to be clear that the power lies with the conservation agency: legally, PAMs have the authority to manage protected areas in Western Australia. This form of power is a ‘possession’ but, as Hindess (1996) states, it is seen as a legitimate capacity because it refers to both the conservation agency’s capacity and right to exercise power, based on the legitimacy and justification which is grounded in the respective legislative Acts of Parliament. For example, the conservation agency has the authority to assess applications and grant licences for CTOs to operate in protected areas according to Sections 97a and 101 of the Western Australian Conservation and Land Management Act (1984) (see also Chapter 3). Considering power from Lukes’ (2005) one-dimensional view and Hindess’ (1996) notion of legitimate capacity, this form of power can easily be recognised, identified and observed.

Lukes considers the one-dimensional view (possession) as inadequate, thus the two-dimensional view of power expands on the one-dimensional view. This view of power is founded in the work of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) and is based on one’s values, beliefs and rituals, as well as institutional procedures that work towards one’s benefit. The main message of the two-dimensional view is that an individual or a group consciously or unconsciously has the potential to create or reinforce barriers by their ability to oppose agendas, situations or decisions (Clegg,
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1989; Hindess, 1996; Lukes, 2005). Furthermore, this view recognises the role of power in potentially developing biases. Individuals or groups can make their views known and can create a sense of understanding for their message. The two-dimensional view moves beyond easily observable and identifiable power, as presented in the one-dimensional view. Furthermore, it takes into account the hidden (covert) uses of power, for example, in refusing to make a decision and therefore through the non-decision the other party can be manipulated (Hindess, 1996; Lukes, 2005). In this way, the mere resolve not to make a decision is recognised as exercising power.

Lastly, the three-dimensional view of power perceives the first two views as incomplete and too individualistic. This view is based on observable but most importantly also on latent conflicts, and provides a platform where both potential issues and existing (‘real’) issues can be considered (Lukes, 2005). The key aspect of the three-dimensional view is the ‘real interest’ of the power receivers. According to this view the one who exercises power can exert individual or group influence on the receiver’s mind and interests without conscious recognition by the receiver (Hindess, 1996; Lukes, 1974). The potential effects of this form of power may have long-term consequences. In the light of all three views of power, the three-dimensional view appears to be most appropriate for this study, PAMs and CTOs use power to fulfil their interests and as such already foreshadow potential or latent conflicts.

When considering power, it is not sufficient to discuss what power ‘is’ (possession or dynamic relation), but also how power ‘works’, how it can be used. Primarily when considering power as a dynamic relation, but also when power is viewed as a
possession, there are two main modes of how power can be exercised: through domination or resistance (Few, 2001; Sharp, et al., 2000). The way in which power is exercised is often not sufficient to be able to judge how power is used, it is also critical to know how an action and one’s behaviour is perceived by the other party.

**Dominant power**

Power can be exercised in an attempt to control and/or dominate others. The individual and/or group who exercises this form of power has the ability to impose her or his will and/or manipulate the other. A characteristic of dominant power is that it limits and constrains the choices of others (Lukes, 2005). Dominant power is frequently associated with possession, based on the individual or group exercising and therefore ‘possessing’ the power (Few, 2001; Sharp, et al., 2000).

PAMs have the legal authority to manage protected areas in Western Australia; however, frequently CTOs’ perceptions are that some PAMs exercise dominant power beyond their given authoritative powers. In possessing authoritative powers, role of PAMs is to enforce the agency’s regulations based on legitimised arrangements. However, in carrying out their directives, some CTOs perceive the way the directives are executed as an example of PAMs exercising dominant power. The barriers described in Chapter 5 highlight some CTOs’ perceptions how PAMs use dominant power when dealing with each other:

But it is a bit of a power trip for them [PAMs] to be honest, and most operators up here don’t have a good feeling about CALM [DEC] at all. The operators think they are arrogant, they know that they have this amazing icon and yeah, are a bit on a power trip.
They [PAMs] are in fact public servants and they tend to forget that, they get high and mighty and say we will do this or that without thinking about us at all.

Lukes (2005) acknowledges the difficulties in clearly distinguishing between authority based on social structures and dominant power. Nevertheless, PAMs are required to fulfil their role based on the legislative authority given to them, whilst not using and exercising power beyond their authority in order to dominate CTOs. Although PAMs exercising authority may appear to some CTOs as being dominated but the important issue is not what PAMs have to do (aspects of their role), rather how they do it. There might be only minor changes in PAMs’ behaviour which will be perceived and taken up by CTOs as exercising dominant power which may hinder collaborative efforts on their part.

The legislation provides a framework within which PAMs act and exercise their authoritative powers with respect to protected areas. This finding of the research is in accordance with previous research addressing public sector employers, which suggests that public servants exercise power in accordance with their role in the public sector which gives legitimacy to their decisions and resulting actions (Elliott, 1997).

In recapping the key results in Chapters 4 and 5 of the sociograms, assumptions of how PAMs and CTOs perceive their relationships with respect to power, several conclusions can be made. The sociograms are useful in illustrating the network of and describing relationships between actors, in this case PAMs and CTOs, through the representation, placement and presence of a relationship by an arrow or a line.
(Brandes et al., 1999; Huang et al., 2006; Saxena, 2004; Scott, 2000). Similar to cognitive maps, sociograms are employed here to explore each respondent’s image of stakeholders who are involved in protected areas in their representation (Sommer and Sommer, 2002). Due to the reluctance of several participants to draw a sociogram the sociograms provided information in addition to the participants’ verbal responses to the interview questions. It needs to be noted, however, that a full analysis based on the sociograms has its limitations as they may represent the respondents’ stereotyped or desired illustrations rather than their actual relationships (Sommer and Sommer, 2002).

PAMs’ sociograms were complex and centric with the PAMs placed in the centre; in contrast, CTOs’ sociograms had a hierarchical layout with themselves placed at or near the bottom and the PAMs at the peak of the hierarchical structure. An analysis of CTOs’ sociograms suggests that they perceive PAMs as ‘telling’ them what to do; they drew the interactions with PAMs as a top-down relationship. Most PAMs considered having a two-way connection between themselves and the CTOs. In contrast, CTOs were divided in having a two-way connection between them and PAMs, and a perceived one-way connection going from PAMs to themselves.

With respect to power, CTOs’ sociograms can be viewed as presenting their perception of a power imbalance between PAMs and themselves. They drew a hierarchical structure in which they placed PAMs at the top of structure with a one-way connection going from PAMs to them, indicating a perceived weak tie with them (Pavlovich, 2002). Their drawings of a hierarchical structure with a one-way connection between them led to the assumption that they thought PAMs are exercising dominant power. Hierarchical displays of networks (e.g. sociograms) are
frequently an indication of unequal access to information and knowledge (Saxena, 2004). CTOs placing themselves at the bottom indicates their perceived powerlessness. This hierarchical structure of CTOs’ sociograms can be considered as a formal network ‘based on rules (terms of reference, structure) and status.’ (Saxena, 2004:282). Even when CTOs drew a two-way connection between themselves and PAMs, they mostly used a hierarchical layout to show the linkages (Chapter 5, section 5.5).

In contrast, PAMs’ sociograms show more stakeholders with mostly two-way connections between them. Including more stakeholders is an indication of a networks density (i.e. more stakeholders equals higher density). Although a detailed analysis based on density is not feasible with the sociograms obtained due to the limited sample size, the assumption can be made that PAMs’ perception is to be part of a tighter network with a stronger information/communication exchange and with stronger ties, based on their two-way connections within the network (Pavlovich, 2002).

In their sociograms, PAMs mostly placed themselves in the centre, which suggests that they perceive themselves as ‘important and powerful’ with respect to their functions (Pavlovich, 2002). As Pavlovich (2002:204) states, ‘In a network context, high centrality allows an organisation quicker access to more information, speedier action and implementation. This enables the organisation to shape its reputation ...‘. PAMs placed the CTOs peripherally to them (Chapter 4), indicating what they perceive as a power balance due to the mostly two-way interaction they drew and their respective location. With respect to the networks as drawn in the participants’
sociograms, it has to be understood that networks and people’s perceptions about them are evolving and therefore changing over time (Pavlovich, 2002).

The use of dominant power is often linked to a perceived powerlessness by the other subjected to the power. Through the exercise of dominant power the receiver’s choices of this form of power are reduced and limited; however, this is not entirely true. According to Foucault, the relationship between the one who exercises dominant power and the one who receives it will never be completely one-sided because the receiver will always be in the position to make choices: ‘[p]ower can only be exercised over another to the extent that the latter still has the possibility [choice] of committing suicide, of jumping out of the window or of killing the other’ (Foucault 1988, in Hindess, 1996:103). Through the exercise of this ‘possibility or choice’, the dominated one represents another form of power – resistant power.

**Resistant power**

CTOs and the tourism industry have no specific authority or dominant power manifested in legislation with respect to the management of protected areas. Nevertheless, CTOs have the power to react. This mode of power is resistant power and involves resistance against domination (Few, 2001; Sharp, et al., 2000). Exercising resistant power can take various forms, such as through discourse, activism, specifically set up situations and actions, and spontaneous undertakings by individuals.
Commercial tourism is part of a very large industry sector and is becoming a powerful and vocal lobby group (Buckley and Sommer, 2001). Tourism in Australia and particularly in Western Australia is a significant industry and important to the public, therefore it has substantial political power which translates into resistant power. The success of the industry will be measured against Tourism Western Australia’s key objective to accelerate tourism growth, as identified in their policies (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, the industry’s success can be linked to protected areas as it can be assumed that an increased number of people appreciating protected areas might motivate them to pay to conserve protected areas (Buckley and Sommer, 2001; Goodwin, 2003; IUCN, 1993; Worboys, et al., 2005). If that is the case, CTOs have the power to ‘use’ this development as a form of balancing PAMs’ powers through their use of resistant power, for example through discourse (as part of their tours), activism (lobbying against decisions made by PAMs) or spontaneous undertakings (reacting to specific programs).

A group of local CTOs in the Shark Bay area in the Midwest region actively use resistant power generated through their cultural groupings and groupthink. These CTOs share a strong feeling of belonging together in their ‘fight’ and resistance against the agency and individual PAMs. This group of CTOs strongly displayed all three groupthink syndromes: overestimations, closed-mindedness and uniformity, as part of their resistance towards PAMs:

Everything in Monkey Mia worked so much better before CALM [DEC] moved in. They should just go or we kick them out. ... They don’t mingle in town because they are so afraid. They split the town in half.

There is the perception in the local community, because they are the ones who are affected, that CALM [DEC] has come along, grabbed it [a specific area], locked it up and denied access. The
local community suffers, they lose out as part of their recreational activities. This puts CALM [DEC] offside with the community. CALM [DEC] will tell you they can’t give access to some people and not others, therefore lock all up. As a commercial operator working with a government department you see so many things that are inefficient, and costly and when you discuss these issues with them you’ll always get the nod, yeah I understand what you are saying, but really nothing gets done – the usual story.

As the first quote illustrates, the CTO believes that the group is able to ‘kick CALM out’, displaying the group’s overestimation of their powers and a sense of uniformity. The second quote illustrates the CTO’s lack of understanding why access is denied in one area, as well as the notion of ‘we always did it why can’t we keep doing it’, which is an indication of the group’s closed-mindedness in their unwillingness to understand why change occurred and accept it. The community feels that the privilege of using ‘their’ area was taken from them because in their view the conservation agency ‘grabbed it’. Most of the local CTOs think that there exists a clear rift between the local community of which they are a part and the PAMs working in that area.

PAMs in the region are fully aware of some of the local CTOs’ anger and beliefs, which creates difficulties in the community and in their working arrangements. The following statement reflects this understanding:

The inherent conflict in the community [Shark Bay area] translates to the operators and the operator’s association with CALM [DEC] and the operators within their own group. I don’t know why that is, they [CTOs] are so tied up in their situation that they can’t see it is counterproductive for everyone being in that sort of almost hostile degree of being critical of CALM [DEC] has a negative effect on everyone, it’s not just CALM [DEC].
Similarly to the above quotes by CTOs, this PAM’s response illustrates how he/she perceived the local CTOs engaging in groupthink and displaying associated groupthink syndromes of uniformity and closed-mindedness, as well as exercising resistant power in being hostile towards the agency.

As power is not static but continuously shifting, it is an important aspect of relationships. It can be expected that, as previously described, a multitude of different power relationships are present, both between PAMs and CTOs, and between PAMs and the conservation agency as an institution. The power relationship between individual PAMs and the conservation agency in which they work is mediated by the culture of the organisation. Such a cultural grouping exercising resistant power within the agency was observed in the Kimberley:

The rules, which are made down there [Perth head office] don’t necessarily apply thousands of kilometres away. A national park up here [Kimberley region] with high visitation is totally different to a national park down there. There is no communication and consultation and also the goal posts keep moving, there is so much re-inventing the wheel. But we are far away and most of the time we keep doing it our way.

This quote illustrates resistance in that the responding PAM within the group of his/her colleagues highlights doing things ‘their own way’, even though sometimes it is not fully aligned with the directions given by the head office. The results of current barriers (Chapter 4) include statements from PAMs referring to barriers within their own agency.

The quote also indicates a perception that the formation of their cultural group and associated groupthink are due to their geographical distance from the head office. Some individuals in remote areas perceive themselves as geographically removed
from the agency’s core but also as being ‘different’, based on their specific experiences and requirements with respect to their working arrangements, which are very often different from those of urban areas. Individuals working in the Kimberley and the Midwest developed a shared frame of reference and created their own cultural group, in feeling subordinate to their colleagues working in the head office. Their feeling of subordination is based on their lack of scientific background, of tertiary education, of communication, and their geographical location:

We want communication, it is a problem down in Perth, and everyone has their vested interest and not much else. The PVS [Parks and Visitor Services] people are looking at things in different ways than the nature conservation9 people. Many of us are ‘Jack of all trades’, we don’t have a scientific background, we have no degree.

Some theorists believe that exercising resistant power in a group setting requires a level of coordination and cooperation from all members to successfully achieve their goals (White, 1986). In contrast, Scott (1986) points out that activities based on resistant power are rarely collective in their nature if they are open, and rarely open if they are collective. However, the findings of this research lead to the conclusion that resistance, as exercised by the group of local CTOs in the Shark Bay area, is in fact based on the cooperation by all or most members of the group and is openly displayed and exercised. Therefore, when looking at the resistant power of more than one individual, it is important to consider it in relation to cultural groupings and groupthink, as it then becomes apparent that exercising resistant power is a strategy used by cultural groups. Specifically, Janis’ (1982)

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9 PVS and Nature Conservation are two different divisions of the conservation agency.
groupthink syndromes Type I (overestimation of the group with its powers) and Type III (pressure towards uniformity) fit the above situation. However, exercising resistant power as part of the group’s behaviour also has the potential to lead to false compliance (Scott, 1986) which may be based on peer pressure exerted by other group members, and is also a characteristic of groupthink syndrome Type III.

Both, dominant and resistant, forms of power are a more appropriate fit to power as a dynamic relation than the more conventional view of power as possession, because where there is power there is both dominance and resistance. This is particularly true within the context of this research with its focus on the relationships between PAMs and CTOs, whose regular interactions are a means of exercising power over the other party. Through discourse in interactions, the group exercising power provides meaning for their actions and creates new realities, a function of power as a dynamic relation.

Interactions and discourse are instrumental for successful collaboration and good relations; however, they may also lead to failure. Discourse in relation to power has multiple layers; firstly by what is verbalised, but secondly by what is not verbalised and stays hidden, with its associated meanings and the linkages between them. Thirdly, discursive elements which appear similar or even identical may have diametrically opposing meanings when considered within the context of one’s position, where the same statement can have inherently different outcomes as the meaning is often not disclosed (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Interactions and discourses are guided and driven by one’s values and motives and are therefore regularly used as part of one’s strategy to achieve a goal through the exercise of power. Power is most commonly exercised through discourse, particularly when viewing power as a
dynamic relation, through its very nature of being shifting and opportunistic (Carabine, 2001). Although not visibly at first, PAMs and CTOs alike showed how their behaviour and actions are based on resistant power which was exercised partly through discourse. The relationship between individuals or groups is recognised as a meshing of power, as the exercise of power and perceived powerlessness (Lukes, 2005).

A specific example of how local CTOs use resistant power as part of their discourse with their customers was outlined by PAMs in the Midwest. As presented in various sections of this thesis, the working relationship between PAMs and CTOs in the Shark Bay area is strained and often accompanied by a reluctance to communicate and work together. The group of local CTOs is angry with the PAMs in the area, because they perceive the PAMs are interfering with what they think is their right with regards to protected areas (e.g. free access). Prior to the area’s recognition as a protected area with World Heritage Status, they had unrestricted access and freedom to utilise the resource to their liking. The CTOs openly display their dislike and resentment towards the agency. According to some of the statements provided by PAMs (see following quote), several CTOs voiced their strong negative opinion about the agency and the conflict they have with PAMs:

> I even know of CTOs up there who quite openly discuss the conflict with their customers in terms of bad mouthing CALM [DEC] and things like that.

The quote illustrates how some of the CTOs exercise resistant power towards the agency through discourse. This PAM perceives the CTOs’ openly displayed resistance as animosity with the intention of instilling resentment towards the
agency in their customers. From the agency’s perspective, this behaviour has negative impacts on the agency’s profile, particularly when visitors tell these stories to others. Furthermore, the CTOs’ behaviour has an immediate effect within the local community. They often boast amongst their peers about what they have done, namely communicating to their customers their conflicts with PAMs in the area. However, given that the Foucauldian notion of power is based on dynamic relationships it can be expected that PAMs will fight against CTOs’ resistance.

From PAMs’ perspective, they think it is important that CTOs communicate the agency’s conservation message to their customers and, to achieve that goal, they indicated their preference for working together with CTOs. Both aim to overcome the ‘us versus them’ notion as they realise the benefits of doing so. Challenges to overcome these difficulties are not only issue based, also important is how the respondents understand these issues and the meanings they assign to them. The next chapter (Chapter 8) addresses the respondents’ difficulties, based on their perceptions, misunderstandings and how their different perspectives influence their working relationships.
CHAPTER 8
IT IS ALL A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVES
(ANALYSIS III)

8.1 INTRODUCTION

It is not only values (Chapter 6), cultural dynamics and power (Chapter 7) which influence the relationships between protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs): their respective perceptions, the ‘idealised’ attributes each one should have, and the differences in understanding, do as well. Particularly for future management actions, knowing their expectations of each other is very useful. As such it is important and necessary to identify the respondents’ perceptions because it reflects their perceptual biases as well as inclinations towards the issues in question. A perceptual perspective held by an individual can be considered as being unique to that particular person and therefore it is useful and reasonable to ask questions about material to describe his/her perceptions in order to obtain meaningful insights (Starbuck and Mezias, 1996). Furthermore, the respondents’ respective positions impact on and affects their job-related performances (Subramaniam and Ashkanasy, 2001).

This research determined that PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships are influenced and affected by their respective perceptual biases such as stereotyping, frame of reference, perceptual defence, and underlying expectations. Furthermore, it was identified that the idealised attributes that PAMs and CTOs seek in each other were evenly balanced between ‘similar’ and ‘different’. As identified in the results
chapters (Chapters 4 and 5), they seek the same broad characteristics, interpersonal, operational, liaison, and business skills, as well as value-based attributes, although, the specific attributes differed. It is not sufficient for a good understanding of their relationships to take the ‘ideal’ attributes the respondents expect from each other, and their perception of each other, at face value; rather, one needs to un-package their respective meanings because words or concepts had different meanings for PAMs and CTOs.

8.2 PERCEPTION AND SCHEMA THEORY

Confusion may arise due to the misunderstanding and the often interchangeable use of perception and schema. Perception frequently refers to a person’s mental view or outlook, a way of considering situations, topics or people (Hamlyn, 1996). In contrast, schema is based in psychology’s schema theory, and is the internal representation of the world, an organisation of concepts and actions that can be changed and amended by obtaining new information about the world (Schank and Abelson, 1977). The key concept of schema theory can be described as an individual’s set of rules, scripts, or knowledge blocks through which all new information is processed, categorised and allocated.

The schema’s cognitive simplification helps and controls how a person processes and interprets information relevant to him/herself. In addition to the interpretation process, one’s schema can be used to foresee and predict situations. Such examples are the ability to finish another person’s sentence and to understand the exact meaning of placeholders in a sentence (Casson, 1983; Onorato and Turner, 2004; Schank and Abelson, 1977). Schema theory is helpful when an in-depth
understanding of an individual’s processes and information categorisation is required on a micro scale. This study did not aim to explore the schema of the individuals on a micro scale, instead the focus was on PAMs’ and CTOs’ perceptions of each other, their working relationships, protected areas and people working in protected areas on a broader scale.

The term ‘perception’ refers to a person’s interpretation of reality (Rock, 1975). In the process of perception, an individual selects, organises, and interprets all environmental stimuli through his/her senses. The organisation achieved is based on a selection, decision, or preference for certain outcomes on the part of the perceptual system (Rock, 1975). Perceptual processes are regarded as a chain of more or less complex transformations of the input delivered by the stimulus. Perceiving is not a process of the eye or brain itself, it is the way in which all these factors are assembled by each individual (Ben-Ze'ev, 1993). Moreover, a person’s perception and inclinations can appear to be wrong, highly unrealistic or difficult to comprehend by others because people’s perceptions are influenced by their memories and experiences (Starbuck and Mezias, 1996).

Perception is considered to be an important way of acquiring information, or belief-like states. The acquisition of information as part of perception can be regarded as perceptual learning. Perceptual learning involves the acquisition of new abilities which therefore enables further perceptual discrimination (Ben-Ze'ev, 1993). This learning enables the person to perceive progressively more subtle aspects of the perceptual environment. The difference between original perceptions (present at birth) and acquired perceptions (evolved later) is historical, a factor of the time at which a certain perception evolved (Ben-Ze'ev, 1993).
Perceiving is itself a state of awareness; it is part of thinking, remembering, feeling, and imagining (Ben-Ze'ev, 1993). According to Ben-Ze’ev (1993) we do not perceive first and add awareness later. Perception is a cognitive state of being aware of the perceptual environment or of simply being in that environment. The fact that in everyday life meaning is assigned to perceptual inputs virtually instantaneously obscures the realisation of the temporally extended character of human perception (Hentschel et al., 1986). Distinction has to be made between perceiving as an act of mental outlook and mere physiological registration. As this is a tourism research project, the term perception, as understood in sociology, is used and referred to as a person’s mental view or outlook and this person’s way of considering situations, topics or people. Furthermore, it includes the acknowledgement of individual interpretations of events which are culturally and socially influenced (Jary and Jary, 2000).

Inviting the respondents to select one or a series of words from a prompt card (Appendix 2), that they find most suitable to describe each other (Question 5), and describe a memorable experience (Question 6), provided information on their perceptions of each other (see Chapters 4 and 5, sections 4.3 and 5.3). It is important to recognise that when a perceiver sees an action, for example those mentioned as part of their memorable experiences, he/she normally observes a part of the material sequence only, but often the whole of the action can be present in the perceiver’s experience (From, 1971). Past experiences are regularly used to ‘fill the gap’, to allow the perceiver to complete the observed picture. This phenomenon is important in situations where a change is sought in interactions between people. If the perceiver relies on or ‘uses’ his/her negative past
experiences the whole action will be perceived as negative; however, if the perceiver has a specific expectation of an action or a person, this expectation can influence how an action sequence will be perceived (From, 1971). As such, ‘filling in gaps’ can have positive or negative consequences as it lays out what type of picture the observer perceives but also expects.

Perceptions are based on, influenced and shaped by experiences (past and present), memories, background and training of the individual as well as physical stimuli (Hentschel, et al., 1986). In this context, the background of a person is considered to be the person’s sociological ‘blanket’, for example up-bringing, ethnicity, age, and gender. These attributes are intertwined with the perceiver’s memories, emotions, educational background, training and experiences. As Ben-Ze’ev (1993) highlights, perceptions are person-specific as they express an observer’s particular perspectives and expectations. For example, missing information will be filled in by the perceiver by drawing on familiar patterns and will be influenced by the perceiver’s prior beliefs and values. Further, a person may react in a particular way because he/she has been trained to do so, hence, the reaction is more or less mechanical. The training connects the perception with the subsequent reactions (Hamlyn, 1996). However, on various occasions a person may experience the same situation or object differently, due to the existence of a variety of perceptual perspectives.

Some PAMs believe that their perception, values and images of the protected area should coincide with other peoples values and images:

If they [CTOs] go into the Park they should know the Park is there to be conserved and that there’s no rubbish left behind, leave no
traces; all those principles should apply. I think if National Parks are their prime location for visiting, other things they should be thinking of in the future is other sorts of conservation philosophies and how they run their tour. Like they might want to think about solar buses or energy conserving vehicles, bio-diesel, so all that sort of thing they should be thinking about, I believe.

I would expect him to obey the simple things, like remain on designated tracks, not take people to sensitive areas where it’s known there may be cultural areas at risk, it may be erosion problems, I would expect him not to compromise those values. I’d expect him to know the area he’s taking people to and impart that knowledge to his paying public passengers.

A critical aspect of successful management of the resource is PAMs’ perceptions of the resource and of the choices open to them in managing it (Twight and Catton, 1975). Some choices will be provided as part of their mandate and organisational requirements but other choices are based on their preferences and personal inclinations, particularly the choices of ‘how’ to manage the resource rather than of ‘what’ to manage. For example, how they behave towards, or perceive, CTOs and their actions is predominantly a personal choice.

Lussier and Poulus (1998), Gibson et al. (2000), and Ivancevich et al. (1997) argue for a close relationship between perception and behaviour. According to these authors, needs and perceptions are the starting point of human behaviour. Perceptions are significantly influenced by a person’s needs and desires, therefore a person’s perception can lead to different behaviour. It is acknowledged that how individuals perceive others affects their actions and behaviour towards them (Lussier and Poulus, 1998).
The perception of other people’s behaviour frequently has action-guiding consequences for the perceiver (Straenger and Hommel, 1996). In situations where the respondents presented positive memorable experiences (sections 4.3 and 5.3), they frequently linked their behaviour to the perceived actions of the other party. For example, PAMs in the Midwest, who spoke about CTOs’ willingness and involvement in rescue missions, now react positively when these CTOs provide feedback or raise park a related issues. The PAMs hold these CTOs in high regard and try to accommodate their views and inputs.

Positive or negative perceptions can result in corresponding behaviour patterns. For example, a positive interpretation of an observed behaviour or situation may guide the observer to react in a positive manner, whereas a negative perception of a situation can have the opposite effect. Consequently, in order to achieve satisfactory coexistence for people in their personal and work environments, positive interpersonal interactions are important, beginning with a positive mutual perception. Interactional approaches study how information derived from stimulation interacts with information stored in memory and how the output depends on this interaction (Prinz and Bridgeman, 1995). A significant research problem is how information derived from stimulation can interact with information stored in memory.

Interactional indicators between the perceiver and the subject can be facial expressions and/or actions and behaviour. For example, facial expressions have a nonverbal communication function as well as an expressive function, therefore the visible sequence will be determined not only by emotion but also by acquired communication rules, or ‘display rules’ (Straenger and Hommel, 1996). Actions
can be considered to be an indicator of how to interact; they are called ‘perception of causality’ and are performed teleological, to attain specific goals. Furthermore, an action sequence often provides essential information on the behavioural intentions of the observed person (Straenger and Hommel, 1996).

Perception is an ongoing activity, but is a complete state at every moment in the sense that it does not need to await any further development to perfect or complete itself. The content of a perceptual experience is seen as a meaningful event (Ben-Ze'ev, 1993; Hentschel, et al., 1986). Perception can be an intentional state of direct awareness of the environment, or it can be unconsciously taken up by the individual. It has long been recognised that there exists an unconscious or subliminal perception, in which what is perceived does not immediately register (Hamlyn, 1996).

Individuals tend to form a quick assessment based on their first impression and perception when meeting a stranger. This process is called the primacy effect (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Lussier and Poulus, 1998). The primacy effect is the way people perceive one another based on their first impressions. Human perceptions are open to biases and therefore first impressions establish the mental framework within which people view one another (Lussier and Poulus, 1998). These first impressions can affect an individual’s behaviour in a positive or negative way. During the short duration of the first impression, human relations will be established, denied, or reconfirmed. As many social scientists claim, first impressions are used to evaluate others. From a PAM’s and CTO’s point of view, an important implication of the primacy effect in organisational behaviour is the tendency to judge people and therefore each other too early (Lussier and Poulus,
First impressions can also be easily influenced by existing knowledge of the person which may be used to judge this person prior to a face-to-face meeting. In this instance the actual perception will be influenced by, and is based on, background information. As stated by Straenger and Hommel (1996) the perception of other people’s behaviour frequently has action-guiding functions by the observer and is regularly influenced by perceptual biases. As such, PAMs’ and CTOs’ biases guide their actions and influence their relationships and level of collaboration.

**Biases affecting perceptions**

A range of factors and biases can affect or distort an individual’s or group’s perception of others. In addition to the previously outlined factors affecting perception, biases such as stereotyping, the halo effect, frames of reference, perceptual defence, projection, and expectations are potentially influential (Bartol, *et al.*, 2005; Gibson, *et al.*, 2000; Lussier and Poulus, 1998; Robbins *et al.*, 1994). Some of these biases are based on social categorisation, a type of group process. Social categorisation occurs when members of one group consider another individual to be a member of another social group. One such example of social categorisation is through ‘stereotyping’ (Stangor, 2004).

The bias of stereotyping is present amongst PAMs and CTOs alike. Stereotyping was observed when respondents talked about current barriers (Chapters 4 and 5, sections 4.4 and 5.4). The following quote from a PAM in the Kimberley region illustrates this phenomenon:
The actual tour operators, they want to do all sorts of bloody resorts because they are in for the money, they [resorts] do have a place but in a lot of places they don’t, putting up resorts takes away a lot of things.

This PAM generalises his/her impression to the whole group of CTOs, and projects what he/she thinks the CTOs’ motivations are, namely that ‘they are in for the money’. The PAM might be having this experience with one particular CTO; however, as part of stereotypical perception involves simplifying characteristics which may be a feature of an individual, the PAM applies it to all members of the group of CTOs (Bartol, et al., 2005; Gibson, et al., 2000; Lussier and Poulus, 1998).

Similarly, CTOs also stereotype PAMs. As one CTO said:

The attitude of some staff [PAMs], you get the impression that CALM [DEC] staff think they own it [protected area].

This quote clearly shows that the attitude exhibited by some PAMs is perceived by this CTO as reluctance to share the area or welcome CTOs. However, this CTO generalises and projects the behaviour of some individuals to all DEC staff, stereotypically assuming that all PAMs behave in the same way.

Stereotypes develop and can be based in a range of areas, including occupation, race, religion, nationality, gender and so forth. **Stereotyping** is the process of assigning generalised and simplified characteristics to a person on the basis of the person’s group belonging (Bartol, et al., 2005; Gibson, et al., 2000; Jary and Jary, 2000; Lussier and Poulus, 1998; Robbins, et al., 1994). Frequently, in considering a group as stereotypical, the most prominent members of this group show the
attributes of that stereotype whereas other members do not necessarily fulfil these characteristics. Stereotypes are manifest as either positive or negative characteristics and the stereotypical groups are perceived as such. However, stereotypes are most commonly used in a negative or prejudicial context, as previously demonstrated for the Shark Bay area with CTOs and PAMs holding stereotypical perceptions of each other (Gibson, et al., 2000; Lussier and Poulus, 1998; Robbins, et al., 1994).

The next bias relates primarily to individual traits instead of characteristics found in groups. The **halo effect** refers to the tendency to place more significance on certain individual characteristics or traits than on others when an individual evaluates another person. The person projecting a halo effect on another person bases his/her overall perception of that person on one specific feature which then is used to dominate the person’s other characteristics (Lussier and Poulus, 1998). However, the findings of this research do not provide sufficient data to draw any conclusions with respect to PAMs and/or CTOs exerting a ‘halo effect’ that influences their perceptions.

**Frame of reference** is the human tendency to see things from a narrow focus that directly affects the individual (Gibson, et al., 2000). Two individuals or two groups can perceive the same situation from a different frame of reference. The respondents’ examples of their memorable experiences of situations in which they were involved are all based on their respective frames of reference. Each specific situation was most likely perceived differently by the PAM and the CTO in question. One such example (Chapter 5, section 5.3), is the CTO’s memorable experience of requesting the use of the PAM’s agency’s vehicle, which the PAM refused. From
the CTO’s frame of reference, the PAM lacked understanding of his/her and the visitor’s needs, whereas the PAM’s frame of reference was to follow the agency’s guidelines.

In perceptual defence an individual blocks out or distorts information which are considered as threatening or confrontational to one’s beliefs (Bartol, et al., 2005; Lussier and Poulus, 1998; Luthans, 1995). Perceptual defence in PAMs and CTOs was evident in the Shark Bay area. Local CTOs reportedly intentionally refuse to acknowledge the agency’s role. Most of the CTOs believe they have the power to ‘kick them [PAMs] out’. The occurrence of perceptual defence can be seen in many fields where a range of different people work together. Perceptual defence is a bias which can be found in individuals but it is also common among groups in organisations, displayed in cultural groupings and the concept of groupthink (see Chapter 7).

Several decades ago, research determined that resource managers and users of the resource often do not share the same image of the resource (Bultena and Taves, 1961; Twight and Catton, 1975). The respondents in the Twight (1975) study expressed a high level of homogeneity and solidarity, with their perceptions being influenced by their job values, which in turn were based on their professional experiences and education. The authors state that, ‘when such images [perceptions] become implicit, they are incorporated as accepted elements of plans presented for public choice’ (Twight and Catton, 1975:299). Based on this understanding, a person will incorporate his/her values as part of his/her perceptions when ‘assessing’ another person’s action.
Perceptual defence, also called selective perception, is often used and applied in the study of organisational behaviour. It is the perceptual process by which an individual selects certain stimuli and ignores others (Bartol, et al., 2001; Gibson, et al., 2000; Lussier and Poulus, 1998; Robbins, et al., 1994; Twight and Catton, 1975). In the process of perceptual defence the observer selects segments of the observable to be taken in, as the observer cannot assimilate all that can be observed. However, the selected segments are not chosen randomly, instead they depend on the background, interests, experience and attitudes of the observer (Robbins, et al., 1994). Through selective perception the observer is able to rapidly assess and sometimes judge others, although not without the risk of drawing an inaccurate picture.

**Projection**, as a bias of an individual’s perception, is a person’s tendency to assume others share or have similar characteristics, motivations, or shortcomings to themselves. Projection is often linked to expectations. As the process of perception includes selecting, organising and interpreting information, the bias of ‘expectation’ is commonly evident.

In having **expectations** individuals perceive according to a present situation but also include their expectations as part of the overall process. Certain expectations about people may also affect the behaviour of the perceiver. In Chapters 4 and 5 (PAMs’ and CTOs’ views), the results of how PAMs and CTOs described their expectations of a ‘good’ PAM/CTO were presented. These were their expectations of how the ideal PAM or CTO should be and as such influence their respective perception of each other. The following section covers in detail the respondents’
expectations and provides an overview of the similarities and differences between their expectations as these influence their relationship.

8.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF EACH OTHER

PAMs and CTOs working within the same vicinity may unknowingly rely on their past experiences together with their perceptions of one another in the underlying process of constructing reality. An example from a PAM of current barriers between PAMs and CTOs (Chapter 4) illustrates this phenomenon:

Their [CTOs’] mind set, their attitude, they think that they have been doing this for twenty years, and keep doing it, hence, it’s ok and they can.

A comment like this indicates that this PAM uses his/her experience to predict CTOs’ behaviour instead of assessing each individual encounter on its merits. This phenomenon is according with observations made by From (1971) that people observe the beginning of an action and based on their experience the whole of the action which may happen can appear to the perceiver. There is a direct perception of others as they are present in people’s daily encounters. Furthermore, the quote also illustrates that the PAM’s perception is influenced by his/her expectations. He/she not only anticipates the CTOs’ actions, behaving as they did twenty years ago, but also expects them to continue to do so. The PAM’s expectation is another form of perceptual bias towards the local CTOs.
Responses from CTOs (Chapter 5) showed the same pattern. The following example by a CTO illustrates this point:

> It is basically that they [PAMs] look down on us; like, oh here comes another tour bus. There is an absolute disregard for tourism operators.

Some CTOs enter protected areas with an underlying expectation and anticipation that the PAMs will not welcome them and will ignore them. Consciously or subconsciously, it can easily happen that they ‘communicate’ this expectation and anticipation to their customers through their facial expressions, behaviour, or comments they might make. This form of anticipation may have a negative impact on the working relationships between PAMs and CTOs, in which they can both become wary and watchful of any situations which support their constructed reality.

To be able to obtain an insight of PAMs’ and CTOs’ idealised attributes and perceptions of what constitutes a ‘good’ PAM/CTO, it is important to illustrate the similarities and differences of their responses (see Table 8.1), for future management actions. The categories in Table 8.1 are extracted from the results in Chapters 4 and 5, sections 4.2 and 5.2 respectively. Interpersonal skills refer to a PAM’s/CTO’s personal characteristics when dealing with others, operational skills addresses skills necessary for the day-to-day running of the business, liaison skills include skills required for working together, business skills encompasses a business understanding and associated knowledge, and value-based attributes cover attributes that describe PAMs’/CTOs’ expectations based on values.
Table 8.1: Similarities and differences of PAMs’ and CTOs’ idealised attributes of a ‘good’ PAM/CTO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAMs’ idealised attributes of CTOs</th>
<th>CTOs’ idealised attributes of PAMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interpersonal skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communicative</td>
<td>• Communicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feedback</td>
<td>• Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Progressive</td>
<td>• Approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operational skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operational skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practical skills &amp; safety</td>
<td>• Practical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accreditation</td>
<td>• Present &amp; visible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledgeable</td>
<td>• Knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liaison skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Liaison skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative</td>
<td>• Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business skills</strong></td>
<td><strong>Business skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Business understanding</td>
<td>• Business understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value-based attributes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Value-based attributes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental commitment</td>
<td>• Value-related tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respect</td>
<td>• Sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Passion</td>
<td>• Passion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAMs’ and CTOs’ idealised expected attributes of each other are, broadly speaking, in the same categories; however, through deeper analysis differences emerge. Based on the broad categories, at first glance it appears PAMs and CTOs expect mostly the same attributes from each other. Particularly with respect to their direct encounters, they both want communication and collaboration, mixed with practical skills, in conducting their work and passion for the place and people. Such similarity in their expectations may be due to their personal motives, as that is what they consider important in a ‘partner’ (Kenny and Acitelli, 2001). In relationships, particularly close relationships, partners’ expectations of each other may be influenced by their perceptions of reality and, when asked how they actually perceive each other, PAMs and CTOs included ‘collaborative’ (Table 8.2).
When looking at the differences between PAMs’ and CTOs’ expectations, interpersonal, operational and value-based attributes were mentioned. For CTOs it is important to see, meet, and talk to PAMs when in the field. They want PAMs to ‘share’ the area with them and with their customers. This finding was somewhat surprising, as one might assume that CTOs would prefer to be ‘left alone’ when visiting an area, but seeking contact instead indicates their desire to make contact and obtain information. Furthermore, it leads to the assumption that they strongly believe that their behaviour, whilst with their customer in the park, accords to all rules and regulations, therefore they do not expect to have a problem being around PAMs. This finding reflects research conducted on outfitter/guides\textsuperscript{10} and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service\textsuperscript{11}, which determined that outfitter/guides are seeking contact and are therefore interested in working with the agency (Parker and Avant, 2000).

PAMs expect environmental commitment and respect from CTOs. These expectations were not mentioned by CTOs. However, an environmental commitment from PAMs is a requirement of their position based on their role and the tasks need they fulfil. PAMs’ expectation of respect from CTOs for them, protected areas, and their customers, is most likely based in their own set of values. As such it shapes their expectations, as previously described. Research conducted in Western Australia obtained similar results regarding respect (Hughes and Carlsen, 2004). In Hughes’ and Carlsen’s (2004) study, PAMs and CTOs voiced their belief that they should respect each other, with PAMs’ position being that the

\textsuperscript{10} Outfitter/guides have special use permits to operate, and provide commercially run tours in wilderness areas

\textsuperscript{11} The Forest Service was established in 1905 and is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
agency published a large number of products that can assist CTOs in understanding their role and therefore increase their respect.

In light of the respondents’ expectations, it is important to include their perceptions of each other, as they reflect how they perceive each other. Do their perceptions reflect their idealised expectations of attributes, or are they completely opposite to them? The aim was to determine if the respondents’ idealised expectations of each other, of how a ‘good’ PAM/CTO should be, match their perception of how the PAMs and CTOs with whom they work actually are. Table 8.2 illustrates the respondents’ most frequently mentioned attributes in describing each other (see also Chapters 4 and 5, section 4.3 and 5.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>PAMs’ perceptions of CTOs</th>
<th>CTOs’ perceptions of PAMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservationist</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue oriented</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAMs’ and CTOs’ perceptions of each other show close similarities, for example, both think of each other as collaborative and knowledgeable. Also, ‘collaborative’ and ‘knowledgeable’ were both idealised attributes they expect from each other (see Table 8.1) and, as such, their perceptions reflect their expectations. Although both PAMs and CTOs believe how they perceive each other is how the other party actually is, their perception may be inaccurate and strongly influenced by their expectations and/or motives (Kenny and Acitelli, 2001; Starbuck and Mezias,
1996). As Kenny (2001) suggests, partners in a relationship use a combination of actual and assumed similarities in assessing each other. Both PAMs and CTOs described communication and collaboration as part of their role (see Chapter 3, sections 3.6 and 3.7) and, as such, they may reflect how they perceive their own role to the idealised attributes they expect from the other party. Therefore, the respondents’ perceptual biases, as illustrated earlier, have the potential to lead to accuracy in instances of assumed similarities, such as values and views, or similar expectations (Hoch, 1987; Kenny and Acitelli, 2001).

There is a close link between perceptions and attitudes held by individuals and the willingness to collaborate, as negative perceptions and attitudes may hinder effective collaboration. Wondolleck and Yaffee’s (2000:58) work on collaboration determined ‘[h]ow we think affects how we act, and our thinking is often biased against collaboration’, and it needs to be taken into account when examining the collaboration between the participants. It can be assumed that both PAMs’ and CTOs’ thinking, with respect to their expectations, projections, and perceptual biases of each other, affects their collaborative efforts.

Importantly, the results show that PAMs and CTOs perceive themselves and their roles similarly across a number of attributes (e.g. communication, collaboration, operational), and also expect and seek similar idealised attributes from each other. Based on these findings, and in light of Wondolleck and Yaffee’s (2000) understanding of collaboration, collaboration between PAMs and CTOs appears to be a real possibility. However, perceptual biases between PAMs and CTOs do exist and as such need to be acknowledged and addressed by them.
Personal perceptions and attitudes often push the other party away rather than encourage collaboration. This can be based in a lack of trust, stereotyped ‘us-them’ images (see Chapter 7, cultural grouping and groupthink), organisational norms and values (see Chapter 6), or fear of commitment (Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Gray, 1989; Gray and Hay, 1986; Hall, 1999; Reed, 1999; Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000; Wood and Gray, 1991). Furthermore, not knowing what the other’s expectations are may result in PAMs’ and CTOs’ assumed perceptual schism which can influence their willingness to work together. When different or conflicting parties get together a sense of wariness and scepticism may be present, based on one or more of these perceptions but also on difficulties in understanding each other.

8.4 THEIR UNDERSTANDING, DO THEY MEAN THE SAME WHEN THEY SAY THE SAME?

Although PAMs and CTOs frequently used the same words or concepts, this research revealed that their understanding of them, and the meaning they assigned to them, sometimes differed. At first glance, it appeared that PAMs and CTOs were talking ‘the same language’; however, after probing and in-depth analysis it became clear that their meanings differed, in some instances substantially.

Communication by the respondents was presented at face value in the results Chapters (Chapters 4 and 5), even though their perceptions of communication differed. Both expect excellent communication skills from each other. Communication can be considered as a precursor to collaboration, which was
identified when asked how they perceived each other (see previous section). To delve into the field of communication theory is beyond the scope of this research; nevertheless, what is meant by communication in this context is: (a) the process of information exchange, and (b) building relationships, in which the information exchange can be formal or informal (Ajzen, 1992; Bartol, et al., 2005).

Communication between CTOs and PAMs often follows set procedures, depending on its purpose. In instances where the conservation agency seeks CTOs’ input the form of communication can be formal:

We [DEC] planned to change an access road into the national park to reduce visitor risk. We prepared a report, and maps, and photos, it’s quite a presentation that we are taking to CTOs.

Where PAMs have a good relationship with specific CTOs, their communication is informal and often based on, or influenced by, social input outside their work environment. For PAMs communication is instrumental for their day-to-day work, whereas communication for CTOs is a means for building rapport and relationships.

CTOs seek to build relationships with PAMs, particularly with PAMs in the field. In talking about communication, CTOs specifically raised the possibilities that, in their view, improved communication with PAMs may result in both working more closely together as well as developing a personal connection with each other:

I invite the rangers working in the parks to come and join our group for dinner or coffee. Sometimes I’ll even ring up beforehand and let them know that our group will be coming and that he’s invited. I encourage him to talk about the park and it’s a really good conversation with them. I would say that 70% of the time we exchange information over a cup of coffee or a meal in the evening.
I certainly try to instil it in our tour guides, that they utilise the rangers’ knowledge. To build a personal relationship takes a long time, it doesn’t just happen in one week; it takes 3 or 4 years to build that relationship.

Forming relationships across organisational boundaries through effective communication and collaboration is also a means of building support for much needed management and operational direction (Lister and Kay, 1999). CTOs understand that effective communication will allow them to have input into park management issues. In instances where CTOs reported good communication with PAMs they referred to the consultation process in which they had the opportunity to voice their opinions and reservations:

For example, on one occasion, the CALM [DEC] guys from Geraldton came up to discuss with us, operators and tourist bureau, the plans they had to change access to the Z-Bend lookout. They gave us a presentation, brought maps and photos along and asked for our input and what we thought about it and where we thought the road should go. That was really good, we had good discussions and they listened to what we had to say.

For CTOs, communicating with their customers is often one-way, providing the customers with interpretation, education and information. Also, it is expected that this form of communication is conducted in an informal and entertaining way. CTOs consider their role often as one of entertainer and information provider. These are all different communication channels which play a pivotal role in operating successfully in protected areas. Each of these channels of communication has different requirements associated with different needs but also different approaches (Bartol, et al., 2005). PAMs did not explicitly mention how they would expect CTOs to communicate with their customers; instead they
referred to the content of their communication and that of their customers as being factually correct.

For PAMs and CTOs to be able to improve their working relationships, it is important to recognise that their understanding of some words and concepts differs. They assign different meanings to key concepts and therefore have difficulty in understanding what the other party wants and needs. Table 8.3 illustrates the different meanings for PAMs and CTOs of the terms ‘communication’ and ‘collaboration’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/concept</th>
<th>PAMs’ meanings</th>
<th>CTOs’ meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicative and Collaborative</td>
<td>Consultation about the tours</td>
<td>Consultation with park management issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative (used as idealised attributes of how a ‘good’ PAM/CTO should be)</td>
<td>Instrumental: follow rules and regulations for the day-to-day work</td>
<td>Building personal relationships/rapport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative (used as description of how PAMs/CTOs actually are)</td>
<td>Have interactions - Follow regulations - CTOs to act as extension of the agency</td>
<td>Help each other out in situations when needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both stated they expected more collaboration from each other, even though a number of PAMs and CTOs saw the other party as collaborative. Similarly to communication, they referred to different attributes and characteristics when
describing the other party as collaborative (Table 8.3). But is it in fact collaboration that participants referred to? The results show that PAMs and CTOs did not share the same understanding of collaboration. Although both referred to collaboration, the underlying meaning of this term and their understanding of it differed. PAMs considered CTOs as being collaborative as long as they did what is required (see Chapter 4). PAMs’ use and understanding of collaboration was instrumental, for them it is important for the day-to-day running of their work in relation to CTOs. Collaboration in PAMs view is when CTOs follow the agency’s rules and behave according to the legislation. As long as CTOs follow the rules and regulations (e.g. licensing conditions, park regulations), PAMs did not see a reason to interact with them:

We are trying for people not to climb the pinnacles. Now the majority of the bus drivers control that. This is really good; a lot of the operators do the explaining to their visitors as we can’t be out there all the time and they keep an eye out for people not to climb them.

By ‘working with the agency’ PAMs meant that CTOs should act as an extension of the agency to communicate its conservation message to their customers (see also Chapter 4) and effectively help PAMs with their job. They want CTOs to be their ‘eyes and ears’ in the field.

In contrast, collaboration for CTOs was the direct interaction with PAMs in the field, for example, when a PAM joins them at their camp and talks to them and their passengers (see Chapter 5). CTOs actively seek direct interactions with PAMs, as in their view PAMs can provide information about the park, greater surrounds, agency issues and other matters to them and to their customers. Through regular interactions with PAMs in the same park, CTOs aim to build relationships with
individual PAMs; for them collaboration is a means to build rapport. Furthermore, CTOs believed that effective communication, combined with collaboration between PAMs and themselves and their customers in direct encounters in the field, strongly influences the quality of their tourism product and the satisfaction of their visitors. In their experience, the information provided by PAMs directly to their customers was taken up favourably and added to their product.

CTOs thought of PAMs as being collaborative in instances where they helped them in difficult situations. The excerpt I presented in Chapter 5, of a CTO’s positive memorable experience of asking for help with his trailer, was one such example. This CTO perceived the PAM as collaborative and as a friend. Nevertheless, PAMs and CTOs highlighted the need for more collaboration. CTOs seek to build more personal relationships and rapport with PAMs in the field, whereas PAMs try to improve their existing day-to-day working arrangements with CTOs. In PAMs’ view, CTOs collaborate if they do not have confrontations with each other during their visit in the park.

Not only are different understandings of terms to blame when miscommunication occurs, the ambiguity and sometimes value-laden meanings of some of these concepts also plays a vital role. Previous research examining the uses and meanings of values with respect to protected areas identified that the resulting difficulties not only reflect misunderstandings of words, they also negatively influence collaborative efforts by affecting and sometimes hindering the willingness of people to communicate, which can lead to communication breakdown (Bentrupperbäumer, et al., 2006; Hull, et al., 2003). Furthermore, the participants, and their respective organisations, need to be aware that non-
compliance and not fulfilling the other's expectations can lead to disagreements and conflicts (Smith and Duffy, 2003). The individual's perspective, similar to a specific angle of a crystal, provides the particular point of view in time. The concept of crystallisation is also useful and can be applied to one's perception, perspective and understanding to illustrate individual differences.

Perception, perspective and understanding difficulties combined with the use of power in cultural groupings undoubtedly impacts on PAMs and CTOs collaboration. As such, the last chapter, Chapter 9 – Conclusions and Implications, summarises the findings in the light of the three different frames of reference (values, culture and perspectives), and links these influence conceptually to collaboration based on the underlying assumption that there is a value in a more productive, collaborative relationship. The goal to increased collaboration not only involves addressing the identified issues, the implications in moving forward and possible improvement in the working relationships between PAMs and CTOs requires a rethinking of the traditional paradigm, with its main purpose to protect biodiversity, for protected areas.
9.1 INTRODUCTION

This study has found that the difficulties and problems encountered by protected area managers (PAMs) and commercial tour operators (CTOs) in working together are not merely based on communication difficulties, there are many other facets of their relationship to be considered. The first is the role played by their values, values which are shared but unrecognised. The second is the public policy context within which they operate with their different objectives. The third involves the participants’ use of resistant and dominant power grounded in their cultural groupings and groupthink. Power is a key influence, supporting Hall’s (2007:264) argument that power ‘[l]ies at the heart of the interplay of values, interests and tourism policy’. The fourth concerns the way in which PAMs’ and CTOs’ both similar and different expectations and perceptions of each other, as well as their different understanding of key concepts play an important role. All these aspects influence PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships and therefore their level of collaboration.

This final chapter presents the research conclusions and implications in the light of the research question: ‘What are the features influencing the relationships and collaborative efforts between protected area managers and commercial tour operators working in protected areas?’
In order to successfully collaborate and build good relationships between PAMs and CTOs, it is critical to have an understanding of their underlying values, perceptions and expectations of each other, regarding protected areas and their working arrangements. To be able to gain this understanding my research objectives were to identify, explore and describe the participants’ values, perceptions and expectations, consequently to draw on this information to describe, from a cultural perspective, influences on their collaborative efforts, and to place the different perspectives into a broader context of collaboration. Furthermore, I aimed to determine the implications of the findings in order to recommend ways in which PAMs’ and CTOs’ level of collaboration might be improved. Using a qualitative research approach, specifically through in-depth interviews with stakeholders, this research has enabled me to address all objectives and the guiding research question.

This thesis argues that the difficulties PAMs and CTOs currently experience in their relationships transcends communication (or lack thereof), features which have been identified in previous research (Hughes and Carlsen, 2004). Therefore, to improve their collaboration, greater attention needs to be paid to different levels of engagement (individual, organisational/locale, and policy).

9.2 MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS

The first feature of the relationships between PAMs and CTOs described by this research relates to values. Participants assigned similar values to protected areas, with the only difference being that all PAMs saw the conservation of biodiversity as the purpose of protected areas, whereas most but not all CTOs afforded
Chapter 9: Conclusion and implications

biodiversity this status (see Chapter 6). In contrast, all PAMs but one, and all CTOs identified recreation and enjoyment as the main purpose of protected areas. Throughout this research it became evident that, although PAMs and CTOs profess to hold similar values for protected areas, they are unaware of each other’s values. This lack of awareness is a missed opportunity for increased collaboration. Furthermore, it imposed difficulties for individuals in understanding each other’s perspectives and worldview, particularly since these guide the other’s actions. Holding similar values is important as it provides a platform for shared actions, including collaboration.

The second feature of PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships, the underlying policy context, influenced the effectiveness of collaborative efforts between them. In Western Australia, the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and Tourism Western Australia hold different policy values and objectives, with some overlaps based on their Acts of Parliament (see Chapter 6). In a legal/bureaucratic context, DEC as the conservation agency has the authority, legal mandate and formal regulatory power to manage protected areas in Western Australia. Although this research focuses on the analysis, understanding, and interpretation of the relationships between PAMs and CTOs, it needs to be seen in a wider policy context since it becomes apparent that policy values play a supporting role to the roles and expectations of individuals and members of cultural groupings.

The third feature of PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships involved the concept of power. Some CTOs in the Midwest and PAMs in the Kimberley region formed cultural groupings and exercised resistant power in order to work towards their own goals. The CTOs focused their resistance on PAMs with whom they work, whereas the
resistance by PAMs in the Kimberley was focused on head office. In identifying this important difference, this research highlights the influence that cultural groupings with a strong sense of groupthink can exert on collaborative efforts. For example, members of cultural groupings may seek to actively hinder collaboration, which in turn creates conflicts and/or animosity. An understanding of these dynamics provides means of addressing these issues in order to move forward and improve existing working relationships.

The fourth relationship feature between PAMs and CTOs involves personal perceptions, expectations and perspectives. This study shows that PAMs and CTOs are frequently influenced by various perceptual biases, rather than assessing each of their encounters on a case-by-case basis. Another aspect hindering collaboration is the difference in the two groups in understanding the meaning of key concepts relating to their working arrangements. That is, although PAMs and CTOs used the same words and concepts in response to the questions, they understood them differently and assigned different meanings to them, which in turn created misunderstandings between them. For example, for CTOs ‘collaboration’ meant building support, whereas PAMs understood this concept instrumentally (e.g. where CTOs collaborate by following rules and regulations).

PAMs’ and CTOs’ misunderstandings were often based on shortcomings in communication, with both groups identifying a lack of, and/or limitations in, communication as a barrier. Furthermore, both groups felt that more, and more effective, communication was needed in order to improve the level of collaboration. While this research highlights that both PAMs and CTOs seek more collaboration, before this becomes possible PAMs and CTOs need to understand
and respect each other’s position vis-à-vis regarding their respective roles and values (see Chapter 6); be aware of the existence of cultural groupings and groupthink and of how their members exercise power (see Chapter 7); and acknowledge each other’s perspectives, expectations, and viewpoints (see Chapter 8), since all these aspects are important in influencing collaboration.

9.3 CONSTRAINTS TO COLLABORATION

Over the last five to seven years developing collaborative arrangements with stakeholders has become increasingly important for protected area agencies worldwide (Buckley, 2004; DITR, 2003; DOC, 2005; Eagles, et al., 2002; UNEP, 2005). Such collaboration relies on effective communication (Bramwell and Lane, 2000). In order to work collaboratively, adaptability and flexibility are essential as collaborating parties need to work with a range of perspectives and often differing values.

In light of these research findings it is useful to reflect on Margerum’s (2001) constraints to collaboration which were introduced in Chapter 1, in order to analyse these results and inform our understanding of the impediments to collaboration between PAMs and CTOs. These are: legislation and mandates, resources, organisational power, organisational perception, organisational guidance and training, and personal commitment.

This study’s findings suggest the following primary constraints on collaboration...
between PAMs and CTOs:

(1) **Policy** – the divergent policy foci of DEC and Tourism Western Australia as they advocate different objectives and have different values and missions,

(2) **Power** – PAMs have and exercise authoritative and decision-making power,

(3) **Power** – CTOs appear to have and exercise resistant power, and

(4) **Expectations and behaviour** – the behaviour of individuals which is based in their perceptions and expectations of each other, such as of aggressiveness, disrespect, a ‘high horse mentality’, a reluctance to ‘share’ the area, and a lack of interest in each other.

These constraints to collaboration between PAMs and CTOs can be seen to be aligned with a number of those identified by Margerum (2001).

The different objectives, goals and values embedded in the policies of the conservation agency and tourism authority guide PAMs’ and CTOs’ behaviour in their respective roles. The results show that PAMs’ and CTOs’ values regarding protected areas reflect these policy values, hence, this finding supports Margerum’s (2001) constraint ‘legislation and mandates’. Moreover, PAMs and CTOs’ difficulties in collaboration are not only based on different policy foci, the legislative power imbalance is also of importance. The conservation agency has the legal mandate (and therefore the organisation power) to manage protected areas. However, some CTOs did not identify PAMs’ authority as a barrier; rather, this was seen in how PAMs exercise their powers in their dealings with CTOs.

It is important to recognise that power (who exercises it and how it is exercised) plays a key role in collaborative efforts. The importance of and the level of
influence power has on PAMs’ and CTOs’ working relationships could be clearly observed in participants from the Midwest and Kimberley region. As previous research (Margerum, 2001; Schuett et al., 2001; Selin and Chavez, 1995a; Selin and Chavez, 1995b; Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000) has also suggested, the use of power is highly influential on the level of collaboration. For example, in the Midwest, CTOs perceived PAMs as unwilling to collaborate and share decision-making power. As a result, these CTOs formed cultural groupings, and through groupthink, repositioned themselves to the stage where they exercised resistance in their dealings with PAMs. Resistant power was also used amongst PAMs in the Kimberley region but in contrast, they showed signs of resisting head office.

Behaviour and personal commitment were mentioned by both PAMs and CTOs when asked what they perceive as barriers in their working arrangements. Margerum (2001) also listed these features as constraints, primarily in relation to ‘organisational perception’ and ‘personal commitment’. PAMs’ and CTOs’ perceptions, and the biases affecting their perceptions, influence and affect their behaviour. Additionally, their expectations of each other, which are often based on their expected idealised attributes of a ‘good’ PAM/CTO, affect their relationships. I therefore argue that Margerum’s (2001) constraints only contribute one part to understanding and resolving the collaboration puzzle. The other critical part is the opportunities revealed through this research.

9.4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

Gray (1989) identified interdependence as being an emergent process, with joint ownership of decisions, collective responsibility for the future direction, and
constructively dealing with differences, in offering such opportunities for collaboration. Greater recognition of, and reliance on interdependence and collaboration as an emergent process were opportunities evident in this research, in which CTOs and PAMs acknowledge their interdependence. CTOs recognise that PAMs have the legislative responsibility to manage protected areas in Western Australia, and PAMs know that CTOs need to operate a financially viable business to ensure their income. However, there could be wider recognition of each party’s mutually beneficial actions. For example, CTOs provide DEC services, such as interpretation and education in the parks, and PAMs provide the locale for tourism.

Both PAMs and CTOs acknowledged that collaboration is an ‘emergent and ongoing process’. They recognised that they are located and work in the same areas and therefore need to work together. Both voiced their awareness that it will require ongoing commitment and efforts to improve their existing level of collaboration. This point was raised when they discussed how PAMs/CTOs actually ‘are’, where both groups saw each other as ‘collaborative’. However, they also mentioned the need for more collaboration. This insight provided by respondents from both groups suggests their understanding of collaboration as an ongoing process.

The final collaboration opportunity identified in this research is that of forming relationships across organisational boundaries. Such relationships can build support for management direction and provide operational advantages (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000). One example from this study is CTOs’ aspiration for PAMs to directly interact with them and their customers. CTOs actively seek greater collaboration, which they articulated as an increased involvement by PAMs
in their tours. Furthermore, CTOs would like PAMs to be visible and present on-site to allow for interaction.

DEC has begun to address shortcomings in PAMs’ and CTOs’ working arrangements, as identified in CTOs’ complaints, previous research, and PAMs’ feedback, by implementing administrative, communication and collaboration changes (Quartermain, pers. comm. 2007). Administrative changes include the reduction of licence application process time from six to ten weeks to seven working days, licence renewal notices being sent out electronically, and the option of payment of entry fees by credit card. To improve communication, DEC has developed electronic Tour Operator Alerts, an electronic mail system sending licensed CTOs news and information on the State’s conservation estate including notification of fires, and park or road closures. DEC also conducts ‘Road Shows’ each year throughout Western Australia, to explain the licensing process and nature based tourism issues (e.g. visitation statistics, expression of interest processes, distribution of fees) to PAMs in the field and CTOs with the aim of improving communication and collaboration (Reading, pers. comm. 2007).

In order to overcome the collaboration constraints identified, and to build on such recent DEC initiatives, opportunities for improvement are offered through adjustments at the individual, organisational, and policy level (Imperial, 2005; Margerum, 2007). Pro-active approaches to collaboration must necessarily address and initiate changes at all three levels (Margerum, 2007). For example, policy changes can occur when DEC and Tourism Western Australia work together on a policy level, whereas PAMs and CTOs can improve collaboration at an individual level. Successful collaboration relies on an adaptive planning and
management approach, especially where there are multiple values to consider and include in decision making (Lister and Kay, 1999), and where knowledge sharing is critical (Fennell and Weaver, 2005). Action research provides a suitable strategy for such an approach, one that explicitly recognises the influence of power and prevailing social norms (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Levine, 1999; O’Brien, 1998; van Beinum, 1999).

The objective of action research is ‘[n]ot just to describe or understand or to explain social reality, action research wants to improve a situation’ (van Beinum, 1999:12). In this situation it provides the means for PAMs and CTOs to collaborate, share, and gain new knowledge in order to change conditions and circumstances (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Levine, 1999). Such ongoing participation should contribute to a revealing of shared values and a discussion of unmet expectations and perceived roles. Ideally, changes at an individual level can then influence changes in different locales, relating to Margerum’s (2007) organisational level, as well as policy settings, to further improve collaboration.

The proposed action research model should be understood as an ongoing process for successful and long-term collaboration. Furthermore, the model is also useful as a collaboration assessment framework as it addresses context, conditions, representation, power and process. Using the model as an assessment framework has the benefit of synthesising knowledge (Plummer et al., 2006). Figure 9.1 illustrates the different stages of the model. The action research process is primarily concerned with: (1) the identification and clarification of the problem to be solved in order to work towards its solution, and (2) the initiation and

![Diagram of Action Research Process Model](Source: Greenwood and Levin, 1998)

Operationally, the above model (Figure 9.1) is based on two different groups of ‘participants’. Firstly, it includes the interested parties, the ‘insiders’, such as PAMs and CTOs, on an individual level, DEC’s regional managers, PAMs, Tourism Western Australia’s regional managers, CTOs and possibly regional tourism organisations (RTOs) on an organisational/locale level, and DEC and Tourism Western Australia on a policy level. These are people who are working together and who have identified a need for better collaboration. Secondly, it includes a trained facilitator, the ‘outsider’, who works with the participants. A professional facilitator’s role is to be the ‘friendly outsider’ as he/she will need to gain the trust of the ‘insiders’, to be supportive and not negatively critical, and to have the ability
to open up and maintain lines of discussion and communication (Greenwood and Levin, 1998).

A facilitator seeks to facilitate between parties and achieve a balance of support and, if necessary, of critique. Facilitators, together with the ‘insiders’, address problems, create situational changes, and/or improve conditions (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Levine, 1999; van Beinum, 1999). However, it needs to be noted that the final decision will always be made by the ‘insiders’ and not the facilitator, and as such the participants are responsible for, and ‘own’, this decision. Most importantly, facilitators need to be aware that all ‘insiders’ have an equal right to voice their concerns and encourage the participants accordingly (Greenwood and Levin, 1998). To ensure neutrality, the appointment of an independent professionally trained facilitator is required.

Although the facilitator needs to be an outsider, it is important to assign the responsibility for, and running of the overall action research process to one body or committee. Several reasons exist for the action research process to be driven by DEC, potentially in conjunction with Tourism Western Australia. The first reason is DEC’s legislative mandate to manage protected areas, the second is DEC’s presence and facilities in all protected areas throughout the State, the third is PAMs’ interest in improving collaboration (as described above), and the fourth is that a portion of the licensing fee could be used to help funding the action research process with the help of Tourism Western Australia and/or individual CTOs.
Part of this action research approach could include regular organised meetings, for example quarterly for the individual level (a suggestion also made in the interviews), as well as biannually for the organisational/locale and policy level. Such meetings could address issues and problems arising, and ways to improve unsatisfactory situations. In relation to this research, the ‘problem(s)’ are the features affecting PAMs’ and CTOs’ relationships, as well as the constraints to collaboration. The problem must be important to the ‘insiders’ in order for them to fully participate and seek a satisfactory outcome in the overall process (Greenwood and Levin, 1998). That is, the ‘insiders’ need to clearly define and mutually agree on the problem(s).

The next stage in the action research process is the provision of a communication arena (Figure 9.1). A communication arena is the meeting itself and the locale where it is held. As communication arenas, meeting places in and around the protected areas visited by CTOs are suitable and recommendable; this is one of the reasons for recommending that DEC drives the process. The communication arena is also the place where facilitators open discussions and, if necessary, mediate between the parties. At this point, the skills and knowledge bases will be unbalanced and the facilitator’s role is to develop strategies for communicative actions (e.g. training people how to encourage knowledge transfer) (Greenwood and Levin, 1998). Furthermore, this step includes discussion of possible ways to build on common ground, of how the process of interaction can be improved or structured to be more meaningful and how it can be sustained, as well as of assessing if the individuals (the ‘insiders’) can be guided to focus on the problem (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000). Part of this step is also the mutual reflection and learning of all participants. The ‘insiders’ will need to reflect on the other groups’
input and views, which means sharing their experiences and learning from each other. All the above are features of successful collaboration (Gray, 1989; Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000). The ‘outsider’ will reflect on the groups’ input and on how to utilise their knowledge to foster collaboration. The primary aim of this step is working towards solving the stated problem(s).

All of these action research process stages lead participants to the next phase of process: problem solving through action. This step is based on a plan of action through which to solve the initially stated problem. The participants should have agreed on which actions to take. One such action on an individual level might involve PAMs visiting CTOs and their tour groups in the field, on a regional level it might involve planning meetings between DEC, PAMs, Tourism Western Australia and CTOs, and on a policy level, it might involve DEC and Tourism Western Australia jointly developing a policy addressing the interaction of CTOs and PAMs in protected areas. Throughout the whole action research process opportunities for learning from each other, ‘insiders’ from ‘insiders’ as well as from the ‘outsider’ and reflection, constitutes an important aspect and should be encouraged by the facilitator. Greenwood and Levine (1998:119) explicitly point out that ‘[t]he AR [action research] process cannot fulfil its democratic obligations unless the main thrust of the process is toward increasing the participants’ control over knowledge production and action’.

The overall aim of an action research process is a more fruitful communication and collaboration between PAMs and CTOs on the individual, organisational and policy level. As an outcome of this process, PAMs, CTOs, DEC and Tourism Western
Australia will gain a greater understanding of each other’s concerns, values, expectations, and perceptions and benefit from their new knowledge. Furthermore, if such an undertaking will be operationalised and regularly carried out, it is likely to lead to the ultimate goal of changing policies to address the complexity between people and the natural environment, and to be inclusive of values, ethical views as well as different perspectives (Fennell, 2002).

9.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on above findings, the following recommendations for future research can be made. Firstly, the approach used to examine PAMs and CTOs in three regions in Western Australia through in-depth interviews could be applied in other States and Territories, as well as other protected areas worldwide. In doing so, the geographic limitation of this research, which was beyond the control of the researcher, could be addressed. This would help to draw conclusions Australia wide, particularly with respect to different settings and different inter-relationships that occur between individuals. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence from this study helps to build a rich picture of the complexity of the respondents’ relationships. While they cannot at present be generalised beyond these settings to different sectors, these findings aid our understanding of the influences on the behaviour of individuals, and can be applied to other protected area management agencies to build on current theory and empirical evidence.

Secondly, although communication has been addressed, further insights might be gained through the application of a psychological perspective. Finally, action research could be initiated in order to assess the success and/or failure of the
action research process which aimed to improve collaboration on all three levels (individual, organisational/locale, and policy). Ideally, the same facilitator working with the participants should be appointed for this to ensure the continuity of approaches. An interesting area to explore would be participants’ willingness to implement the proposed action research process, the actual take-up, and the level of its implementation by the participants. It would be particularly interesting to assess the integration of approaches of the three levels, as a result of the action research.

Following its implementation, the current body of knowledge would benefit from an ongoing study to monitor and evaluate the success of the individual levels. In order to be able to obtain the necessary information, similar in-depth interview questions based on this study need to be developed and administered to the participants to monitor and compare changes in values (personal, organisational, policy), perceptions, expectations, communication, power, and collaboration, both pre-intervention and post-intervention.

9.6 FINAL COMMENTS

In the light of the findings presented in this study, it is appropriate to draw on the words by Nelson Mandela: ‘Ultimately, conservation is about people’ (Mandela, 2001). Mandela’s comment reflects the importance of considering people as the key ‘ingredient’ with respect to protected areas and their management. Conservation, as well as tourism, is all about people, their values, their desires and their passion. This research found that both PAMs and CTOs aim to sustain the area even though they have different objectives in doing so. I would like to add my
own words to Mandela’s comment, informed by my research: ‘it is all about relationships’.

Understanding influences on behaviour and decision-making can determine the success of working effectively and satisfactorily together. Furthermore, this understanding allows for the development of strategies to ensure continuous improvement of protected area management and activities in protected areas. Whilst the conservation of biodiversity has an important role with respect to protected areas, a fundamental principle of this thesis is that conservation and nature based tourism require a shared space and are interdependent. Without tourism to protected areas people might lose interest in these special places and become apathetic to the desire to save and sustain them.

Support for this argument comes from the CTOs who showed a strong desire to maintain protected areas in the best possible conditions, not only to protect their business interest, but also in order to conserve and protect biodiversity. By the same token, PAMs’ passion for protected areas was evident, and most PAMs voiced their desire to share this passion and instil a sense of appreciation in CTOs and their customers who visit these areas. At present, though, they are unaware of each others’ values and passions. Development of an awareness in both groups of the mutuality of their values and objectives for protected areas supplies the much-needed foundation for increased collaboration and mutual understanding in their working relationships. Nurturing this foundation, together with intensive collaborative efforts to develop a mutually agreed understanding, should be the objective of DEC, individual PAMs and CTOs, and Tourism Western Australia.
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References


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Appendix 1

Interview questions

1. Can you please tell me about your work in protected areas?
2. What do you consider as the main purpose of protected areas?
3. What words/adjectives would you use to describe a ‘good’ protected area manager/ commercial tour operator?
4. What do you perceive as current barriers between you and protected area managers/ commercial tour operators?
5. What words would you use to describe the protected area managers/ commercial tour operators with whom you engage?
   (Associated prompt card to be shown to the respondents)
6. Can you give me an example of a memorable experience between you and a protected area manager/commercial tour operator?
7. Can you please draw a picture or diagram (sociogram) in which you indicate your person and position all other contributors’ involved in/managing protected areas including their working relationships?
8. What do you consider being the five most important attributes and values (ranked from 1 the most important to 5 the least important) of people working in protected areas?
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<th>Sensitive Idea</th>
<th>Soft Idea</th>
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<td>Disciplined</td>
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<td>Inventive</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Curious</td>
<td>Easy going</td>
<td>Risk taker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3
LETTER OF INVITATION

Company:
Attn.:
Address: (2 lines)         Date

Re: Research project ‘Building better collaborative management between protected area managers and the tourism industry’

Dear ----,

I am writing you this letter to invite you to participate in an important research study.

In partnership with Murdoch University, the Sustainable Tourism CRC, and the WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), we are conducting a study in the field of protected area management in WA. Due to your role in working in protected areas you have been recognised as a valuable potential contributor to this study.

Nature based tourism is booming, the sector is of great importance yet the management of protected areas is facing a dilemma: protection versus visitor use. The different objectives of protected area managers and tour operators result in misunderstandings and sometimes animosity, which does not serve the interests of either. This research aims to improve the communication and collaboration to overcome this problem. In addition to being published in thesis form and Sustainable Tourism CRC report, the research outcomes will seek to develop a set of practical strategies for optimal working arrangements.

I am currently studying for a PhD as part of the School of Environmental Science at Murdoch University. Dr Sue Moore and Dr Jim Macbeth from Murdoch University are supervising this research project. The study has been approved by my university and the University’s Human Research Ethics Committee.
I am writing you to invite you to participate in a research interview at a time and place convenient to you. The interview will take approximately one hour, and I would like to conduct it during May. The objectives of the interview session are to (1) determine perceptions of protected area managers (from field through to senior staff) and tourism members regarding current working arrangements, expectations of each other, and of protected areas, and (2) to identify current efforts of collaboration. You will be asked to discuss issues surrounding working in protected areas. I would like to tape the interview, and I can assure you that any information you choose to share with me will be treated with the strictest confidence. No information about individuals or organisations will appear in the published thesis, or any other document. Your participation is of course purely voluntary, and, should you agree to participate in an interview, you will be free to withdraw at any time.

If you need further information please do not hesitate to contact me on either office (08) 9360 6079, mobile 0438 953 056, or email below. I will follow up this letter by contacting you by phone next week and I am already looking forward speaking to you. Many thanks for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Aggie Wegner
PhD Student, Murdoch University
Email: A.Wegner@murdoch.edu.au
Complete list of all characteristics of a good protected area manager/tour operator. This list was generated through categorising and coding in NVivo.

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### (9 17) Operational

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### (9 18) Liaison

(9 18 5) Collaborative

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### (9 19) Conceptual

(9 19 2) Managerial

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### (9 20) Value-based

(9 20 6) Passionate about:

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APPENDIX 6
EXPECTED VALUES FOR WORKING IN PROTECTED AREAS

Personal attributes a person should have when working in protected areas according to regions and protected area managers / operators:

(ranked from most important (1) to least important (5))

**PAMs – Kimberley (5):**
1. Wisdom
2. Intuition
3. Nouse (common sense, not being an idiot, understanding cause and effect)
4. Positive attitude

1. Conservation ethic
2. Passionate
2. Sense of fulfilment
3. Sharing
4. Excitement

1. Knowledgeable
2. Outgoing
3. Considerate
4. Tactful
5. Insightful

1. Ethical
2. Affinity with the environment
3. Communicator
4. Vision
5. Planning skills

1. Dedication
2. Protective
3. Environmental appreciation
4. Knowledgeable
5. Educator
6. Management skills

**Operators – Kimberley (8):**
1. Environmental conscious
2. Passionate
3. Knowledge of local area
4. People skills

1. Communicator
2. Role modelling
3. Maintaining the area
4. Respectful (area, people)
5. Sharing the knowledge

1. Adaptable
2. Practical
3. Sense of humour
4. Social skills
5. High level of communication

1. Approachable
2. Helpful
3. Knowledgeable/educated
4. Responsible
5. Conservationist
6. Patient

1. Conservationist
2. Knowledgeable
3. Flexibility
4. Responsible
5. Active

1. Environmental conscious
2. People skills
3. Work in sustainable manner
4. Foster good working relationships

1. Passion
2. Environmental appreciation
3. Respect for cultural issues
4. Collaboration
5. Communication

1. People skills
2. Ethical
3. Knowledgeable
4. Dedicated
5. Resourceful

**PAMs – Midwest (15):**
1. Collaborative
2. Respectful
3. Environmentally conscious
4. Planning skills
5. Good communication skills

1. Knowledgeable
2. Management skills
3. Approachable
4. Safety conscious
5. Helpful

1. Resourceful
2. Managerial skills
3. Experienced
4. Cooperative
5. Educated

1. Good communication skills
2. Knowledgeable
3. Sense of ownership
4. Problem solving abilities
5. Operational skills

1. Passionate
2. Educated
3. Rational
4. Hard working
5. Managerial skills

1. Passionate
2. Knowledgeable
3. Open minded
4. Curious - to find out additional information
5. Good communication skills

1. Belief system – recognition of importance of protected areas
2. Passionate
3. Good interaction skills
4. Willingness to learn
5. Seeking help when needed

1. Passionate
2. Communication skills
3. Technical skills
4. Knowledgeable
5. Conservation ethics

1. Dedicated
2. Knowledgeable
3. Understanding
4. Collaborative

1. Environmentally aware
2. Cooperative
3. Communicative
4. Consultative
5. Non-exploitative

1. Knowledgeable
2. Good communicator/interpreter/educator
3. Understanding of legislation and regulations
4. Team player
5. Risk management skills

1. Conservation ethic
2. Enthusiasm and passion
3. Good communication skills
4. Knowledgeable
5. Adaptive and open-minded

1. Passionate
2. Knowledgeable
3. Technical skills
4. Communicator
5. Managerial skills

1. Positive attitude
2. Knowledgeable
3. Presentable (well dressed)
4. Helpful
5. Adaptive

1. Environmental awareness
2. Empathetic
3. Respectful for the place
4. Professional approach
5. Pride in

**Operators – Midwest (7):**
1. Safety awareness
2. Planning abilities
3. Conservation conscious
4. Providing some information
5. Having a good time

1. Passionate about the environment
2. Motivated
3. Managerial skills
4. Good people skills
5. Team players

1. People person
2. Business sense
3. Helpful
4. Trying to show everything in the area

1. Environmentally conscious
2. Foster preservation, conservation and sustainability
3. Sharing
4. Educated
5. Good people skills
1. Responsible
2. Caring
3. Knowledgeable
4. Awareness (before & after)
5. Communicator

1. Positive personality
2. Good communication skills
3. Caring
4. Passionate
5. Physical fit

1. People skills
2. Environmental awareness
3. Patience

**Tourism WA (2):**
1. Belief system that acts through hierarchy of needs, recognition of the importance of PAs
2. Integrity
3. Managerial skills
4. Creativity
5. Empathetic

1. Passion
2. Sense of community
3. Business skills
4. Knowledgeable
5. Sustainability goals
6. Listening skills

**PAMs – Head office (3):**
1. Environmentally awareness
2. Good communication skills
3. Confident
4. Versatile
5. Good collaboration skills

1. Commitment
2. Enthusiasm for people and nature
3. Acceptance of people
4. Continuous improvement
5. Respect of the values of the area

1. Passion
2. Educated
3. Flexible
4. Patient
5. Resilient to outside pressures
6. Adaptable

**PAMs – South West (6):**
1. Conservationist
2. Knowledgeable
3. Educated
4. Responsible
5. People person

1. Excellent communication skills
2. Common sense
3. Work sustainably
4. Protection of biodiversity
5. Open minded

1. Good communicator
2. Knowledgeable
3. Understanding of peoples needs
4. Practical
5. Committed to appropriate use of the land

1. Conservationist
2. People person
3. Professional
4. Experienced (managing people)
5. Knowledgeable

1. Conservation ethic
2. Managerial skills
3. Interpersonal skills
4. Knowledgeable
5. Balanced and not opinionated

1. Passionate
2. Knowledgeable
3. People skills
4. Communicator
5. Management skills

**Operators – South West (7):**
1. Educated
2. Easy going personality
3. Passionate
4. Understanding
5. Communicator

1. Conservationist
2. Educator
3. Informative
4. Pro-active

1. People skills
2. Sensitive
3. Love of nature and history
4. Conservationist
5. Enjoy showing people the site

1. Environmental awareness
2. Adhere with all requirements/regulations
3. Competent
4. Communicator
5. Contribute to maintain the area

1. Positive personality
2. Professional
3. Knowledgeable
4. Understanding of cultures and religions
5. Flexibility

1. Nature loving
2. People skills
3. Knowledgeable
4. Resourceful
5. Helpful

1. Knowledgeable
2. Managerial skills
3. Resourceful
4. Cultural awareness
5. Good communicator