



South African
NATIONAL PARKS

GOLDEN GATE HIGHLANDS NATIONAL PARK

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS

FACILITATED BY

MALOTI DRAKENSBERG TRANSFRONTIER PROJECT

ON BEHALF OF

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL PARKS

Proceedings

of the

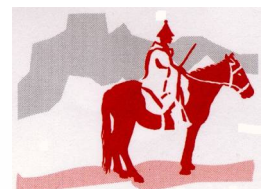
Key-stakeholder Workshop

held at

*Wilgenhof Environmental Education Centre,
Golden Gate Highlands National Park*

10 to 13 May 2005

**Maloti-Drakensberg
Transfrontier Project**



GOLDEN GATE HIGHLAND NATIONAL PARK

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS

Proceedings from the Key Stakeholder Workshop held at Golden Gate Highland National Park from 10 to 13 May 2005

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1. Glossary of Acronyms used in this Document

GGHNP	Golden Gate Highlands National Park
MDTP	Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (South Africa)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
SANParks	South African National Parks
SAPS	South African Police Services

2. Assumptions on the Extent of Golden Gate Highlands National Park

Key-stakeholders were informed at the workshop that the adjacent Qwa Qwa National Park (east of GGHNP) that was presently under the jurisdiction of the Free State Provincial Administration was in the process of being consolidated with the GGHNP into one National Park under the jurisdiction of SANParks. As the administration of this process had still not been finalised, the present Workshop (originally planned for February 2005) had been delayed with the expectation that the consolidation would have been concluded by April 2005. Unfortunately this had not occurred, but the workshop could not be delayed any further and would proceed on the assumption that the consolidation would be concluded in the near future.

In this regard, the stakeholders were informed that if they were of the opinion that the outcomes of the Workshop, namely a Mission and Management Objectives, could not apply equally to the consolidated area and the present GGHNP, this would then be noted as such, in the unlikely event that consolidation does not take place.

It must be clearly noted that during the workshop, and on a number of occasions, various participants strongly voiced their opinion that they wished to see the consolidation of the two protected areas under the jurisdiction of SANParks concluded as soon as possible. Appeals were made to all authorities present to do what they possibly could to expedite the matter. The general consensus of opinion was that this would be in the best interest of the total protected area as the effective management of the Qwa Qwa National Park had suffered as a result of indecision in this regard. There was unanimous agreement among the stakeholders in favour of this standpoint.

3. Concern at the Lack of Tourism Authority Presence at the Workshop

Although provincial and local authority tourism had been invited to the workshop to present their perspectives, they had not been able to attend and the stakeholders present expressed their concern in this regard. On the final day of the workshop an official from the Maluti a Phofung Municipality did attend however. Inputs towards tourism objectives were as a result mainly gathered from the private sector tourism stakeholders present.

4. The Management Planning Process

Prior to the workshop, the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP) and South African National Parks (SANParks) had agreed that the management plan for the Golden Gate Highlands National Park (GGHNP) would be compiled according to a process that would ensure that it be a fully integrated and strategic product. Agreements were reached on the harmonisation of the Protected Area Management Planning process proposed by the MDTP and the Integrated Environmental Management System being used by SANParks. In addition, it was agreed that the integrated management plan be subject to regular review and up-dating and as such be subject to application that ensured active-adaptive management. Review iterations of each management plan component would be indirectly proportional to the degree of detail in each component, (i.e. mission statement every five years while

specific activities may be up-dated on a monthly basis). The responsibility to facilitate this integrated management planning process was given to the South African Project Coordinating Unit of the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project.

In order to achieve the above, preparatory meetings were held with SANParks - the designated management authority for GGHNP. These meetings were used to ensure that the appropriate staff members within SANParks were fully apprised of the process to be followed and the principles encompassed within it. A management planning team to assist with the development of the management plan was also determined. In addition, a review of prevailing dynamics (i.e. both internal and external) currently influencing the management of GGHNP were interrogated. The key-stakeholders associated with these dynamics were then identified (see **Annexure A** – Key-stakeholder Workshop Attendance List) and ‘champions’ within SANParks and MDTP were tasked with the responsibility of engaging these. Such engagement was designed to invite them to a ‘key-stakeholder workshop’ and to ensure that they were fully aware of the process to be followed and the role they would play in such.

The process designed to produce an integrated management plan for GGHNP has begun with the above-mentioned workshop, details of which are explained below. Thereafter the product of the workshop, i.e. a management-planning framework including a mission statement and prioritised management objectives, will be subjected to further public scrutiny with comments gathered from such being assessed and incorporated where appropriate. This will then be subjected to a review and approval process by SANParks executive. Having achieved the latter it will be given back to the team who compiled the framework in order to expand it into specific operational goals and activities, i.e. to ‘action’ the management-planning framework.

The **key-stakeholder workshop process** was arranged as follows (the outcome of this process is captured in the body of this document):

- Pre-workshop meeting with community representatives: to ensure that they were well prepared to participate in the workshop and that their input was well considered and articulated.
- Sharing of information: Participants were given an opportunity to present information pertaining to their particular sphere of interest. The programme for this portion of the workshop is attached as **Annexure B** and reflects the identification and representation of the key-stakeholders. The aim of this information-sharing component was to ensure that participants could begin to develop an understanding for each others’ perspectives and be better equipped to contribute to the derivation of the mission statement and management objectives. (The presentations that have been received in electronic format will be placed on the MDTP website www.maloti.org together with this document.)
- Derivation of a mission statement (see section 5 and 6 below): Participants were randomly divided into small groups and were tasked with drafting a mission statement for GGHNP. The draft statements were then presented in plenary for discussion. Commonalities were identified in the drafts and were then used to derive a single statement that reflected the essence of what the groups had articulated. This section of the workshop was designed to enhance the common understanding generated from the information-sharing session and to bring participants from different interest groups together.
- Articulation of preliminary objectives (see section 7 below): Each participant who had presented information (promoter group) was requested to list management objectives pertaining to their particular sphere of interest. These were then collated by the facilitation team and presented to the participants in plenary. The background to the sets of objectives was reiterated and an opportunity was provided for participants to ask questions for the sake of clarity. This section was again designed to ensure that all participants enhanced their understanding for all the management planning dynamics.
- Rationalisation of preliminary objectives (see sections 7, 8 and 9 below): The aim of this session was to eliminate duplications and overlaps and to derive a list of objectives that were well articulated and meaningful for the later derivation of operational goals and activities, i.e. the actioning of the management-planning framework. From the preliminary list of

management objectives, the plenary identified twelve themes into which these could be categorised which after discussion were reduced to nine. Thereafter participants were given the freedom to choose a theme into which they could group themselves. These small groups were then each given the task of articulating one or more objectives out of the preliminary list they had pertaining to their particular theme. The result of this exercise was a list of nine clearly articulated management objectives. Having derived these in this manner with key-stakeholder participation meant that participants were satisfied that their particular sphere of interest had been heard and captured in a way that they had been party to.

- Prioritisation of objectives (see section 10 below): Given that the management authority is often faced with limited resources it is critical that management actions are prioritised. Prioritisation furthermore ensures that the most important dynamics are addressed irrespective of areas of interest and/or expertise. The process used to derive the priorities was simple and is open to criticism but serves to guide the management authority. The process was as follows: each objective was written out on a separate flip chart page. The participants were given five stickers with which to 'vote'. They were limited to a maximum of two stickers per objective in order to ensure that they were as objective as possible. No time limit was placed on this process to ensure that participants took their time to weigh the objectives against each other.
- Closure and a way forward: The facilitators thanked all the participants for their spontaneous, honest and productive contributions. It was agreed that the workshop proceedings would be circulated to all participants as soon as possible and that a mandate would be sought from SANParks to put the document out for further public comment.

Note: During the workshop translators verbally translated the proceedings to Sesotho for those participants who required it. Participants were regularly encouraged to ask questions for the sake of clarity.

5. Mission Statement Formulation

5.1 Initial Mission Statement Formulation

Participants were divided into 7 random groups to formulate a mission statement for GGHNP. The following mission statements were derived from these deliberations:

Group 1

The sustainable conservation of biodiversity and heritage sites by professionals for the enjoyment and benefit of all people.

Group 2

To manage GGHNP's indigenous wildlife, vegetation, landscape and associated cultural assets sustainably for the joy and benefit of the nation.

Group 3

To manage the Park and all its resources effectively for the benefit of all people.

Group 4

To take the lead in a holistic conservation approach and to share the beauty and splendour of GGHNP with all S.A.'s people for eternity.

Group 5

Golden Gate Highland National Park – Ultimate Tourist experience in the Eastern Free State.

Group 6

To conserve and manage biodiversity in an attractive and secure environment to ensure sustainable benefits to empower all the people of South Africa.

Group 7

The GGHNP manages biodiversity and cultural heritage resources in an effective economically viable and ecologically sustainable and safe environment for present and future generations.

5.2 Key Concepts Identified from the Initial Statements

At the subsequent plenary session the following key concepts were identified from the initial statements and discussed:

- 1) Management
- 2) Sustainability
- 3) Benefits to all people (includes tourism)
- 4) Biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation
- 5) Safe environment
- 6) Uniqueness
- 7) Natural beauty
- 8) Enjoyment

5.3 First Revision of Mission Statements

Participants were now divided into three random groups to further develop a mission statement after identifying the key concepts that participants agreed on. The following mission statements were derived after this workshop session:

Group 1

To manage GGHNP's unique natural and cultural heritage for the joy and benefit of the nation.

Group 2

To manage biodiversity and cultural heritage for the benefit of all people in a sustainable manner.

Group 3

Get high!!! Experience a unique feeling to inspire you for life – in a sustainably managed and secure environment!

6. Final Mission Statement

After a thorough discussion, the following final Mission Statement was derived for Golden Gate Highlands National Park:

(English)

The Mission of GGHNP is:

To manage its unique natural and cultural heritage sustainably for the joy and benefit of the nation.

(Sesotho)

Maikemisetso a GGHNP ke:

Ho tsamaisa lefa la yona la tlhaho le setso, le ikgethang, ka tsela e ikemetseng thabong le molemong wa setjhaba.

(Afrikaans)

Die Missie van GGHNP is:

Om die Park se besondere natuurlike en kulturele erfenis op 'n volhoubare basis te bestuur tot voordeel en vir die plesier van die volk.

7. Objectives Sorted by Promoter Group

Community Perspectives (CP)

- Community involvement.
- Contribution to the bigger region.
- Conservation of biodiversity and cultural Heritage.
- Access to benefits.
- Financial and economic sustainability of GGHNP.

Cultural Heritage (CH)

- Mitigate the impacts of Park operations and activities on the heritage resources of the Park and adjacent areas.
- Promote the expression and celebration of diverse cultures and spiritual significance associated with the Park and facilitate the recognition of the cultural linkages of the Park with surrounding communities.
- Conserve geological features, geomorphological features and palaeontological deposits in the Park.
- Centralised tourist information systems.
- Develop cultural tourism as a conservation tool.
- Support research into cultural heritage values and significance of particular sites in the Park.
- Facilitate IKS research initiatives into biodiversity and its link to cultural values e.g. medicinal plants, use of animal products, cultural uses of natural features).
- Research into cultural management issues for GGHNP.
- General and site specific management plans for cultural heritage sites.
- Facilitate Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) re cultural and national heritage to contribute towards conservation planning.
- Cultural heritage sites impacted on by tourism and recreation activities should be managed in accordance with the National Heritage Resources Act.
- Use of cultural resources to be monitored and documented.
- Ensure Park management incorporates cultural heritage concerns into biodiversity / natural heritage management e.g. fire management, service roads and game capture, erosion management, alien vegetation clearing and facility planning.
- S.W.O.T. analysis of cultural heritage sites Audit of cultural heritage sites in GGHNP Cultural heritage resources must be integrated from the initial planning stage of any project.
- Ensure physical protection of cultural heritage resources e.g. buildings, shelters, burial sites, stone-walled settlements, fence posts etc.
- Increase awareness through education of the significance, legal protections and conservation of cultural heritage sites (CH).

Ecology (Ecol.)

- The optimal management of diversity in the ecosystems to benefit plant and animal communities.
- The significant conservation development and use of GGHNP's natural and man-made heritage for the educational and spiritual enrichment of man.
- The conservation of the spectacular cave sandstone formations and fossil contents.
- To prevent extinction within the Park of any species on the red data list and work with conservation initiatives to secure the future of such species within its historic range.
- The sustained production of maximum quantities of silt-free water.
- Where animals / plants needed to be removed for ecological reasons, GGHNP should be obliged to maximize revenue from this.
- Resource utilisation must be consistent and defensible -designed to improve ecological outcomes and increase financial benefits to GGHNP and economic benefits to all stakeholders.
- Encourage and allow uses that have high value while discouraging uses that have significant ecological impacts.
- To establish clear and measurable ecosystem objectives as a framework for deciding the type and magnitude of resource use that can be undertaken without threatening ecosystem objectives.
- To monitor and understand the major effects of the climate in influencing biodiversity.

- To develop an integrated understanding of ecosystem diversity and where necessary to intervene with appropriate strategies to conserve and restore terrestrial biodiversity.
- Promote and encourage basic and applied research in the Park and to use the results to support decision-making by park management.
- Ensure implementation (monitoring and re-evaluation) of management plans.
- Ensure that an inventory and monitoring programme is designed and implemented to provide information relevant to Park management.
- Coordinate research programmes in cooperation with research institutes and volunteers.
- Research, rehabilitate and nurture heritage resources - especially where these have been suppressed and neglected.
- Actively source research funding for cultural heritage projects.
- To provide guidance for the allocation of surplus derived from resource utilisation

Marketing and Tourism (M&T)

- Environmental education.
- Various forms of tourist activities that could be viably run in the Park e.g. horse riding, quad bike riding, hiking trails, wilderness camps, 4x4 trails, game drives and tours specializing in geology, paleontology and history.
- The use of accredited operators only.
- Create effective mechanisms for ongoing marketing of the Park.
- Develop tourism 30% per annum.
- Environmental education.
- Identify key features for promotion.
- Provide a unique experience and world-class service and facilities to visitors and users of the Park.
- Biodiversity co-operation in conservancies.
- Link resource utilisation to control of expenditure and marketing of tourism opportunities.
- The proposed conservation fee (community levy?) is too high and could have a negative effect on tourism.
- Show tourism linkages to health services.
- Have a policy for recreational use of the Park (organized / structured activities and commercial operators).
- Manage visitors' access on an equitable basis within the accepted carrying capacity of the Park.
- Manage visitor activities to ensure that there is no or minimal impact on the visitor experience, ecological, heritage or scenic resources of the Park.
- Manage concessionaires and commercial tourism operators in the Park to ensure that ecological, cultural and scenic resources and visitor experience are maintained and enhanced.

Safety and Security (S&S)

- Use cross-border forums as platform for collaboration [Lesotho, RSA and GGHNP].
- GGHNP and surroundings - through way for illegal activities.
- To ensure that the Park is safe and secured for the community of Golden Gate National Park and the tourists visiting the Park.
- Use community policing forums in liaison mechanisms of the Park.
- To ensure that there is interaction between SAPS and the GGHNP security and the visibility of SAPS around the Park.
- Increased visibility of police.

Planning (Plan.)

- Collaboration between SANParks and consultants on regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- Await outcome of SEA and Land Use Planning Scheme (Oct. 2005).
- Take SEA recommendations into account in decisions regarding development in the Park.
- Proper development guidelines. Sustainable controlled development.
- Consolidate and expand Park to incorporate representative areas of moist and wet Cold Highveld Grassland vegetation types that would sustain and enhance the biodiversity of the Park.
- Integrate planning and development of the Park with relevant local, provincial and national authorities and other stakeholders.

- The guiding principle for use shall be cost-benefit efficiency criteria that compares financial / economic benefit against ecological cost.

Partnerships (Part.)

- Institutionalise a mechanism of representative and accountable participation in the management of the Park.
- Strive to ensure that regional planning and development affecting the Park are coordinated and integrated.
- Seek to ensure that local and provincial authorities share and contribute to the attainment of the vision and goals for the Park.
- Conserve and re-introduce historically occurring, locally indigenous, floral populations to the Park.
- Conserve and re-introduce faunal populations to the Park.
- Develop and nurture relationships between Park management and stakeholders that promote the long-term social sustainability of the Park.
- Identify and address all legal responsibilities imposed on Park management and other relevant parties.
- Conserve and manage biodiversity to ensure sustainable benefits to the people of South Africa, through co-operation and partnerships that build on strength and opportunities.

Park Management (P. Mangmnt.)

- Prevent use that pushes ecosystems beyond limits of acceptable change or significantly affects ecosystem processes.
- Conserve and restore natural landscapes and scenic resources of the Park. To maintain the biodiversity of the aquatic ecosystem and where necessary restore natural structure, function and composition.
- To maintain the biodiversity of the aquatic ecosystem and where necessary restore natural structure, function and composition.
- Prevent entry and where possible control invasive alien species in order to minimise the impact and to maintain the indigenous biodiversity.
- Conserve energy and water and manage waste.
- Implement effective fire management and coordination mechanisms with adjacent landowners / occupants.
- Strive to diversify the Park's income base and cost-effectiveness of its operations.
- Mitigate the impacts of Park operations and activities on the natural, scenic and heritage resources of the Park and adjacent areas.
- Effectively manage invasive alien plants and animals and eradicate resident problem alien fauna in the Park.
- Develop and implement effective management strategies that ensure the conservation of biodiversity in the Park - inclusive of species, patterns, processes and landforms.
- Contribution to protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage. Ensure that the permitted, managed use of biological resources occurs on a sustainable basis.
- Strive for excellence and continual improvement in managing the Park.
- Develop a Park information management system.
- Resource use must take place within, and be guided by, the overall objectives of GGHNP.

Community Involvement and Education (Comm. Educ.)

- Develop and implement suitable environmental awareness, information and education programmes.
- Election of a steering committee as starting process for the establishment of a Park Forum.
- To facilitate community based conservation initiatives.
- To build constituencies, develop partnerships and networks
- To create an enabling environment for emerging entrepreneurs from local communities to participate in business opportunities in the Park.
- To co-ordinate and support community-based conservation (environmental and cultural heritage) training.
- To encourage and exercise environmental and cultural heritage awareness in the communities.
- To inform people on the holistic approach SANParks has towards conservation.
- To communicate the value of environmental interpretation and education

- Develop awareness among visitors, staff, contractors, private landowners and users of GGHNP about the Park and its policies.
- Ensure that emergency response plans, which take account of the potential negative impacts that may result from their implementation, are prepared in collaboration with all relevant authorities.
- Develop programmes within the Park as well as jointly with communities and other educational and interested parties to establish meaningful environmental interpretation and education programmes in the Park.
- Safety and security in a transfrontier context.
- Collaboration on fencing.
- To provide access for cultural heritage use at no cost [discretion of Park manager] provided impact is negligible and the activity conserves culture.
- Realize opportunities for and equitable distribution of benefits to surrounding communities.
- Support and help facilitate community access to "Living Heritage Sites" in Park.
- To empower communities by providing training opportunities to acquire the technical, managerial and business skills to develop and manage community initiatives.
- To support the development of emerging SMME's from local communities.
- Implement relevant training programmes for Park management staff, contractors and volunteers to give effect to the policies and plans for the Park.

8. Objectives Sorted into Themes (not in priority order – promoter group in parenthesis)

As a first derivation of this exercise, twelve themes were identified. It was agreed that the following themes were either generic principles, management tools or an integral part of the management process in achieving the set objectives that were either dictated by legal frameworks such as the Public Financial Management Act or would be addressed during the operationalisation of the management objectives. There was also no perceived need to emphasise them by stating them as management objectives:

- ~ Financial and economic sustainability: The PFMA and guidelines contained in the operationalisation of the plan (Strategic Management and Business Plans) would address these issues.
- ~ Planning: Generic and inherent part of all the management processes.
- ~ Management: Implied in the operationalisation of the management objectives which would also address the administrative, financial and human resources needed.

The nine management objective themes (based on the suggested objectives by promoter groups) that the workshop participants agreed to after thorough discussions were:

- 1) Environmental Awareness and Education**
 - ◆ Increase awareness through education of the significance, legal protections and conservation of cultural heritage sites (CH).
 - ◆ Environmental education (M&T).
 - ◆ Develop and implement suitable environmental awareness, information and education programmes (Comm. Educ.).
 - ◆ To co-ordinate and support community-based conservation (environmental and cultural heritage) training (Comm. Educ.).
 - ◆ To encourage and exercise environmental and cultural heritage awareness in the communities (Comm. Educ.).
 - ◆ To inform people on the holistic approach SANParks has towards conservation (Comm. Educ.).
 - ◆ To communicate the value of environmental interpretation and education (Comm. Educ.).

- ◆ Develop programmes within the Park as well as jointly with communities and other educational and interested parties to establish meaningful environmental interpretation and education programmes in the Park (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Implement relevant training programmes for Park management staff, contractors and volunteers to give effect to the policies and plans for the Park (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Develop awareness among visitors, staff, contractors, private landowners and users of GGHNP about the Park and its policies (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ The significant conservation development and use of GGHNP's natural and man-made heritage for the educational and spiritual enrichment of man (Ecol.).

2) Community Involvement and Partnerships

- ◆ Community involvement (CP).
- ◆ Biodiversity co-operation in conservancies (M&T).
- ◆ To build constituencies, develop partnerships and networks (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ To create an enabling environment for emerging entrepreneurs from local communities to participate in business opportunities in the Park (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Develop and nurture relationships between Park management and stakeholders that promote the long-term social sustainability of the Park (Part.).
- ◆ Identify and address all legal responsibilities imposed on Park management and other relevant parties (Part.).
- ◆ Conserve and manage biodiversity to ensure sustainable benefits to the people of South Africa, through co-operation and partnerships that build on strength and opportunities (Part.).
- ◆ To facilitate community based conservation initiatives (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Election of a steering committee as starting process for the establishment of a Park Forum (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Institutionalise a mechanism of representative and accountable participation in the management of the Park (Part.).

3) Safety and Security

- ◆ Increased visibility of police (S&S).
- ◆ Ensure that emergency response plans, which take account of the potential negative impacts that may result from their implementation, are prepared in collaboration with all relevant authorities (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ GGHNP and surroundings - through way for illegal activities (S&S).
- ◆ To ensure that the Park is safe and secured for the community of Golden Gate National Park and the tourists visiting the Park (S&S).
- ◆ Use cross-border forums as platform for collaboration [Lesotho, RSA and GGHNP] (S&S).
- ◆ Safety and security in a transfrontier context (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Use community policing forums in liaison mechanisms of the Park (S&S).
- ◆ To ensure that there is interaction between SAPS and the GGHNP security and the visibility of SAPS around the Park (S&S).

4) Culture

- ◆ Ensure physical protection of cultural heritage resources e.g. buildings, shelters, burial sites, stone-walled settlements, fence posts etc (CH).
- ◆ Cultural heritage resources must be integrated from the initial planning stage of any project (CH).
- ◆ Audit of cultural heritage sites in GGHNP (CH).
- ◆ S.W.O.T. analysis of cultural heritage sites (CH).
- ◆ Ensure Park management incorporates cultural heritage concerns into biodiversity / natural heritage management e.g. fire management, service roads and game capture, erosion management, alien vegetation clearing and facility planning (CH).
- ◆ Use of cultural resources to be monitored and documented (CH).
- ◆ Mitigate the impacts of Park operations and activities on the heritage resources of the Park and adjacent areas (CH).
- ◆ Promote the expression and celebration of diverse cultures and spiritual significance associated with the Park and facilitate the recognition of the cultural linkages of the Park with surrounding communities (CH).

- ◆ General and site specific management plans for cultural heritage sites.
- ◆ Facilitate Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) re cultural and national heritage to contribute towards conservation planning (CH).
- ◆ Cultural heritage sites impacted on by tourism and recreation activities should be managed in accordance with the National Heritage Resources Act (CH).

5) **Research and Monitoring**

- ◆ To monitor and understand the major effects of the climate in influencing biodiversity (Ecol.).
- ◆ To develop an integrated understanding of ecosystem diversity and where necessary to intervene with appropriate strategies to conserve and restore terrestrial biodiversity (Ecol.).
- ◆ Promote and encourage basic and applied research in the Park and to use the results to support decision-making by park management (Ecol.).
- ◆ Develop a Park information management system (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Ensure implementation (monitoring and re-evaluation) of management plans (Ecol.).
- ◆ Ensure that an inventory and monitoring programme is designed and implemented to provide information relevant to Park management (Ecol.).
- ◆ Coordinate research programmes in cooperation with research institutes and volunteers (Ecol.).
- ◆ Research, rehabilitate and nurture heritage resources - especially where these have been suppressed and neglected (Ecol.).
- ◆ Actively source research funding for cultural heritage projects (Ecol.).
- ◆ Support research into cultural heritage values and significance of particular sites in the Park (CH).
- ◆ Facilitate IKS research initiatives into biodiversity and its link to cultural values e.g. medicinal plants, use of animal products, cultural uses of natural features) (CH).
- ◆ Research into cultural management issues for GGHNP (CH).

6) **Tourism and Marketing**

- ◆ Identify key features for promotion (M&T).
- ◆ Develop tourism 30% per annum (M&T).
- ◆ Create effective mechanisms for ongoing marketing of the Park (M&T).
- ◆ The use of accredited operators only (M&T).
- ◆ Show tourism linkages to health services (M&T).
- ◆ Strive to diversify the Park's income base and cost-effectiveness of its operations (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Various forms of tourist activities that could be viably run in the Park e.g. horse riding, quad bike riding, hiking trails, wilderness camps, 4x4 trails, game drives and tours specializing in geology, paleontology and history (M&T).
- ◆ Provide a unique experience and world-class service and facilities to visitors and users of the Park (M&T).
- ◆ Centralised tourist information systems (CH).
- ◆ Develop cultural tourism as a conservation tool (CH).
- ◆ Manage concessionaires and commercial tourism operators in the Park to ensure that ecological, cultural and scenic resources and visitor experience are maintained and enhanced (M&T).
- ◆ Manage visitors' access on an equitable basis within the accepted carrying capacity of the Park (M&T).
- ◆ Have a policy for recreational use of the Park (organized / structured activities and commercial operators) (M&T).
- ◆ Manage visitor activities to ensure that there is no or minimal impact on the visitor experience, ecological, heritage or scenic resources of the Park (M&T).

7) **Bioregion (Including MDTP)**

- ◆ Collaboration between SANParks and consultants on regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (Plan.).
- ◆ Contribution to the bigger region (CP).
- ◆ Seek to ensure that local and provincial authorities share and contribute to the attainment of the vision and goals for the Park (Part.).

- ◆ Strive to ensure that regional planning and development affecting the Park are coordinated and integrated (Part.).
- ◆ Await outcome of SEA and Land Use Planning Scheme (Oct. 2005 (Plan.)).
- ◆ Integrate planning and development of the Park with relevant local, provincial and national authorities and other stakeholders (Plan.).

8) Biodiversity Conservation

- ◆ Proper development guidelines (Plan.).
- ◆ Sustainable controlled development (Plan.).
- ◆ Strive for excellence and continual improvement in managing the Park (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Ensure that the permitted, managed use of biological resources occurs on a sustainable basis (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Conserve and re-introduce historically occurring, locally indigenous, floral populations to the Park (Part.).
- ◆ Conserve and re-introduce faunal populations to the Park (Part.).
- ◆ The conservation of the spectacular cave sandstone formations and fossil contents (Ecol.).
- ◆ Contribution to protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Collaboration on fencing (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ The optimal management of diversity in the ecosystems to benefit plant and animal communities (Ecol.).
- ◆ To prevent extinction within the Park of any species on the red data list and work with conservation initiatives to secure the future of such species within its historic range (Ecol.).
- ◆ Take SEA recommendations into account in decisions regarding development in the Park (Plan.).
- ◆ Consolidate and expand Park to incorporate representative areas of moist and wet Cold Highveld Grassland vegetation types that would sustain and enhance the biodiversity of the Park (Plan.).
- ◆ Develop and implement effective management strategies that ensure the conservation of biodiversity in the Park - inclusive of species, patterns, processes and landforms (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Effectively manage invasive alien plants and animals and eradicate resident problem alien fauna in the Park (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Prevent use that pushes ecosystems beyond limits of acceptable change or significantly affects ecosystem processes (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Mitigate the impacts of Park operations and activities on the natural, scenic and heritage resources of the Park and adjacent areas (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Implement effective fire management and coordination mechanisms with adjacent landowners / occupants (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Conserve energy and water and manage waste (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Prevent entry and where possible control invasive alien species in order to minimise the impact and to maintain the indigenous biodiversity (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ To maintain the biodiversity of the aquatic ecosystem and where necessary restore natural structure, function and composition (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Conserve and restore natural landscapes and scenic resources of the Park (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Conservation of biodiversity and cultural Heritage (CP).
- ◆ Conserve geological features, geomorphological features and palaeontological deposits in the Park (CH).

9) Resource use, Benefits and Ecosystem Services

- ◆ To provide access for cultural heritage use at no cost [discretion of Park manager] provided impact is negligible and the activity conserves culture (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ The sustained production of maximum quantities of silt-free water (Ecol.).
- ◆ Realize opportunities for and equitable distribution of benefits to surrounding communities (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ Access to benefits (CP).
- ◆ Support and help facilitate community access to "Living Heritage Sites" in Park (Comm. Educ.).

- ◆ To empower communities by providing training opportunities to acquire the technical, managerial and business skills to develop and manage community initiatives (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ To support the development of emerging SMME's from local communities (Comm. Educ.).
- ◆ The proposed conservation fee (community levy?) is too high and could have a negative effect on tourism (M&T).
- ◆ To establish clear and measurable ecosystem objectives as a framework for deciding the type and magnitude of resource use that can be undertaken without threatening ecosystem objectives (Ecol.).
- ◆ Resource utilisation must be consistent and defensible -designed to improve ecological outcomes and increase financial benefits to GGHNP and economic benefits to all stakeholders (Ecol.).
- ◆ Resource use must take place within, and be guided by, the overall objectives of GGHNP (P. Mangmnt.).
- ◆ Encourage and allow uses that have high value while discouraging uses that have significant ecological impacts (Ecol.)
- ◆ To provide guidance for the allocation of surplus derived from resource utilisation (Ecol.).
- ◆ Where animals / plants needed to be removed for ecological reasons , GGHNP should be obliged to maximize revenue from this (Ecol.).
- ◆ The guiding principle for use shall be cost-benefit efficiency criteria that compares financial / economic benefit against ecological cost (Plan.).
- ◆ Link resource utilisation to control of expenditure and marketing of tourism opportunities (M&T).
- ◆ Financial and economic sustainability of GGHNP (CP).

9. Objectives Rationalised and Re-articulated (not in priority order)

- ✓ Environmental Awareness and Education

Implement environmental awareness and education programmes to ensure sustainable environmental conservation initiatives.

- ✓ Community Involvement and Partnerships

Establish effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

- ✓ Safety and Security

Create and maintain a safe and secure environment in and around the Park.

- ✓ Culture

Conserve and manage cultural heritage.

- ✓ Research and Monitoring

Implement research and monitoring programs for decision-making in an adaptive management approach.

- ✓ Tourism and Marketing

Market the Park and deliver an outstanding tourist experience.

- ✓ Bioregion (including MDTP)

Participate in the establishment and maintenance of the MDTP bioregion.

- ✓ Biodiversity Conservation

Manage the environment and its ecosystems sustainably.

- ✓ Resource use, Benefits and Ecosystem Services

Provide resource use opportunities that create benefits equitably without negative impact on ecosystems.

10. Prioritisation of the Rationalised Objectives Based on Workshop Voting

	Rationalized Objective	Tally
1.	<i>Establish effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders.</i>	61
2.	<i>Market the Park and deliver an outstanding tourist experience.</i>	44
3.	<i>Implement Environmental Awareness and Education programmes to ensure sustainable environmental conservation initiatives.</i>	39
4.	<i>Conserve and manage cultural heritage.</i>	28
5.	<i>Create and maintain a safe and secure environment in and around the Park.</i>	26
6.	<i>Manage the environment and its ecosystems sustainably.</i>	24
7.	<i>Participate in the establishment and maintenance of the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Bioregion.</i>	14
8.	<i>Provide resource use opportunities that create benefits equitably without negative impact on ecosystems.</i>	6
9.	<i>Implement research and monitoring programs for decision-making in an adaptive management approach.</i>	5

11. Establishment of Steering Committee

The workshop participants agreed that a Park liaison forum be established to address the management objective of establishing partnership with relevant stakeholders.

The following principles were agreed upon in the identification of stakeholders:

- Stakeholders will have to represent a constituency or an interest group. If a group is not organised into a structure, an effort should be made to do so e.g. farmers living on the boundary.
- Individual interests could not be represented on the forum as it would set precedents for benefit sharing.
- A Steering Committee would drive the process towards the establishment of a Park liaison forum.
- Lesotho communities on the boundary of GGHNP were recognised as a neighbouring affected group and were therefore urged to participate in the process.

The following process was agreed upon:

1. All stakeholder groups identified are listed in **Table 1** below.
2. These stakeholder groups would be contacted per letter with the request to nominate a representative from their particular constituency to serve on the Steering Committee.
3. The Steering Committee will initiate the process that would lead to the establishment of the Park Forum.
4. One of the key functions of the Steering Committee will be to develop a terms of reference that would establish the role and functions of the park liaison forum and it would also ensure that the appropriate stakeholders are participating in the process.
5. Once the aforementioned is achieved, the park liaison forum will be established and SANParks will officially recognise the members of the forum as liaison structure.
6. Concurrently in this process, the constituency will have to officially second their representatives to the forum.
7. Once this is done, the forum will initiate its work with GGHNP.

The date for the first steering committee meeting was set for **6 June 2005** at GGHNP.

12. Summary and Closing Remarks

At the beginning of the key-stakeholders workshop the participants were informed that this was the beginning of a process to derive and implement a fully integrated and strategic management plan for the GGHNP, and that this would be an on-going process with various levels of iterations and up-dates at the appropriate levels. There was also a level of nervousness at the opening of the process to key-stakeholder input at such an early stage; however both the SANParks officials and the workshop participants all expressed their satisfaction with the outcome and the process by which it was derived. Many community members expressed their thanks and appreciated the opportunity to participate and were satisfied that their contributions had been well considered and incorporated.

This document thus serves to deliver the integrated management-planning framework for the GGHNP in the form of a Mission Statement and a list of prioritised Management Objectives. In addition to this, the process by which these were derived has been detailed to ensure that further critical review of the product can be done in context and with the confidence that a fully integrated process was followed.

Following further public comment, critical review and approval by the appropriate structures, the framework will be given back to the GGHNP Management Planning Team ('champions') to further derive the appropriate operational goals and activities associated with each of the objectives, i.e. the actioning of the framework. The latter will then form the basis from which all management activities in and around the SDNR are monitored, financed and resourced.

The MDTP thank all who were involved in making this process the success that it has been thus far and looks forward to continued involvement.

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**Table 1: Identified Stakeholder Groups**

**LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS CONSTITUENCIES / GROUPS FOR NOMINATION OF ONE REPRESENTATIVE PER CONSTITUENCY FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A PARK LIAISON FORUM**

- Concessionaire – PROTEA
- Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality (TMDM)
  - DMA Councillor
  - Municipal Manager
- Dihlabeng Local Municipality
  - Mayor
  - Municipal Manager
- Maloti-a-Phofung
  - Mayor
  - Municipal Manager
- Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP)
- Conservancies
  - Clarens Bioregion
  - Eastern Conservancies
- SAPS – Area Commissioner Eastern Free State
- Qwa Qwa National Park Management
- Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (Basotho Cultural Village)
- Free State Department of Tourism, Environment and Economic Affairs
- Department of Land Affairs (Regional Representative)
- Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (Provincial Project Manager)
- Department of Labour
- Department of Education
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Health
- Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
- Traditional Leaders
- Lesotho Neighbours
- South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA)
- Provincial Heritage Resource Agency (PHRA)
- National Museum
- National Research Foundation (NRF)
- Traditional Healers
- Arts and Crafts Practitioners
- Direct Neighbours (sharing fences) – North East and West
- Residents Qwa Qwa National Park
- TMDM Tourism
- Tourism Product Owners – East and West
- Community Police Forum
- Honorary Rangers
- SANParks
  - Management
  - Employees
  - Workers Union
  - Arid Ecosystems Research Unit (AERU)