TOURISM – PROTECTED AREA PARTNERSHIPS IN AUSTRALIA

Designing and managing for success

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SUMMARY

Objectives of Study

The last decade has seen increasing recognition of the importance of national parks and protected areas to tourism in Australia and elsewhere. For example, protected areas in Australia received 84 million visits in 2003 (DITR 2003), with estimates in one state alone (Queensland) of visitor expenditure associated with protected areas of $602 million to $858 million per year (Kinhill Economic 1998, in Lindberg 2004). At the same time the resources available to provide and manage such tourism have not necessarily been available as government agencies downsize to cope with a reduction in budgets. Against this backdrop, partnerships between the tourism industry and protected area agencies are increasingly being regarded as a way of encouraging more involvement by the private sector and local communities in protected areas, enhancing tourism opportunities and garnering much needed resources for protected area management.

In Australia, the need for these partnerships and their potential contribution to sustainable tourism has been identified in a number of recent reports. The first of these was commissioned and published by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre. The first report in 2001 provided general principles and guidelines for tourism – protected area partnerships, while a second, completed the following year, reported on the potential contributions of partnerships to sustainable tourism in protected areas and beyond. In 2003, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources published a report exploring common goals between tourism and conservation. In the same year, the Commonwealth Government released its Tourism White Paper advocating partnerships to grow tourism in protected areas. The critical need for partnerships between national parks and tourism was reiterated in two Tourism and Transport Forum Australia reports, in 2004 and 2007. A recently released report by the NSW Taskforce on Tourism and National Parks (in December 2008) again emphasised the centrality of partnerships for the future of nature based tourism and protected areas in Australia. The study reported on here is a two-year Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre project commissioned and commenced in 2006 in response to the concerns and opportunities raised in those reports and policy initiatives.

This project aimed to identify the features involved in developing, fostering and maintaining partnerships among those involved in sustainable tourism associated with protected areas. An associated aim was determining how these features contribute to the success or otherwise of these partnerships. Previous research has focused on a small number of partnerships, which means it is difficult to be sure that the findings apply to the enormous range of partnerships typical of tourism in protected areas in Australia and elsewhere. Also, an integrated analytical framework has often been lacking, making it difficult to apply the findings more broadly or to relate the findings back to previously published work. There has also been little analysis of ineffective or failed partnerships.

This report has been written for an industry audience with the idea that most mangers and policy makers have a minimum amount of time to read more in-depth documents. As such, the most important parts, for those who are extremely time-poor, are the title and this summary. For those who are involved in protected area tourism and/or managing protected areas, then the bare minimum is the aforementioned, plus Chapters 1 (Introduction) and 7 (Overview and Recommendations). To help realise the full benefits of better partnering associated with tourism and protected areas, the whole report should prove compelling reading. The appendices and reference list have been included for other researchers to provide a record of the methods and survey instruments used.

Methods

A total of 21 partnerships from across Australia were the focus of this study. All included the tourism industry and almost all included a protected area agency as a partner. Local government, state and regional tourism organisations, other government departments (apart from protected area and tourism agencies), non-government organisations, community and Indigenous people were also members of one or more of these partnerships. The tourism interests were extraordinarily diverse, ranging from small accommodation and tour providers, through to large scale commercial developments.

The 21 partnerships were chosen in consultation with an Industry Reference Group using agreed-upon criteria. This Group, whose members are listed in the acknowledgments, was comprised of senior managers from protected area agencies (both State and Commonwealth), state tourism organisations (e.g. Tourism Tasmania), senior operators from the tourism industry and senior staff from peak tourism industry bodies (e.g. Tourism and Transport Forum Australia). They had an important role in designing and conducting this research.

Information was collected from members of these partnerships via a questionnaire (100 respondents) and follow-up interview (97 respondents). Both survey approaches sought to find out what contributed to partnership outcomes and what these outcomes were. These contributors were investigated as: (1) features of the partners and the partnership itself (e.g. leadership was provided by at least one of the partners); (2) features of working together (e.g. open communication between partners); and (3) features of the working environment (e.g. adequate financial support for the partnership). For each of these features, respondents were asked if it was present or not, and how important it was to them. The partners were also asked about the outcomes they had observed and how important they were to them. Such outcomes included overall results of the partnership as well as those related to sustainable tourism. This linkage between partnering and sustainable tourism has not been explored in this way before.

In the follow-up interviews, partners were asked about the features and outcomes they thought were most important. The intention in doing this was to find out why these features and outcomes were important to the person being interviewed and, most critically, what enabled them to be present (or absent). These results, together with those from the questionnaire, provide a detailed description and understanding of what contributes to successful partnerships (from the 'features' results) and what these successful outcomes might be (from the 'outcomes' results). To further assist this understanding, partners were asked in the interviews to generally describe what had contributed to the successes and failures of their partnership, and similarly what problems had they encountered along the way and how they dealt with them (or not). The purpose in doing so was to gain further insights on these contributors.

Every effort has been made to present the results in the most straightforward way possible. The questionnaire results are presented in summary tables, including an analysis of how well the partnerships were performing using importance-satisfaction analysis, a widely used approach in facilities and services management in tourism and other service sectors. It has not been previously used to analyse partnerships but offers useful insights into partners' expectations and their satisfaction with the current situation. The questionnaire results are also interpreted using correlation analysis to help get a firmer, statistically-based appreciation of the relationships between the features contributing to partnership outcome and the outcomes themselves. The interview results are organised and are presented using a set of 19 'classes' (e.g. communication, roles and powers) to simplify into something more manageable than 2,000 text excerpts derived from the interviews. This class information is then used to analyse the overarching factors that both contribute to and describe successful partnership outcomes.

Key Findings

Outcomes of Partnerships

All of the outcomes listed for the partnership in the questionnaire were identified as somewhat to extremely important, with the most important being 'achieving the purpose of the partnership', 'benefits to partners' and 'improved information available to protected area managers'. These benefits provided direction for and drove the partnership as well as creating a sense of achievement.

All listed outcomes for sustainable tourism were identified by partners as somewhat to extremely important. The most important were improved understanding of protected area values, biodiversity conservation, greater respect for culture, and increased social benefits to local communities. Interestingly, these sustainability responses did not explicitly include economic benefits, although these are probably covered in the partnership outcomes of achievement of purpose and benefits to all partners.

Analysing partner perceptions of the outcomes (both for the partnership and sustainable tourism) showed that partners were satisfied with the economic gains from the partnership and the improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourism destination. This is clear evidence of the ability of partnerships to value-add to protected area tourism. Although partners were generally satisfied with other outcomes, they expected more from the partnerships than they were currently getting. A possible reason for these results is that partners expect more of partnerships than the current arrangements can deliver.

Contributing Features

These outcomes are achieved through the contributions of a number of features, including those of partnership itself, the working arrangements and the working environment. All of the features, which were detailed in the questionnaire using 44 items, were identified by the partners as somewhat to extremely important. For the partnership itself, the most important features were having the decision makers involved, support by the protected area agency and leadership by at least one of the partners. All have been emphasised in other research as being critically important. They collectively emphasise the importance of the leadership and input provided by the protected area agency (or protected area manager).

Having decision makers involved was particularly important, especially with regards to achieving the purpose of the partnership.

Communication, trust and commitment were the most important features of the working arrangements. Commitment is particularly important in its contribution to achieving the purpose of the partnership, benefits to all partners and stimulation of innovation. Open communication influences a number of other features and therefore indirectly many of the outcomes.

The most important features of the working environment were adequate organisational and financial support and current legislation supporting tourism in protected areas. Both forms of support (organisational and financial) were important for achieving improvements in understanding of other partner interests, reducing conflicts, improving access to funding and strengthening business capacity.

Critical Factors for Partnerships

A few critical factors can help explain the most important points in these results. These were communication, understanding, direction, roles and powers, regulations and agreements, and lack of resources. Open communication was highly valued by partners. It refers to being able to share information, effectively deliver it and do so in an open way. Understanding, partners understanding each other's positions, was emphasised in many of the recommendations made about better partnering by respondents during interviews. Direction refers to partnerships working towards a shared goal. It was the most frequently mentioned contributor to sustainable tourism outcomes.

Roles and powers refer to the allocation and acceptance of roles, and responsibilities and obligations. Having and showing leadership was identified as a critical role. Being flexible about roles and working with multiple levels in partner organisations were also part of this factor. Regulations and agreements, with an emphasis on having a written agreement for the partnership and current legislation supporting tourism, were important. Problems with regulations and agreements was frequently mentioned, with aspects including inconsistency in regulations across state boundaries, a lack of coordination in licensing approval processes within governments, short lease/licence terms, and regulations not covering all protected area users/visitors. Adaptability and flexibility were proposed as solutions to these problems.

An inadequacy in resources was identified as a problem and a failure. Partners referred to lack of staff, inadequate financial backing and insufficient involvement by the protected area agency in the partnership. Solutions proposed to address this problem included working with other partners to source funding. This lack of resources for protected area management reflects broadscale government cutbacks, with part of the enthusiasm for partnerships within government resting on the assumption that such arrangements will create efficiencies. It seems that given this context, more resources for partnerships are unlikely to be forthcoming and other solutions will be required.

Future Action

The following recommendations all aim to support establishing and maintaining successful partnerships. Successful partnerships, as defined by the partners in this study, achieved partnership goals, better protected area management and a range of benefits to partners, tourism and local communities.

Managing the Features of Partnerships for Success

These first three recommendations relate to managing features of the partnership itself, the working arrangements and the working environment.

Recommendation 1. Ensure that partners are *selected* and the partnership itself is *managed* to achieve partnership success:

a. By including those partners and individuals with the ability to make decisions about the protected area and the tourism venture in the partnership.
b. Through support for the partnership by the protected area agency (e.g., with staff, publicity, funding, information).
c. By facilitating and supporting leadership by at least one of the partners.
d. Through encouraging all partners to participate and develop empathy for each other.

Recommendation 2. *Manage* how the partnership works to make sure the following occurs:

a. Open and ongoing communication between partners.
b. Development and maintenance of trust between partners.
c. Commitment by partners to the partnership.
d. Agreement by partners on the partnership purpose.

Recommendation 3. *Manage* the *working environment* (i.e. the *context*) by ensuring:

a. Recognition of the legal obligations of partners.
b. Development of a written agreement by partners.
c. Supportive legislation for tourism in protected areas.
d. Adequate organisational and financial support for the partnership, often but not always provided by the protected area agency.

Managing the Overarching Factors for Success

Two factors in particular contribute overwhelmingly to successful partnerships: communication and understanding. Recommendations associated with these follow, as does a set of recommendations about regulations and agreements. Regulations and agreements and inadequate resources were the most often mentioned problems (the latter is covered in the next section).

Recommendation 4. Achieve open *communication* by:

a. Two- and multi-way exchanges through meetings, emails and phone calls, and also less formally through networking and social events.
b. Paying attention to communication within the partnership as well as with external stakeholders.
c. Addressing problems and potential conflicts as soon as they arise, especially those associated with regulations and agreements, lack of inclusion, resource problems, and leadership issues.
d. Allocating staff to partnerships who have or can receive training to enhance their communication skills.

Recommendation 5. Improve *understanding* between the tourism industry and protected area managers by:

a. Facilitating communication between all levels of the industry and protected area agencies through seminars, social events and joint field activities.
b. Encouraging industry groups such as TTF Australia and Ecotourism Australia to support such communication acitivites.
c. Ensuring that protected area staff understand and acknowledge as valid the business imperatives of the tourism industry.
d. Ensuring that the tourism industry builds on and complements with their activities the conservation mandate that is central to protected area management.

Recommendation 6. Work effectively with the *regulations and agreements* available to partnership members and others by:

a. Encouraging partners to work innovatively with current legislative and regulatory arrangements.
b. Supporting the enactment of legislation that supports tourism in protected areas or interpretation of existing legislation in ways that engender such support.
c. Continuing to pursue, within and across government, similar licensing provisions between and across states as well as licence and lease terms commensurate with levels of investment.
d. Acknowledging and working with all partners' various and varying legal obligations and liabilities.

Avoiding Failure

Given the risk-adverse nature of today's public sector (Beckwith & Moore 2001), avoiding partnership breakdown and failure is paramount. Two ways of doing so are by paying attention to regulations and agreements (addressed above) and issues with resources. A lack of resources is a common 21st century lament, and as Bramwell and Lane (2000) note, cutbacks are now a permanent part of the public sector landscape (and encompassing protected area agencies). Innovation and adaptability seem to be part of the solution, as are partnerships themselves. Recommendations to create these opportunities follow.

Creating Opportunities for the Future

The previous sections have detailed what works or needs to be improved in current approaches. This section suggests some directions for the future. These are opportunities not only for improving partnerships through research and practice, but also a final recommendation about continuing to enhance the relationship between the tourism industry and protected areas. Improving the outcomes for sustainable tourism is one of these opportunities.

Recommendation 7. Improve the outcomes for sustainable tourism by:

a. Encouraging all partners to explicitly focus on increasing the economic viability and prosperity of local communities as a result of their joint tourism activities.
b. Improving knowledge of the protected area (and dissemination of this knowledge) by working with a diversity of stakeholders.
c. Actively involving the tourism industry in sustainability activities such as environmental monitoring, visitor education and promoting responsible behaviour.

Recommendation 8. Create opportunities for innovation and adaptation in tourism – protected area partnerships by:

a. Involving and communicating with partners at multiple levels in the partner organisations.
b. Fostering honesty and openness as precursors to innovative problem solving.
c. Taking a flexible, adaptive approach to the direction of the partnership and its performance, and to regulations and agreements.

Recommendation 9. Further improve the performance of partnerships by pursuing research on:

a. Better understanding how communication contributes to partnerships and how it can be improved.
b. Further enhancing the sustainable outcomes from partnering and more generally from tourism in protected areas.

Recommendation 10. Continue to improve the relationship between the tourism industry and protected areas by:

a. Using successful partnerships as a way of showcasing the benefits of tourism associated with protected areas.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Partnerships are increasingly being regarded as essential for sustainable protected area tourism. They are a pivotal part of increasing efforts by protected area agencies to encourage more involvement by the private sector and local communities in protected areas and associated tourism opportunities. In Australia, the need for such efforts, particularly with regards to partnerships, has been identified in a number of recent reports. These reports have examined the potential contributions of partnerships to sustainable tourism (including protected areas and beyond) (De Lacy, Battig, Moore & Noakes 2002) as well as more tightly focusing on partnerships centering on tourism and protected areas. In 2003, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources published a report exploring common goals between tourism and conservation. This was followed by two Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) Australia reports, in 2004 and 2007 (TTF Australia 2004; 2007), both advancing the critical need for partnerships between national parks and tourism. At the same time, the Commonwealth Government of Australia released its Tourism White Paper, on 20 November 2003, which advocated partnerships to grow tourism in protected areas (DITR 2003). As part of an industry and research response to the concerns and opportunities raised in these reports and policy initiatives, the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre commissioned the two-year research project which underpins this report. Most recently, the report by the NSW Taskforce on Tourism and National Parks (DECC 2008) has again emphasised the centrality of partnerships between nature based tourism and protected areas in assuring the future of both.

Numerous benefits of partnerships centered on natural resource management, where tourism is included in this broad grouping, have been identified in recent research. Partnerships can be a vehicle for mobilising resources and expertise, leading to efficiency and productivity gains (De Lacy et al. 2002). They can support change management (Rosenau 2000), stimulate innovation (Tremblay 2000), moderate power inequalities (Leach & Pelkey 2001), boost conservation initiatives (Stubbs & Specht 2005), foster collaborative decision-making and conflict resolution (De Lacy et al. 2002), and help coordination and improve understanding (Davidson & Lockwood 2008). However, partnerships can also be exclusionary, favour established interests (Rhodes 1997), compromise public accountability, and threaten public values and the capacity of governments to govern (Davidson & Lockwood 2008).

Given the extent of interest in partnerships and the benefits for both protected areas and tourism, it is vitally important to understand the factors that promote successful partnerships for tourism associated with protected areas. Successful partnerships would result in the benefits given above, and avoid the possible threats. They would also contribute to sustainable tourism, a much defined and contested term. Here, the agenda for sustainable tourism developed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Tourism Organisation (UNEP & WTO 2005) is adopted as definitional. The twelve aims in this agenda, according to Macbeth's (1994) four categories, are: (1) economic sustainability (economic viability, local prosperity, employment quality); (2) social sustainability (social equity, visitor fulfilment, local control, community wellbeing); (3) cultural sustainability (cultural richness); and (4) ecological sustainability (physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency and environmental purity). Macbeth (1994, 42) also notes its long-term nature:'Put simply, our task is to facilitate a tourism that will carry on, that will endure but that will also contribute, nourish and tolerate'.

While previous studies have sought to understand these factors, they have generally examined only one or two cases, so that the wider applicability of the findings is uncertain. Other studies, such as Buckley and Sommer (2001), have drawn together findings from previous studies, but with no unified analytical frame, and many are not theoretically informed, thereby limiting the understandings that can be generated. There has also been little analysis of ineffective or failed partnerships. The study reported on here was designed and conducted to addressed these limitations by: (1) identifying an appropriate theoretical framework for studying tourism partnerships; (2) undertaking mixed-method surveys of 21 protected area-focused tourism partnerships; and (3) integrating the results from the surveys with theoretical understandings to offer general insights into successful partnerships and the conditions required to achieve these.

Purpose of Report

This report aims to identify the characteristics and attributes of successful tourism partnerships associated with protected areas, through an examination of 21 case studies across Australia. It follows on from a previous technical report (Laing, Wegner, Moore, Weiler, Pfueller, Lee, Macbeth, Croy & Lockwood 2008), which provided an overview of literature on 'successful' partnerships, including the features that contribute to this success, and identified eight theoretical areas with potential application to research on partnership success. This report addresses the two research questions central to the partnerships study:

1) What are the features involved in developing, fostering and maintaining partnerships between those involved in sustainable tourism associated with protected areas?
2) How do these features contribute to partnership success?

Previous Research

This project has been strongly grounded in existing research, both to prevent duplication of what has already been found, and to build on existing knowledge. Also, combining the findings from surveys with those from previous research, the approach taken in this study, provides insights and new knowledge that might not otherwise be possible. A brief overview of previous research, including activities in related fields, follows to provide background to and help position the partnerships study. A more comprehensive review is provided in Laing et al. (2008).

A starting point in previous studies in a number of disciplines has been identifying the nature and hallmarks of a 'partnership'. In this report, partnerships are defined as 'regular, cross-sectoral interactions over an extended period of time between parties, based on at least some agreed rules or norms, intended to address a common issue or to achieve a specific policy goal or goals, which cannot be solved by the partners individually, and involving pooling and sharing of appreciations or resources, mutual influence, accountability, commitment, participation, trust and respect and transparency' (Laing et al. 2008, 5). This definition draws on a wide body of literature, including general management (Mohr & Spekman 1994), health (Popay & Williams 1998; Dowling, Powell & Glendinning 2004), tourism (Selin & Chavez 1995; Selin 1999; Bramwell & Lane 2000) natural resource management (Wondolleck & Yaffee 2000), environmental management (Poncelet 2004) and watershed management (Leach & Pelkey 2001), as well as studies examining partnerships in general (Brinkerhoff 2002a).

Many studies of partnerships do not define what is meant by a 'successful partnership' or have adopted definitions focusing on one or more of the following: the outcomes or products of successful partnership, the processes or factors contributing to successful partnerships, both outcomes and processes. This project embraces both process and outcome as measures of success, a more holistic approach following that used in a variety of disciplines, such as natural resource and environmental management (Toupal & Johnson 1998; Wondolleck & Yaffee 2000; Schuett, Selin & Carr 2001; Poncelet 2004), public administration (Gray 1996; Brinkerhoff 2002b) and tourism (Blackman, Foster, Hyvonen & Moscardo 2004). It was also felt that there was merit in asking partners to define success, reflecting their intimate involvement and knowledge of the partnership concerned (Moore 1996).

Numerous features of success are evident from reviewing literature from this variety of disciplines. For ease of understanding, and to provide an ordered basis for the study reported here, they can and have been categorised using the work of Bingham (1986) in environmental dispute resolution, into partner-related (features of the partners/partnership), process-related (features of working together), and context-related (features of the working environment). This has been done in order to group features and facilitate analysis. A number of researchers (e.g., Roberts & Simpson 1999) have suggested that it is important to consider as broad a range of features as possible, not only those that are easy to measure, including more 'mundane' features such as lack of time or paucity of resources or challenging or less easily measured concepts such as leadership and empathy. These broader considerations also formed a basis for this study.

Research from a number of other areas, both conceptual and empirical, potentially provides insights into the characteristics and attributes of successful tourism partnerships associated with protected areas. Potentially useful sources of previous research and practice include social exchange theory, adoption and diffusion of innovation, environmental dispute resolution, social representation theory, network theory, stakeholder theory, social capital theory and the institutional analysis and development framework. Each offers rich insights into the ways people work or fail to work together. For example, *social exchange* explores relationships and interactions between parties (actors), particularly with respect to exchange of resources (Thibault & Kelley 1959; Emerson 1962; 1972; Blau 1964), while *social capital* examines how people or organisations interact or function within

social structures, systems or networks (Coleman 1988).

Stakeholder theory considers the effects of strategic issues on a number of stakeholders and thus takes account of group concerns (Freeman 1984), including those of individual partners. *Adoption/diffusion of innovations* looks at the way new ideas or innovations are taken up (Rogers 1962; 1983), including factors that facilitate or inhibit this process, and might be useful to facilitate uptake of a partnership approach. *Social representation* explores common attitudes, views and behaviour and helps to explain conflict in partnerships where members appear to share common views and attitudes but exhibit different behaviour (Moscovici 1984; Fredline & Faulkner 2000). *Network theory* might also be usefully applied to partnership research, given that networks can foster or organise the collaborative effort or relationship (Imperial 2005; Dredge 2006a; 2006b).

Environmental dispute resolution focuses on the factors underlying successful conflict resolution and management, often in the context of multi-party arrangements with different views and interests (Smith 2006). It potentially offers insights into what affects the development and on-going success of partnerships, including the influences of processes and taking account of the political, legal and/or administrative settings or context (Bingham 1986). The final potentially useful source, *institutional analysis and development*, can be used to explain how local institutional arrangements may shape environmental management practices and outcomes (Ostrom 1990; 1999). In particular, the framework assists in the analysis of problems dealing with 'common pool resources', including the use of rules to address these problems (Imperial 1999) and thus may inform understanding of partnership performance.

The extent to which these theoretical perspectives are useful in describing the processes and outcomes of successful partnerships was determined by Laing, Lee, Moore, Weiler and Wegner (forthcoming), as part of this project. They recommend, based on mapping the theories onto the numerous features of successful partnerships, that institutional analysis and development, social capital and environmental dispute resolution are required as a minimum to underpin partnerships research. They also note that these theories help, not as individual theories but collectively describing the features of successful partnerships. Their conclusion is particularly relevant: 'The use of more rather than fewer theories, within the choice bounded by a researcher's cognitive abilities, offers the promise of a richer picture and understanding of partnerships research as an interdisciplinary pursuit' (Laing et al. forthcoming).

Reading this Report

This report has been written for an industry audience with the idea that most mangers and policy makers have a minimum amount of time to read more in-depth documents.. The authors have taken great care to remove jargon, un-necessary theoretical ramblings and protracted methodological justifications. For the extremely time-poor, reading the title and summary is probably sufficient. For those who have a general involvement or interest in partnerships, the title, summary, Chapter 1 Introduction and Chapter 7 Overview and Recommendations are essential reading. The main audience, for whom this has been written, are those people in State and Commonwealth government departments, tourism organisations and businesses, local and regional government, and non-government organisations that want to realise the benefits of better partnering associated with tourism and protected areas. The whole report should prove useful to these readers; however, the appendices and references are non-essential reading. The last but by no means least potential audience is other researchers. To progress research in this area, this report includes as appendices the questionnaire and interview questions used to collect information on the 21 partnerships studied.

This report has seven chapters, including this one. The next chapter briefly overviews the methods, so that readers can understand how this research was designed, undertaken and analysed. This is followed by a brief chapter detailing the 21 partnerships, selected from around Australia, which provided the backbone for this study. The next three chapters (chapters 4 to 6) present the results and associated discussion. Chapter 4 describes the outcomes from tourism – protected area partnerships. These are outcomes for the partners and the partnership itself, plus those for sustainable tourism more broadly. Chapter 5 then explores the features that contribute to these outcomes. Features of interest included those of the partners themselves, of how they work together, and of the environment or context within which the partnership is operating. It also explores how these features contributed to the partnership and sustainable tourism outcomes. The last of the results-discussion chapters examines the broader factors that contribute to successful and unsuccessful partnerships, problems encountered in partnering and associated solutions, and recommendations about partnerships from partnership members. The final chapter overviews the study findings and concludes with recommendations for partnering success.

Chapter 2

METHODS

The research design and methods for this project were informed by a combination of the literature and input from government agencies and tourism operators via an industry reference group (IRG), to ensure that the research was theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous, while producing results of relevance and value to end-users. The Industry Reference Group, whose members are listed in the acknowledgments, included senior managers from protected area agencies (both State and Commonwealth), state tourism organistions (e.g. Tourism Tasmania), senior operators from the tourism industry and senior staff from peak tourism industry bodies (e.g. Tourism and Transport Forum Australia). The role of this Group in designing and conducting this research is detailed below. This chapter outlines decisions regarding the overall research approach and design, the selection of cases, selection of content for and design of the questionnaire and interviews used to collect the data, design of field procedures for data collection, and methods used to analyse the data.

The project employed an explanatory design using both quantitative and qualitative methods, both of which drew on previous empirical research and theorising to identify potential attributes of and contributors to successful partnerships. This is outlined more fully later in this chapter. While data were collected and analysed in part to provide better explanations of the relationships between the features (sometimes referred to in the literature as elements or factors) and outcomes of partnership success, there was also an exploratory component to the research in that these relationships, particularly in the context of protected area – tourism partnerships, are poorly understood, chiefly with respect to sustainable tourism outcomes. It is for this reason that the design did not include formal hypotheses, but relied on post hoc methods of analysis to 'tease out' relationships.

Case Study Approach

A case study approach was selected as it allowed for explanatory and exploratory approaches. Many previous studies of partnerships have used qualitative case studies, for example, Bingham (1986), Moore and Lee (1999), Leach and Pelkey (2001), Pavlovich (2002), Saxena (2004), Blackman et al. (2004) and Imperial (2005). Specifically in relation to tourism – protected area partnerships, a case study approach has been used by Buckley and Sommer (2001), De Lacy et al. (2002), DITR (2003), Griffin and Vacaflores (2004) and TTF Australia (2004; 2007). While each of these studies has made a valuable contribution to the aggregate pool of knowledge about partnerships, many have focused on a single case or had a restricted (or no) theoretical perspective, limiting the generalisability of the study findings.

The present study used a multiple case study approach in order to achieve both literal and theoretical replication (Yin 2003). Literal replication was achieved by selecting cases where partnership success could be attributed to the cases having similar sets of features that were present and influential (i.e., partner-, process- and context-related features). Theoretical replication, on the other hand, was sought by selecting cases that could produce contrasting results but for predictable reasons: for example, by selecting a few cases where there were problems with the partnerships in order to be able to determine if these problems could be attributed to the absence or under-performance of one or more particular features.

In order to develop a varied and useful set of cases, criteria were developed that represented features identified in past studies as having played potentially important roles in partnership success. A preliminary set of criteria was put to the IRG to consider, modify and expand, which produced a final set of 16 criteria (Table 1) that became the basis for identifying suitable cases for this study. These criteria were then used to select a nation-wide set of cases that offered breadth, depth and the capacity to generalise with some degree of confidence. Middle to senior level managers in the parks and visitor services section of the protected area management agencies in each state and territory were invited to recommend and comment on potential cases. Collectively, a case study set was aimed at favouring the STCRC partner agencies, that is, the states of Victoria (Vic) , Tasmania (Tas) and Western Australia (WA). While New South Wales (NSW) DEC is also a member of the STCRC, it already had its own STCRC-funded partnership project underway (with Southern Cross University), therefore only one case study was sought from NSW.

A preliminary case study set was considered by the IRG with respect to the representativeness and comprehensiveness of the set, the appropriateness of each case, and their judgement of it assessed using the 16 criteria. The research team used this input to assemble a final suite of 21 cases that collectively provided the

desired case study set (described in Chapter 3 and Appendix A). A linear-analytic approach (Yin 2003) was taken to writing up the individual case studies. Data collected from respondents (see below) together with documents about the partnership helped to build a case study profile for each of the 21 cases. Sources included management plans, published reports and reviews of the partnership, and promotional material from operators, tourism organisations, visitor bureaus and websites.

Table 1: Case study selection criteria

Criteria	Collectively the case studies include:
1	Marine and terrestrial partnerships
2	Partnerships with many and few members
3	Government and non-government protected area partnerships with or to provide tourism
4	Partnerships with large and small tour operators/operations
5	Cover different facets of tourism (access, accommodation, attractions, activities and amenities)
6	Partnerships associated with protected areas that have significant infrastructure development through to those with no infrastructure development
7	Formal (legal statutory or written base) and informal (none of these) partnerships
8	Best practice examples from each state and territory (at least one from each) where there has been a successful outcome, and three examples (at least) from each of Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia*
9	At least one partnership from Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia that has had problematic elements
10	At least one Indigenous partnerships case study
11	At least one urban or peri-urban protected area involved in a tourism partnership
12	No duplication of the case studies selected by TTF Australia or Southern Cross University (in their partnership study conducted concurrently to this one, in NSW)
13	Partnerships including regional planning authorities and/or local government
14	Joint planning for and management of protected areas (e.g. trans-boundary parks)
15	Partnerships resulting from community-based initiatives
16	Partnerships in potentially high-conflict locales (e.g. marine parks, peri-urban protected areas, old growth forests and wilderness areas)

***** States in which the protected area agencies (who have been the main initiators of this research project) are members of the STCRC.

Design of Survey Instruments and Field Methods

A thorough review was undertaken of field methods and instruments used in previous protected area – tourism partnership research as well as in the eight theoretical areas (e.g., social capital) outlined in Chapter 1. An early methodological decision was made to use a combination of a mail-out self-completed questionnaire followed by a face-to-face interview to collect information from potential respondents.

The design of the questionnaire was informed by previous research, particularly the theoretical areas of social capital, environmental dispute resolution, institutional analysis and development, and network theory (Laing et al. forthcoming). While there have been a number of studies that have used questionnaire-based methods in these fields, the use of questionnaires to assess the contribution of particular features to partnership success is relatively rare. Nonetheless, the questionnaire for the present project was based on previous theorising as well as empirical evidence about the explanations for success or otherwise.

Based on the eight theoretical perspectives identified in the previous chapter, a self-completed questionnaire was developed that could gauge the contribution of numerous *features* (elements or factors) potentially contributing to successful partnerships, as well as itemising the *outcomes* of partnerships. For example, the emphasis on rules and structure in the institutional analysis and development framework contributed to a number of questionnaire items such as 'Legal arrangements exist to implement the results produced by the partnership' and 'Shared accountability for decision-making'. The relationships that are integral to social capital also influenced items throughout the questionnaire, particularly general partnership outcomes such as 'Improved understanding of other partners' interests' or 'Reduced conflicts between partners'. The items used in the questionnaire were often based on multiple theoretical sources; indeed, the boundaries between the different disciplines and theories can be and are fluid (Laing et al. forthcoming).

Closed-ended questions for the questionnaire were selected for two reasons: to be able to look for patterns and relationships across the range of case studies, and as a basis for the follow-up face-to-face interview survey, to explore in detail the most influential features, among other things. The questionnaire was structured to first collect background information about the respondent, the partnership and their assessment of the partnership, using open-ended questions, and then to gather information on the features that potentially contribute to the success of the partnership (Appendix B).

A total of 44 items were developed to capture partnership *features*, organised into three categories: 12 partner-related (features of the partners / partnership), 20 process-related (features of working together), and 12 context-related (features of the working environment) (Bingham 1986). This approach acknowledges the fundamental contribution of environmental dispute resolution to partnership research while incorporating partnership features identified in other bodies of literature (Laing et al. 2008).

For each of these items potentially contributing to success, respondents were directed to tick a box to say whether the feature was present (yes/no), whether it had changed or stayed the same during the life of the partnership (indicated with arrows), and to gauge its level of importance to the success of the partnership (using a rating scale ranging from 1 – not at all important, to 5 – extremely important). The questionnaire concluded by gathering information about the outcomes of the partnerships, including 14 items relating to general partnership-related outcomes, and an additional 14 items relating specifically to sustainable tourism outcomes. For each of these items, respondents rated their level of importance (similar to the features of success) as well as their level of agreement (i.e. level of satisfaction) that the outcome was achieved (from 1 – strongly disagree, to 5 – strongly agree). A draft version of the instrument was pre-tested in July 2007, finalised, and printed as a 6-page (A4) fold-out colour survey with an introductory letter as the cover page (Appendix B).

As already mentioned, data gathered via this questionnaire-based survey was supplemented with more in-depth data collected using face-to-face interviews. Again, a number of previous studies were examined in an even wider range of fields, including social exchange, social capital, social representation, environmental dispute resolution, stakeholder theory and network theory. A draft interview schedule was developed and pilot-tested using mainly open-ended questions (Appendix C). Although the theoretical material had a less obvious influence on the interview questions than on the content of the questionnaire, the researchers used this material to probe in the interviews as well as to guide the analysis and classification of the responses, in order to continue the efforts in this project to draw on theory to better inform practice.

The interviews effectively probed three topic areas: (a) responses about the *features* of the partnership that the respondent perceived to be the one or two most important in each of the three categories of partner-, process- and context-related features; (b) responses about the *outcomes* of the partnership that the respondent perceived to be most important (both general and sustainable tourism related); and (c) *other comments* relating to the development of the partnership over time, partnership successes and problems, and policy recommendations. For (a) and (b), respondents were also asked why the feature or outcome was important and what enabled it to be present.

The population from which the sample of respondents (for both the questionnaires and interviews) was drawn were the individuals affiliated or very familiar with (e.g. employed by or a member of) one or more of the partnerships, with preference for those involved over a period of time or for other reasons being very familiar with the partnership. As such, the sampling method was purposeful. A member of the research team contacted each respondent by email or telephone to request their participation, to introduce themselves, and to provide background information on the project. An explanatory letter of invitation and a copy of the questionnaire (Appendix B) were then sent to each respondent and an interview appointment time and place arranged. The respondent was requested to complete the questionnaire before the interview, which was conducted face-to-face and in a few cases by phone. Most of the interviews were digitally recorded and notes were taken. A summary of each respondent's responses was sent to them as a validity check and courtesy gesture.

Data Analysis

The results from the questionnaire were entered and analysed using SPSS 15 for Windows. Basic descriptive and bivariate statistics (e.g., frequencies, means, t-tests, correlations) were then produced for the scaled responses and closed-ended questions. Paired t-tests were used to determine the significance of the 'gap' between satisfaction and importance for the 14 general partnership and 14 sustainable tourism outcomes (Oh 2001; Tonge & Moore 2007). To examine the relationships between the features hypothesised as contributing to these partnership and sustainable tourism outcomes, a Pearson's correlation analysis was undertaken. Responses to the features were only included where the respondent noted the feature as being present in the partnership. The

correlation used the importance scores of each of the 44 features against satisfaction with each of the 14 general partnership outcomes and, for these same scores, against satisfaction with each of the 14 sustainable tourism outcomes (a total of 1,232 correlations). Correlations that were significant at the $p<0.5$ level were examined to identify any relationships between features and outcomes that were strong ($r=0.50$ and above) or moderate ($r>0.30$ and $r< 0.50$). Correlations that were weak ($r<0.30$) and/or non-significant ($p>0.5$) were eliminated from further analysis. As the data collected in this study did not meet the assumption of normal distribution, caution is suggested in interpreting the results. Additionally, for the correlation analysis, causality can not be inferred from the results, only that there is an association between the variables.

To assist in analysing the qualitative interview results, Excel spreadsheets were developed. As the first stage of this analysis, the 'what features' and 'what outcomes' questions (from (a) and (b)—see previous section) were organised and entered in the spreadsheet using the pre-existing items (e.g. leadership provided by at least one of the partners) from the questionnaire. For each item, accompanying text from the interview transcripts was also entered in the spreadsheet for why the item was important and what enabled it to be present (Appendix C, Questions 1 to 5). Text excerpts (direct quotes from interviews) were also entered in the spreadsheet for partnership successes and problems, and policy recommendations (Appendix C, Questions 7 to 9). The responses to Question 6 (the movement of the partnership through time) were abandoned, as this question was generally poorly answered and was not central to the aims of this project.

These extracted text blocks formed the unit of analysis and, depending on the length and complexity of a respondent's response to a particular question, one, two, or multiple text blocks were created for each response. In total, about 2,250 blocks of text were extracted from the responses to the eight questions in the interview and then subjected to classification. This classification formed the second stage of analysis, using inductively derived classes informed by the research team's knowledge of the relevant literature (Appendix D). The classes were labelled to capture the latent construct, rather than necessarily using the language of respondents, that is, the labels were literature-driven rather than data-driven.

Initially, one member of the research team analysed and coded each question separately, and after all responses to the relevant text blocks were assigned a preliminary code, these were rationalised to yield a combined pool of 19 classes. Each class was given a label (1 or 2 words) and a brief explanation (a few words or phrases) (Appendix D). Where the content of a text block crossed over multiple classes, the text was coded according to the most useful/explanatory component. Where text blocks were largely descriptive of the related question item, coding was done on the basis of secondary content or implied explanations and, in the absence of such secondary content, coding followed the descriptive content.

Cross-coding validation followed (Richards 2005), with a second team member independently coding every tenth entry for all eight questions, while a third team member coded one-fifth of the text blocks for interview questions 1 through 5. As the level of consistency among the coders was somewhat low (approximately 72% across the first five questions), the original classification was revisited. In most cases, this involved writing a more detailed explanation of the class and, in a few cases, the class names were changed. In addition, each class was clarified by describing its components and relationships with other classes (Appendix D). The refined set of 19 classes (Table 2) was then used by the original research team member to undertake a re-coding of all of the data (the ~2,250 text blocks). A second team member again undertook cross-coding, and this time consistency between the coders was approximately 90%. Inconsistencies were returned to the original team member for checking and resolution. Note that the 19 classes as listed in Table 2 are referred to as factors in the results chapters of this report.

Table 2: Class labels

1	Adaptability & Innovation	11	Leadership
2	Individuals	12	Performance
3	Benefits	13	Processes
4	Commitment	14	Regulations & Agreements
5	Communication	15	Resources
6	Continuity	16	Roles & Powers
7	Direction	17	Transparency & Accountability
8	Expertise	18	Trust
9	Inclusion	19	Understanding
10	Interconnections		

These class labels were applied to most of the interview results. A central objective was to reduce the number of categories from the 44 items describing the features contributing to partnerships, plus the 28 outcomes potentially achievable, to a much smaller more manageable group, namely the 19 classes listed in Table 2. An additional objective was to ensure that these findings drew on inductive labels 'emergent' from these interview results as well as the names 'prescribed' by the features and outcomes as detailed in the questionnaire. The class labels were also used to organise and report on: the factors contributing to the successes and failures of the partnerships; problems encountered along the way and associated solutions; and recommendations by respondents for developing and fostering partnerships and sustainable tourism associated with these partnerships.

Conclusion

Both the questionnaire and interview results are used to analyse the features involved in developing, fostering and maintaining partnerships between those involved in sustainable tourism associated with protected areas, as well as analysing how they contribute to partnership success (and 'failure'). Most but not all of the results from these two methodologies are used in the subsequent chapters. Where they have not been used, it is because they do not add information on partnerships of direct usefulness to the tourism industry or protected area managers.

Chapter 3

PARTNERSHIP CASE STUDIES

Introduction and Background to Partnership Case Studies

A total of 21 partnerships (case studies) provided the basis for this research (Table 3). These partnerships were selected as detailed in Chapter 2, using the criteria summarised in Table 1. Details of how each criterion applied to each partnership are given in Appendix 1. Protected areas that were the focus of these partnerships included world heritage areas, national parks, marine parks, state parks, regional parks, coastal parks, and private land. Also included were partnerships covering protected areas and private land (e.g. Heysen Trail) and historic buildings (e.g. Ross Female Factory). All but one partnership (Savannah Guides) had a protected area agency as a partner, and generally the agency was the instigating and administrative partner.

This chapter describes these 21 partnerships, through brief case study profiles. The chapter concludes with details on the affiliations of respondents and the number of respondents to the questionnaire and interviews.

Table 3: Partnership case studies

Partnership case study	State
1. Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve	Australian Capital Territory
2. Australian Alps National Parks	Australian Capital Territory/Victoria/New South Wales
3. Savannah Guides	Northern Territory
4. Lamington National Park – O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat	Queensland
5. Deep Creek Conservation Park	South Australia
6. Gluepot Reserve	South Australia
7. Heysen Trail	South Australia
8. Cradle Mountain Huts	Tasmania
9. Gordon River Cruises	Tasmania
10. Ross Female Factory	Tasmania
11. Dolphin Tours – Port Phillip Bay	Victoria
12. Great Ocean Walk	Victoria
13. Mount Buffalo Chalet	Victoria
14. Queenscliff Harbour Redevelopment	Victoria
15. Bibbulmun Track	Western Australia
16. Jurabi Turtle Interpretation Centre	Western Australia
17. Ningaloo Reef Retreat	Western Australia
18. Penguin Island Conservation Park	Western Australia
19. Purnululu National Park Safari Camps	Western Australia
20. Rockingham Lakes Regional Park	Western Australia
21. Walpole-Nornalup National Park – WOW Wilderness EcoCruises	Western Australia

Of the 21 partnerships, the majority were terrestrial, with only one being solely marine-based (Dolphin Tours – Port Phillip Bay). Two partnerships, however, had marine and terrestrial aspects. Most of the partnerships had less than five partners, with the majority being between a protected area agency and a commercial tourism operator. Five partnerships had more than five partners, with one of these having over 30 partners (Great Ocean Walk). The majority of the partnerships had been created since the late 1990s, some within the past five years, and a minority were very recently initiated. A few partnerships had been in place since the 1970s or earlier (e.g. Lamington National Park – O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat). Most of the partnerships were identified as being in an 'established' phase, where partners had established a good relationship working towards common goals.

The focus of the partnerships was diverse. Some combined a tourism attraction with monitoring impacts, while others partnered to manage an area as well as providing interpretation for visitors. Six of the partnerships were between a protected area agency and an in-park accommodation provider (e.g. Ningaloo Reef Retreat); five were primarily to provide maintenance, environmental monitoring and to enhance access (e.g. Gluepot Reserve); and four included boat tours operating within protected areas (e.g. Gordon River Cruises). Other partnerships provided management for parks, with 'friends of' groups or other government organisations (e.g. Rockingham Lakes Regional Park); and collaboration between tourism operators and protected area agencies (e.g. Penguin Island Conservation Park).

The majority of the partnerships were 'formal', with memoranda of understanding, specific licences, mandated roles and requirements for inclusion, membership requirements, or marketing agreements. Membership could be readily identified as those who were signatories to the formal agreements. Whilst these formal agreements provided a foundation for respective partnerships, for many of the case studies, the actual partnership extended beyond the documented requirements. Partnerships that were less formally-based still had agreements about their scope and aims. The majority of the partnerships were identified as successful, although what was successful was often subjectively determined by the protected area agencies selecting cases.

Collectively, the 21 partnerships provide a relatively representative profile of tourism – protected area partnerships. The scale and scope of the partnerships, their varying longevity, and the partnerships' success, or lack thereof, provide a foundation for assessment of the factors contributing to successful partnerships and a means to foster success. A number of the partnerships were identified as 'best practice'. The agencies involved in protected area tourism in Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania were asked to suggest such cases. This criteria and its allocation are not explored further in this technical report, given that not all states were asked to similarly apply this criterion and nominate cases, and also due to concerns regarding the use of the term 'best practice' (Bergin-Seers, Breen, Jago & Carlsen 2003).

Case Study Profiles

A profile of each case study (partnership) was constructed to provide much-needed background to the results that follow. Each profile includes: partnership title (name of case); protected area providing the tourism focus; location of partnership; tourism significance of the partnership; partnership start date; and purpose of the partnership. For each partnership, the title includes the central reason why the partnership was selected for this study. For example, the Australian Alps National Parks trans-state cooperative management partnership is included as an example of joint management, as well as meeting a number of other criteria (Appendix 1).

1. Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve – Formal Partnership

Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, in the Australian Capital Territory and managed by the ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services (Parks, Conservation and Lands), became part of the Australian Alps National Parks in 2008. Tidbinbilla has an abundance of Aboriginal and European settlement cultural heritage and many species of wildlife, including the eastern grey kangaroo, possums, koalas, 164 bird species, and the Bogong moth. The Reserve is used for a variety of recreation purposes by visitors, including bushwalking and cycling. There is a visitor centre on site with displays, a gift shop and a wildlife veterinary centre.

In October 2007, the ACT Government signed an agreement to create a partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), a non-profit organisation. The partnership is to develop and implement a volunteer interpreter program and deliver a range of services on behalf of Parks, Conservation and Lands, with tourism as well as conservation benefits. In July 2008, trained CVA volunteers took over management of the Visitor Centre and collected fees on behalf of the park agency. CVA volunteers also deliver park interpretation to visitors at the Visitor Centre and in stations along trails, develop tourism product, and jointly seek grants and funding opportunities with Parks, Conservation and Lands.

2. Australian Alps National Parks – Joint Management of Protected Area Partnership

The Australian Alps National Parks (AANP) covers 1.6 million hectares and incorporates a number of national parks, a wilderness area and nature reserves in and crossing the borders of New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria. This fragile ecosystem is home to Australia's highest mountain, Mount Kosciuszko (2,228m), iconic Australian fauna and around 700 species of plants. AANP are also repositories of cultural heritage, including Aboriginal rock shelters, the Mount Buffalo Chalet, and space tracking stations connected with the Apollo moon landings. The AANP have been managed in partnership from 1986, when a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the three State and Territory Governments and the Commonwealth

Government. The AANP MOU is overseen by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, consisting of a senior representative from each of the four government jurisdictions from the respective parks agency and the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. Initiatives of the AANP include the development of tourist maps; preserving sites of cultural significance; and producing histories of the Alps and construction of trails, including the Australian Alps Walking Track, which runs through the States and Territory.

3. Savannah Guides – Non-government-based Partnership

Savannah Guides Limited was established in 1988 as a network (partnership) of professional tour guides servicing the tropical savannahs of northern Queensland, Northern Territory and the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The organisation was established as a not-for-profit company with the purpose of providing access for tourists to unique natural and cultural features on private, public and leased land (Savannah Guides 2008).

To become a Savannah Guide, individuals and enterprises must complete two training schools, meet strict standards of operation, and abide by a professional code of conduct. The objectives of the Savannah Guides and their member operators include maintaining a network of professionalism, benchmarking best practice principles, developing recognised standards of operation, and marketing the region sustainably. The partners work closely together and are involved in the development of policies. Savannah Guides work with local communities, and tourism as well as environmental organisations, to promote ecologically sustainable tourism principles, enhance people's lifestyles, and protect and conserve the region's natural and cultural assets.

4. Lamington National Park – O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat – Partnership with Few Members

Lamington National Park is located in the Gold Coast Hinterland, approximately one hour inland from Surfers Paradise, Queensland. Declared a national park in 1915, it is part of the Gondwana Rainforest of Australia World Heritage Area (EPA/QPWS 2008). Lamington National Park caters for overnight stays in the form of camping and resort style accommodation. O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, which opened in 1926, is an accommodation provider situated within Lamington National Park (O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat 2008). The two partners are the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat.

The aim of the partnership is to work together to improve the presentation of visitor facilities and provide interpretation in the Park. The operator also provides labour, assisting the Parks and Wildlife Service with maintenance in lieu of operating fees. The partners have developed and adhere to a deed of agreement for the accommodation provider's commercial tour operations within the Park.

5. Deep Creek Conservation Park – Infrastructure-based Partnership

Deep Creek Conservation Park, on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, offers opportunities to visit forest, heath and clifftop habitats overlooking the Southern Ocean. The Park is a two hour drive from Adelaide, allowing ready access by the urban population. It is home to over 400 native plant species and around 120 species of birds, making it a popular destination for photography and bird watching, as well as bushwalking. The managing agency is South Australia's Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH), through National Parks and Wildlife.

The partnership is between DEH and Southern Ocean Retreats, which started in 1993. Southern Ocean Retreats, a private operator, provides accommodation in the Park including campsites, a range of cottages, homesteads and eco-lodges and has a signed lease in place with DEH. The partnership's purpose is to provide short-term holiday accommodation to visitors in the Park with minimal disturbance to the environment.

6. Gluepot Reserve – Non-government-based Partnership

Gluepot is a 54,000 ha reserve located 64 km north of the Waikerie, a small town on the Murray River in South Australia. The reserve provides opportunities for bird watching, camping and walking. Gluepot also includes a colourful landscape of semi-desert and mallee, and 12 vegetation communities, which contain 7 rare plants. There are 14 signposted walking trails covering more than 100 km, and a Botanical Trail with key species labelled. Until 1977, Gluepot was privately leased as a sheep grazing property. Birds Australia, together with 2,400 people and organisations, has since purchased the property. Gluepot is also a partner in the Riverland Biosphere Reserve.

Gluepot is almost entirely managed by volunteers and has a variety of associations with other organisations. These include the state government departments of Environment and Heritage, Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation and the South Australian Tourism Commission. Gluepot also has working relationships with the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and numerous informal linkages with

community and conservation organisations.

7. Heysen Trail – Multiple Partner Partnership

The Heysen Trail, constructed between 1978 and 1993, runs from Cape Jervis on the Fleurieu Peninsula, south of Adelaide, to Parachilna Gorge in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia. The trail is 1,200 km long, spanning landscapes of mountains, vineyards and coastal regions, and passes through national parks, conservation parks and state forests, as well as towns and private landholdings. The Trail is managed by the SA Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH).

There are essentially two partnerships associated with this Trail. The first is between DEH, as the protected area agency, and the Friends of the Heysen Trail, a non-profit group of volunteers who maintain the Trail, promote bushwalking and conduct guided walks along the Trail for members and the community. This partnership has existed since 1986. The second partnership is between DEH and private landowners, who have licensed parts of their land for use by the Trail. The duration of the partnerships between DEH and the various private landowners varies according to the date of the relevant licence agreement. The first licence agreements date back to 1985. The purpose of the partnership is to allow the Trail to run across private land and protect landowners from injury or loss claims incurred by walkers while traversing the land forming part of the Trail.

8. Cradle Mountain Huts – Formal Partnership

The 60km Overland Track, within Tasmania's World Heritage Area, runs from Cradle Mountain to Lake Saint Clair. The walk is one of the best-known and patronised walking tracks in Australia. Walkers can arrange their own itinerary, staying in public huts or campsites, or complete the Track with the assistance of a private operator, Cradle Mountain Huts, who offer six-day guided walks, with guests staying in private hut accommodation.

The partnership is between the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service and Cradle Huts Pty Ltd, as the sole private accommodation provider along the Overland Track. It is a formal partnership based on a written agreement. It has been operating since the 1987 to 1988 season. The purpose of this partnership is to provide visitors to the Overland Track with a fully guided bushwalk and hut-based tourism experience, while minimising environmental impact to the fragile alpine environment.

9. Gordon River Cruises – Partnership with Few Members

The Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park was established in 1981 to protect parts of the Gordon and Franklin Rivers from the construction of a hydro-electric dam. The area is now part of the Tasmania Wilderness World Heritage Area, and contains a number of Aboriginal heritage sites, and rare species of plants and animals.

Cruise boats, from the village of Strahan, take visitors along the Gordon River. Activities include a visit to Sarah Island, a 19th century penal settlement, and a short sojourn through the rainforest along a boardwalk.

The partnership is between the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service and two private cruise boat operators: Gordon River Cruises, owned by Federal Hotels and Resorts Tasmania and World Heritage Cruises, owned and operated by the Grining family. The latter has been running cruise boats on the Gordon River since 1896. The partnership began in the 1980s when the first commercial licences were granted by the Parks and Wildlife Service. The purpose of the partnership is to provide a visitor wilderness experience, while protecting the region and sustaining a viable local tourism industry. A secondary purpose of the partnership is to effectively manage and resolve issues pertaining to tourism before they become political ones.

10. Ross Female Factory – Community-based Partnership

Ross Female Factory, the most archaeologically intact female convict site in Australia, is located in the small town of Ross, along the Midland Highway in Tasmania. The female convict factory operated between 1847 and 1854, including a hiring depot, an overnight station for female convicts, a lying-in hospital, and a nursery. There is little infrastructure on the site apart from the Overseer's Cottage, which contains a museum. In 1980, management of the site was transferred to the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service and the site was placed on the Register of the National Estate.

This formal partnership, underpinned by a written agreement, is between the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service and the Tasmanian Wool Centre, as joint managers of the site. The Tasmanian Wool Centre, a non-profit heritage and tour organisation based in Ross, runs tours to the site, amongst other activities. The partnership was established in the mid-1990s, when major excavation of the site first took place. The purpose of the partnership is to develop links with other historic sites in Ross, provide an avenue for community input, and to facilitate the day to day management of the site.

11. Dolphin Tours – Port Phillip Bay – Marine Partnership

Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne, Victoria, hosts a threatened population of bottlenose dolphins. The population has a low number of females and is threatened by human activities. Although the Bay is not a protected area, there is a dolphin sanctuary zone in Ticonderoga Bay, near Point Nepean, at the mouth of Port Phillip Bay. Three operators conduct dolphin tours in the Bay. In the late 1990s, impacts on the dolphins were significant and the industry implemented a voluntary code to control dolphin swim operations. However, although one operator demonstrated high environmental standards, the code was unsuccessful. Finally, a project control group was initiated consisting of Parks Victoria, Tourism Alliance, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), and Tourism Victoria.

DSE, responsible for policy and regulations, is now in partnership with Parks Victoria to administer a licensing system to assess applications for dolphin swim tours, monitor compliance, and provide ongoing advice and support. A maximum of four tour permits, valid for two years, may be issued subject to mandatory criteria. The permit system has evolved into a genuine partnership between Parks Victoria and operators, working together to reduce impacts on dolphins, monitor dolphin behaviour and provide more enriching underwater visitor experiences emphasising the whole dolphin habitat.

12. Great Ocean Walk – Partnership including Regional Authorities

The Great Ocean Walk is a 104km coastal walking experience starting at Apollo Bay and going through to Glenample on Victoria's southwestern coast. The walk passes through the Great Otway and Port Campbell National Parks, whilst skirting the edge of Twelve Apostles Marine National Park. The walk also passes the offshore Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary.

The partnership was started in 2005, initiated by Parks Victoria (PV), and supported by Great Ocean Road Marketing (GORM), the macro region's tourism marketing organisation. The partnership now has 33 partners, and two external supporters in the form of Shipwreck Coast Tourism and Otways Tourism, the two local tourism associations of the area. The partners, besides PV and GORM, are small businesses including accommodation providers, tour operators and other related services, such as shuttle and taxi services. The partnership was started to provide opportunities for economic growth, mainly through collaborative marketing to visitors, using a key PV icon walk as the focus.

The partnership is relatively formal, with a marketing program paid for by members as the central membership document. Economic, functional and social relationships have been created through the partnership which extend beyond the marketing program.

13. Mount Buffalo Chalet – Infrastructure-based Partnership

Mount Buffalo Chalet, built by the Victorian Government in 1910, is an iconic landmark within Mount Buffalo National Park, a national park since 1898. The Park offers a rich cultural and natural heritage, as a traditional Aboriginal meeting place, and for summer and winter recreation. The Chalet was leased and operated by the Burbank Group until January 2007, when trading ceased due to the 2006 bushfires, as well as the need to upgrade the site. The Burbank Group has continued negotiations with Parks Victoria to develop the site, including ensuring adequate infrastructure such as water, energy and roads. A Mount Buffalo Community Reference Group has also been set up to assist with redevelopment strategies and ensure local consultation takes place.

The partnership, set up in 2007, is primarily between Parks Victoria, the Alpine Shire (local municipality), the Mount Buffalo Community Reference Group and Burbank Group. Additional minor partners include Tourism Victoria and the Victorian National Parks Association, who have been involved in the consultation process. The purpose of the partnership is to provide advice on the viability of redevelopment and regeneration of leased commercial tourist facilities on Mount Buffalo, including Mount Buffalo Chalet.

14. Queenscliff Harbour Redevelopment – Local Government Partnership

Queenscliff Harbour on Bellarine Peninsula abuts Swan Bay in Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park, Victoria. Port Phillip Heads Marine Park is used for snorkelling and diving by a large number of visitors, due to its close proximity to the Melbourne metropolitan region, and encompasses a diversity of marine flora and fauna, particularly migratory wader birds. The Harbour was proposed to be upgraded to accommodate growing demand for boating facilities, including construction of access roads, improved car parking, expansion of the marina and a new retail precinct.

A formal public–private partnership was established in 2004, involving Parks Victoria, the protected area agency, and a private developer, Queenscliff Harbour Pty Ltd, which won a tender to redevelop, operate and lease the Harbour. The third partner in the project is the Borough of Queenscliff, the local municipal

government. The Borough has been part of the project from the beginning, when invited by Parks Victoria to provide recommendations for the Harbour upgrade, and assist with evaluating the tenders. The project has been controversial, with some members of the local community opposing the redevelopment of the Harbour due to environmental concerns and fear of losing the local character of the town.

15. Bibbulmun Track – Multiple Partner Partnership

The Bibbulmun Track was originally opened in 1979 as a long distance 1,000 km walking trail, from Kalamunda, in the Perth hills, to Albany, Western Australia (Bibbulmun Track Foundation 2008a). In 1998 the Track was reinvented and reopened, following only some of its original route. The Track meanders through national parks, state forest and private land.

In the mid 1990s, various management structures were considered by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (now the WA Department of Environment and Conservation) and in 1997 'The Friends of the Bibbulmun Track' (renamed 'The Bibbulmun Track Foundation' in 2002) was established, with responsibility for managing the Track. DEC is represented on the Foundation Board. As such, the key partners are the Foundation and DEC.

The partnership is formal, with a memorandum of understanding between DEC and the Foundation outlining the management obligations and responsibilities of each (Bibbulmun Track Foundation 2008b). Other outcomes of the partnership have been community education and participation, developing tourism opportunities, advocating the protection of areas surrounding the Track, promotion and marketing of the Track, and employment and training opportunities.

16. Jurabi Turtle Interpretation Centre – Community-based Initiative

The Jurabi Coastal Park is an important nesting area for three threatened species of turtles: Green, Loggerhead and Hawksbill turtles. The park is adjacent to Ningaloo Marine Park and lies on the northern boundary of Cape Range National Park (Macgregor, Hogstrom & Mau 2004). Jurabi Coastal Park, which includes the Interpretation Centre, is jointly vested in the Shire of Exmouth and the Executive Director of the Department of Environment and Conservation. The Interpretation Centre is about 18 km by road from Exmouth, Western Australia.

The partnerships associated with the Jurabi Turtle Centre are complex and overlapping. The primary tourism partnership is between eight groups: West Australian Department of Environment and Conservation, Shire of Exmouth, Cape Conservation Group, WWF-Australia, Ningaloo Turtle Program, Ningaloo Reef Retreat, Gnulli Working Group (representing Aboriginal interests in the area), and Central West TAFE. The partnership began in 2003 and is informal, although it has elements based on formal agreements. The purposes of the partnership are managing the Jurabi Turtle Centre and associated turtle watching and conservation activities and providing interpretive material at the Centre, including interpretive talks and guided tours.

17. Ningaloo Reef Retreat – Formal Partnership

Ningaloo Reef, stretching 300 km along the west coast of Australia, is the largest fringing coral reef in Australia (MPRA & DCLM 2005). The diversity of coral, the world's largest fish (the whale shark), whales, dugongs, turtles and manta rays and the ease with which the Reef can be accessed make Ningaloo an increasingly popular tourist destination (Richards, Mau & Bedford 2006). The Retreat, protected by the Cape Range National Park and Ningaloo Marine Park, is located 1,200 km north of Perth, and an hour's drive from Exmouth, Western Australia.

This partnership is between Ningaloo Reef Retreat and the WA Department of Environment and Conservation. The Retreat, a wilderness safari camp, was established in 1997, as was the partnership. Since the 1997 licence approval, Ningaloo Reef Retreat has changed its business model and the licence has changed to a five-year E class (i.e. exclusive to this operator). The Retreat is only accessible by foot, in the middle of Cape Range National Park and on the edge of Ningaloo Marine Park. It includes five safari tents, a lounge and dining tent, and kitchen. There is also a library and novel exchange facility (Ningaloo Reef Retreat 2007).

18. Penguin Island Conservation Park – Terrestrial and Marine Partnership

Penguin Island Conservation Park, recognised as an important habitat for little penguins (CALM n.d.), is located approximately 42 km south of Perth, Western Australia. The WA Department of Environment and Conservation manage the Island and the surrounding Shoalwater Island Marine Park. Collectively, they are recognised as one of the State's most important ecologically sustainable nature based tourism destinations (DEC 2008a). Penguin Island offers a variety of tourism activities to visitors, including the Penguin Experience – Island Discovery Centre.

Established in 2005, the partnership is between DEC and a licensed tour operator, offering a ferry service in conjunction with an entry ticket to the Discovery Centre. The operator holds an exclusive E class licence to operate within the Marine Park and access Penguin Island. This is a formal partnership, based on the licensing arrangements. The partners recognise the need for the partnership as a way of achieving conservation and protection of Penguin Island's unique flora and fauna, and to ensure a sustainable visitor services experience.

19. Purnululu National Park Safari Camps – Partnership with Indigenous Involvement

Purnululu 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 Safari Camps are situated in the National Park, in the Kimberley region, 250 km south of Kununurra, in north-west Western Australia. Owned and operated by Australian Pacific Tourism and East Kimberley Tours, they offer camping style accommodation, as well as campsites for the companies' four wheel drive-based tours, together with independent travellers.

The Purnululu National Park Safari Camps partnership was established in 2004 with the aim of developing commercial safari style camps for visitors to the Park. The partnership is comprised of the two operators, DEC and representatives from the Indigenous Purnululu Park Council. The partnership is formal, based upon licence requirements. To allow for commercial activities, including tourism, E class licences were required and issued. The commercial partners contribute to sustainability criteria which are part of their licence conditions.

20. Rockingham Lakes Regional Park – Urban/Peri-Urban Partnership and Community-based Initiative

Rockingham Lakes Regional Park (RLRP) is situated within the City of Rockingham, approximately 45 km south of Perth, Western Australia. The park includes lakes, coastal stretches, a scientific park, and Paganoni Woodlands. Of special note, RLRP protects prehistoric thrombolites, ephemeral lakes, woodlands and wetlands. The park offers a broad selection of activities ranging from boardwalks, walk trails, underwater snorkel adventures and land yacht sailing (DEC 2008b).

RLRP is one of eight peri-urban regional parks arranged around Perth and managed by the WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), most with a number of other partners. These parks are managed for conservation, recreation and landscape values, including the provision of accessible recreational areas (DEC 2006).

RLRP's management is shared by DEC, as the conservation agency, and the City of Rockingham. The partnership is in the form of an advisory committee, comprising representatives from the City Council, DEC, volunteer groups, businesses and recreational groups. DEC has the legal mandate to manage the area but additionally provides support, technical advice and assistance to the various community groups involved as partners. Community involvement in specific projects is encouraged by the partners and events are developed and advertised to ensure a greater uptake.

21. Walpole Nornalup National Park – WOW Wilderness EcoCruises – Government-based Partnership

Walpole-Nornalup National Park is located in the south west of Western Australia. Walpole-Nornalup National Park is known for its vegetation, featuring unique plant species. Also within the park are the Frankland River and the Nornalup Inlet's beaches and cliffs. Part of the Walpole-Nornalup National Park is the Nuyts Wilderness Area. The WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) has the legal mandate to manage the park.

The partnership is between the regional DEC office and WOW Wilderness EcoCruises. WOW Wilderness EcoCruises is a family-owned operator, running daily guided boat cruises with a strong focus on interpretation and education since 1994. The objective of WOW Wilderness EcoCruises is to instil a sense of appreciation, stewardship and understanding of the environment to their customers (WOW Wilderness EcoCruises 2008). The partnership's aim is the conservation of the area, providing benefits for the local community as well as conducting and funding future research. They collaborate on non-commercial type projects, including their joint educational workshops at local schools, as well as a trust fund set up by WOW Wilderness EcoCruises and managed by DEC for priority projects.

Questionnaire Returns and Interviews

Having identified and described these partnerships, respondents were contacted and surveyed as detailed in the

previous chapter. The response rate for the questionnaire was 80% (25 non-responses), with 100 questionnaires returned from the partners in the 21 case studies (partnerships). Interviews were conducted with 97 of these respondents, following on from completion of the questionnaires. Respondents included those operating commercial tourism ventures, regional and state tourism organisations, protected area managers, government agencies (not involved in protected areas or tourism), local government, non-government organisations (including 'Friends of…' and environmental organisations), local communities, Indigenous people, and universities (Table 4). The information in this table was derived from the responses to Question 1a in the questionnaires (Appendix B).

Table 4: Affiliation of respondents

Affiliation	No.
Commercial tourism business (including accommodation, tours etc)	28
Regional tourism organisation	3
State tourism organisation	2
Protected area government agency	38
Government agency (not protected area or tourism)	3
Local government authority	6
Non-government organisation (including "Friends of…, environmental organisations)	9
Community (including volunteers)	5
Indigenous	1
University	2
Total	97

Conclusion

Collectively, these case studies provide a representative selection of tourism – protected area partnerships, covering the varying scale, scope, longevity, and success (or lack thereof) of such arrangements in Australia. Included are partnerships: centered on infrastructure, tours and activities; involving the local community and non-government organisations; with active involvement by local government authorities and regional and state tourism organisations; including Indigenous people; and for almost all of these partnerships, having one or more members from protected area agencies.

Chapter 4

OUTCOMES FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Tourism partnerships associated with protected areas can produce a variety of outcomes, many of them beneficial to those involved, the tourism industry more generally, local communities and the protected area itself. This chapter reports on what partners had to say, through the questionnaires and interviews, about the outcomes from their partnership that they thought were important and whether they felt they were achieved. This reporting first covers the outcomes for the partnership and its partners, with the questionnaire results followed by those from the interviews. Next, the chapter covers the outcomes from the partnerships for sustainable tourism in protected areas. Previous partnership research has not specifically explored these outcomes for sustainable tourism from partnering. The interview results again follow those from the questionnaires. A combined discussion follows, with the intention of placing the results in the broader context of previous research and practice.

Partnership Outcomes

Outcomes for partnerships range from achieving the partnerships' purpose to improvements in relationships. In between are a broad range of other benefits such as improved information for protected area management, stimulating innovation, and improved understanding of other partners and their interests. Economic outcomes are clearly a central feature of partnerships, including economic gains by partners and economic gains for protected area management as well as improved access to funding.

Questionnaire Results

Respondents were provided with a list of 14 outcomes and asked to indicate the importance and level of satisfaction with each (Appendix B, Question 7). All outcomes were identified as somewhat to extremely important, with mean scores of 3.62 (where '3' is somewhat important) to 4.50 (where '5' is extremely important). The same scores at the higher end of the scale resulted for satisfaction—whether the outcome has been achieved—with mean scores of 3.70 (where '3' is neutral) to 4.15 (where '5' is strongly agree) (Table 5). The most important outcomes were: the purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved; benefits from the partnership to all partners; and improved information available for protected area management. These were also the outcomes with the highest satisfaction scores.

In recent years, researchers have been using the 'performance quality gap' (Baker & Crompton 2000) to draw attention to aspects of visitor management associated with protected areas that require attention (Oh 2001; Tonge & Moore 2007). Such an approach has not been applied to partnership research but offers the potential to illustrate where partnering is performing well or conversely requires attention. Importance-satisfaction analysis (ISA) (Tonge & Moore 2007) was applied here by subtracting the importance mean from the satisfaction mean for each item. A total of 10 of the 14 items had a negative gap value, with 6 of these statistically significant (Table 5). These negative values indicate that partners' level of satisfaction with achievement of outcomes was less than the importance they were assigning to them. Such a result is, however, not a great cause for concern, given the high satisfaction scores evident from these results.

Table 5: Importance of partnership outcomes and satisfaction with their achievement from the questionnaires

Item	Satisfaction Mean	Importance Mean	Gap
Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved	4.15	4.50	-0.35*
Benefits from the partnership to all partners	4.12	4.32	-0.2*
Improved information available for protected area management	3.98	4.07	-0.09
Improved relationships with other partners	3.89	4.01	-0.12
Improved understanding of other partners' interests	3.99	3.97	0.02
Reduced conflicts between partners	3.66	3.93	-0.27*
Stimulation of innovative approaches	3.89	3.92	-0.03
Improved access to funding for the site/protected area	3.56	3.89	-0.33*
Improved access to decision-making	3.53	3.78	-0.25*
Economic gain for protected area management	3.70	3.77	-0.07
Improved access to funding for the organisation, business and/or community	3.43	3.77	-0.34*
Economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry	4.09	3.76	0.33*
Strengthening of organisational/business capacity	3.75	3.66	0.09
New relationships with influential people and/or organisations	3.70	3.62	0.08

* Significant at $p < 0.05$ and calculated using paired t-tests.

Economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry was the only outcome where satisfaction was significantly higher than importance, with a positive gap of 0.33 (Table 5). The other three outcomes with positive gaps were: strengthening of organisational/business capacity; new relationships with influential people and/or organisations; and improved understanding of other partners' interests.

Interview Results

During the interview stage of the research, respondents were asked to reflect on their answers to the questionnaire, identify the two to three most important outcomes from their partnership and explain why they were important and what enabled them to be achieved (Appendix C, Questions 4a, b & c). The outcomes most frequently identified as important were: the purpose of the partnership achieved or being achieved: benefits from the partnership to all partners; and improved information available for protected area management (Table 6). These results mirror completely the three outcomes with the highest mean scores for importance identified through the questionnaires (Table 7).

In terms of achieving the purpose of the partnership, achieving the desired outcome was paramount, sometimes encapsulated in an initial memorandum of understanding. Central to this desired outcome was realising an overall goal. For example, one respondent said 'If you do not achieve what you set out to do, where are you?' and another thought that 'In reality the total outcome is greater than the sum of parts'.

Other respondents maintained that achieving the goal was necessary to facilitate understanding. In a partnership involving two government departments, a representative of one said:

> 'Being aware of what each partner does and where and why it is done and the limitations to how they go about their day to day business. For example, when there is conflict within the Department of […] between the two ends of the government spectrum of being environmentally friendly or sustainable and commercially active people can face "brick walls". Both departments need to be aware that this happens, not be critical about it and understand that it is there and it needs to be considered and addressed when it arises'.

Goal achievement was also important because of the commitment of partners. One respondent said:

> 'Not a partnership otherwise. It has survived 21 years and so much can change over that time, so it is amazing to think that it is this ongoing thing'.

Almost as important as achieving the purpose of the partnership was the provision of benefits to all partners. These benefits provided direction and drove the partnership:

'Got to have win-win, otherwise someone is carrying the can. Some of the wins for the environment aren't as noticeable as others. If cottages are maintained well, it attracts a different clientele – someone who is not likely to damage the Parks. We get revenue and they take on the role of managing weeds and dealing with feral animals. They manage people in a small area which is existing cleared land and provide good infrastructure'.

Table 6: Most important outcomes of partnerships from the interviews

Outcome	No. of responses	Contributing factors
Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved	37	Direction Understanding Interconnection/ Communication
Benefits from the partnership to all partners	36	Performance Understanding Direction
Improved information available for protected area management	15	Expertise Performance Understanding
Economic gain for protected area management	14	Performance Resources
Improved relationships with other partners	14	Direction Interconnection Inclusion
Economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry	13	Performance Expertise Communication
Stimulation of innovative approaches	12	Interconnection Leadership
Reduced conflicts between partners	11	Direction Inclusion Communication
Strengthening of organisational/business capacity	7	Roles & Powers Inclusion Commitment
Improved understanding of other partners' interests	7	Communication Direction Commitment
Improved access to funding for the organisation, business or community	4	Resources
New relationships with influential people and/or organisations	4	Direction Understanding Performance
Improved access to funding for the site/protected area	3	Communication Understanding Performance
Improved access to decision-making	2	Direction
Total	**179**	

Gaining benefits gave partners a sense of achievement, created beneficial flow-on effects and was essential for maintenance of the partnership:

'The operators provide iconic experiences and introduce clients to the Park who might otherwise not go there and who get to spend five nights in the wilderness. These people then become the advocates for the Park to those who haven't had the opportunity to visit it. This spreads world heritage values. These experiences are the "sizzle that sells the sausage". Important that it be done sustainably but provides that opportunity for educational and awareness outcomes. Other benefits are the economic outcomes from employing staff and

> the licence fees, which are ploughed back into the Park for things like interpretation and upgrading tracks. Without that income, we could not achieve this'.

A range of benefits, such as increased satisfaction, agreement and reduction of conflict between partners, developing new relationships and funding also accrued. Partnerships facilitated working with a wider range of people. As one respondent stated:

> 'It's important to feel part of it, that you are contributing to the program. If you do this, you have developed new relationships and generated new funding'.

The outcome afforded the third highest frequency from the interviews in terms of importance, was improved information available for protected area management. For many respondents improved information enhanced understanding of the natural area, in particular about impacts on particular species. 'Sharing information (had) benefits through not reinventing the wheel all the time' and led to better decisions. Better information also added to visitor experiences, to the community's knowledge of the area and to better management approaches.

Table 7: Comparison of results from questionnaires and interviews regarding most important outcomes of the partnerships

OUTCOMES OF PARTNERSHIPS	Overall importance ranking based on...		Comparisons of rankings
	...respondents' mean scores (questionnaires, n=100)*	...frequency with which they were identified as top 2 or 3 (interviews, n=97)*	
Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved	1	1	Identical
Benefits from the partnership to all partners	2	2	Identical
Improved information available for protected area management	3	3	Identical
Improved relationships with other partners	4	5	Top 5 in both
Improved understanding of other partners' interests	5	9	---

* These are ranked out of 14 given that 14 outcomes were listed in the questionnaire.

The simplest way to summarise the interview results for the overarching factors contributing to the partnership outcomes (i.e. the third column in Table 6) is to use the 'classes' listed in Table 2 (and Appendix D). For example, for the outcome, 'Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved', the 37 responses about this outcome were reduced to a small number of classes, labelled based on their content. For this outcome, the most common classes or contributing factors were direction, understanding, interconnection and communication. Only the three most frequently allocated classes are included for each outcome in Table 6 (occasionally up to four where the last class had an equal frequency with another).

From Table 5 it is very clear that most factors contribute to more than one outcome and that the most sensible way to discuss these contributions is using the factors themselves and how they contribute to a number of outcomes. For example, 'understanding' contributed to 5 of the 14 outcomes. To determine which factors warranted the greatest attention in the results reported here, the number of times each was used to describe a text excerpt from the interviews was calculated to illustrate the relative importance of the 10 most frequently allocated factors (Table 8). Those that were allocated most frequently when coding these text excerpts were performance, direction, communication and understanding, each of which is discussed in more detail in the following sub-sections.

Table 8: Factors that contribute to partnership outcomes (from the interviews)

Factors	Number of responses
Performance	22
Direction	19
Communication	17
Understanding	16
Interconnection	12
Inclusion	10
Resources	9
Commitment	8
Roles & powers	8
Expertise	7

Performance

Performance of the partnership was a major contributing factor in providing benefits to partners, improving information for protected area management, and providing economic gain for the tourism industry and for the protected area. The economic gain from partnerships was described as being essential for the survival of the protected area and allowed other goals to be achieved. One respondent said:

> 'If you've got money flowing in, and it's linked back to what's happening—training and visitors—then you're likely to get further support for the protected area. There's a hugely increased awareness in turtle conservation in this town through the volunteer monitoring program and the turtle tour guiding'.

Economic gain was also necessary 'for the sustainability of the area—if the area itself isn't managed in a sustainable way it is not possible for a business to be successful' and to maintain the quality of visitor experiences. Economic outcomes were improved by being able to conduct tourism operations in protected areas and 'give back to the Park and Park Council', by 'greater exposure and marketing from being a member of the partnership'. and providing 'combined tour packages which benefit more than one operator and/or region'.

Economic gain for the protected area was closely linked to gains for tourism operators. Being part of a partnership gave operators the ability to run tours in parks, and benefit from joint marketing. One operator stated:

> 'Well, I'm in business so if there's no economic gain, I can't see the point of it'.

According to some, it also meant that other goals of the partnership could be achieved:

> 'Need to get partnership right for the long-term and economic viability is at the top of the tree. If they (operators) are viable and we are interested in their continued growth and strength of business, then they are more likely to look beyond the business towards the environment. Viable, vibrant businesses have more time to care and develop a passion for the environment. If less economically viable, businesses tend to want to cut corners and focus on revenue at the expense of other core values. Legal requirements cost money and they may end up focusing on the survival of their business. This impacts on protection of biodiversity—they are less focused on that'.

A partnership that performed well provided benefits for all partners. For example, in one case study, the walking track and supporting infrastructure 'has built capacity directly for partners and indirectly for the broader community'. Where the partnership involved giving operators access to protected areas, they were able to increase their business. Three operators associated with the same case study said that 'greater exposure and marketing from being a member of the partnership' contributed to their profitability.

In other instances, the partnership allowed the construction of camps in a protected area, which meant that tour operators 'could earn enough and give back to the Park'. Data collection as part of this partnership added knowledge needed for wildlife management. Partnership performance also contributed to economic gain for both the protected area and for tourism. The construction of commercially viable camps and development of combined tour packages generated funds that could be used for park management and benefited operators and the region in general.

Direction

Respondents talked about the importance of a shared or common goal to achieve the purpose of the partnership as well as providing benefits to all partners, agreeing on this at the outset, and having a vision or a strategic plan in place and jointly working towards it. A clear direction also improved relationships between partners. As a conservation group member said:

> 'Because they are working together for an achievable outcome—have a joint goal. So even when there is a difference (on other issues, in other forums), there is a foundation there. Helps [at] other times'.

Communication

Communication was important in achieving the partnership's purpose, increasing transparency, enabling understanding of partners' interests, stimulating innovation, reducing conflict, facilitating economic gain for tourism and providing benefits for all partners. One respondent said that it was important to:

> 'Maintain open communication, resolve problems before they get too big. Behind the scenes we help each other out—wouldn't do that if we had a bad relationship. It works both ways'.

A volunteer in another case study noted that communication was also important in sharing information:

> 'A win-win situation for us, we enjoy meeting and talking to people, interacting with local school groups etc. and it's positive for the Department [the protected area manager] as well as the volunteers, both are gaining from this partnership as does the local community'.

Also:

'Sharing information [had] benefits through not reinventing the wheel all the time' and led to better decisions. Better information also added to visitor experiences, to the community's knowledge of the area and to better management approaches. Communication was also attributed with helping other outcomes to be achieved: 'because it is through those relationships that other factors are achieved'. Another respondent noted:

> 'You can adequately resource the partnership, but this is only a band-aid if you don't have the relationships. Once you have a good partnership, a little money goes a long way. With seed money, you can do a lot'.

Understanding

The development of mutual understanding contributed to achieving the purpose of the partnership, providing benefits and improving information for protected area management:

> 'Taking on board each partner's interests so you could keep going forward without hitting a stalemate on any issue'.

A member of another partnership stated:

> 'We compromise, each partner can make personal suggestions and recommendations, for example, I put forward ideas to the Department [the protected area manager] on what I think can be managed better or differently in the Park'.

Understanding of the protected area also contributed to the partnership performance, as one respondent stated:

> 'We work together with the Department [the protected area manager]. We conducted surveys together in order to gain an understanding of what is needed'.

Sustainable Tourism Outcomes

Outcomes for sustainable tourism are wide-ranging as they seek to cover the breath of concerns articulated by the United Nation's Environment Programme and the World Tourism Organisation in their 2005 report (UNEP & WTO 2005). Included are environmental, social, economic and cultural outcomes. Engagement of the local community, increased local prosperity and reduced use of energy and water exemplify the breadth of outcomes explored.

Questionnaire Results

In addition to being asked about outcomes for the partnership, respondents were asked about outcomes for sustainable tourism in protected areas (Appendix B, Question 8). Similarly to their responses about partnership outcomes, all outcomes for sustainable tourism were somewhat to extremely important, with mean scores of 3.73

(where '3' is somewhat important) to 4.46 (where '5' is extremely important). The same scores at the higher end of the scale resulted for satisfaction—whether the outcome for sustainable tourism has been achieved – with mean scores of 3.51 (where '3' is neutral) to 4.24 (where '5' is strongly agree) (Table 9). The most important outcomes for sustainable tourism were: improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners; improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area; and greater respect for culture, heritage, and/or traditions. The first of these outcomes (i.e. improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners) also had the highest satisfaction mean, however, different items received the next highest satisfaction scores. These were increased engagement of the local community in tourism, increased social benefits to local communities, and increased prosperity of the local community (the last two had tied means of 4.13) (Table 9).

Calculating the importance satisfaction gap gives a total of 12 of the 14 items with a negative gap value, with 9 of these statistically significant (Table 9). These negative values indicate that partners' level of satisfaction with these outcomes for sustainable tourism is less than the importance they are assigning to them. Such a result is not a great cause for concern, given the high satisfaction scores evident from these results. Improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourist destination was the only outcome where satisfaction was significantly higher than importance, with a positive gap of 0.29 (Table 9). The only other outcome with a positive gap was increased prosperity of the local community.

Table 9: Importance of partnership outcomes for sustainable tourism and satisfaction with their achievement from the questionnaires

Item	Satisfaction Mean	Importance Mean	Gap
Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners	4.24	4.46	-0.22*
Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area	4.11	4.44	-0.33*
Greater respect for culture, heritage, and/or traditions	4.10	4.42	-0.32*
Improved quality of environmental conditions	3.78	4.31	-0.53*
Enhancement of culture, heritage, and/or traditions	3.91	4.24	-0.33*
Increased social benefits to local communities	4.13	4.20	-0.07
Increased engagement of the local community in tourism	4.17	4.20	-0.03
Increased prosperity of the local community	4.13	4.09	0.04
Reduced production of waste by visitors	3.68	4.03	-0.35*
Improved economic viability of the protected area	3.95	3.99	-0.04
Reduced use of energy	3.57	3.91	-0.34*
Reduced production of waste by tourism enterprises	3.54	3.91	-0.37*
Reduced use of water	3.51	3.77	-0.26*
Improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourist destination	4.02	3.73	0.29*

* Significant at $p < 0.05$ and calculated using paired t-tests.

Interview Results

During the interviews, respondents were asked to reflect on their answers in the questionnaire regarding the outcomes for sustainable tourism and identify the two to three most important outcomes from their partnership and explain how the partnership contributed to them (Appendix C, Questions 5a & b). The outcomes for sustainable tourism most frequently identified as important were: improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners; improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area; and increased social benefits to local communities (Table 10). Only a small number of respondents identified 'brown' outcomes, that is, reducing resource use (energy and water) and waste production as most important. Those that did were partners who managed accommodation dependent on alternative sources of energy and placed a high priority on sustainable buildings as part of their enterprise

These results almost completely mirror the three outcomes with the highest mean scores for importance identified through the questionnaires (Table 11). The only difference is increased social benefits to local communities which is ranked sixth in the respondents' mean scores from the questionnaire results (Table 9) but third in the frequencies of occurrence of appearance from the interview results (Table 10).

Improved understanding of protected area values was important because it resulted in further benefits to partners. One interviewee described the effect of tourism as:

> 'A 'halo effect'—gives a positive experience to an influential group, so they become advocates back in the community. This sets the standard for people to live up to. This improved understanding of values flows from knowledge exchange from guides to guests, and includes respect for culture, heritage and traditions. In one instance, interest in the protected area by visitors led to a greater appreciation of it by the relevant government department and a subsequent extension of its most protected zone'.

Improved biodiversity conservation similarly led to other outcomes. As conservation improved, so did visitation and awareness of the features of the protected area. As sustainable tourism increased, the local community also gained more knowledge of the area and received other benefits. Indeed, increase in local social benefits was the third most important outcome for sustainable tourism. Pride in the local area increased and local business was stimulated through visitors' use of food and other retail outlets. Partnerships also facilitated productive interactions with other tourism operators.

The factors contributing to these sustainable tourism outcomes are detailed in Table 10. These are based on the responses to Question 5b and the subsequent assignment of these responses to the classes listed in Table 2. As with the previous results for partnership outcomes and the associated contributing factors, only the three most frequently allocated contributing factors are included for each outcome in Table 10 (occasionally up to four where the last class had an equal frequency with another). Where a contributing factor was allocated only once to a text excerpt from the interview results, it has not been listed, except where the total number of factors nominated for a particular outcome was three or less.

Table 10: Most important outcomes for sustainable tourism from the interviews

Outcome	Number of responses	Contributing factors
Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners	36	Understanding Interconnection Benefits/Commitment
Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area	24	Understanding Performance Interconnections/Communication/ Direction
Increased social benefits to local communities	22	Benefits/Performance/Interconnections
Improved economic viability of the protected area	18	Interconnections/Benefits
Increased prosperity of the local community	18	Benefits Performance
Increased engagement of the local community in tourism	18	Inclusion Benefits Understanding
Greater respect for culture, heritage, and/or traditions	18	Understanding Performance Direction
Improved quality of environmental conditions	15	Performance Benefits
Improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourist destination	9	Performance
Reduced production of waste by tourism #	8	Benefits Understanding
Reduced use of energy	5	Benefits
Enhancement of culture, heritage, and/or traditions	4	Interconnections/Regulations & Agreements/Direction/Processes
Unclassified	3	Interconnection/Benefits
Reduced use of water	3	Benefits/Performance
Total	**201**	

Results for waste production by tourism enterprises and visitors have been combined.

Table 11: Comparison of results from questionnaires and interviews regarding most important sustainable tourism outcomes

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OUTCOMES	Overall importance ranking based on...		Comparisons of rankings
	...respondents' mean scores (questionnaires, n=100)*	...frequency with which they were identified as top 2 or 3 (interviews, n=97)*	
Improved understanding of the values of PAs by partners	1	1	Identical
Improved biodiversity conservation in the PA	2	2	Identical
Greater respect for culture, heritage and/or traditions	3	4	Top 5 in both
Improved quality of environmental conditions	4	8	---
Enhancement of culture, heritage and/or traditions	5	12	---

* These are ranked out of 14 as given that 14 sustainable tourism outcomes were listed in the questionnaire.

As with the interview results for the partnership outcomes presented earlier in this chapter, the results here for sustainable tourism are presented according to the most frequently allocated contributing factors. These were benefits, understanding, interconnections and performance (Table 12).

Table 12: Factors contributing to outcomes for sustainable tourism (from the interviews)

Factors	Number of Responses
Benefits	51
Understanding	32
Interconnections	27
Performance	22
Inclusion	13
Direction	10
Commitment	9
Communication	6
Regulations & agreements	6
Resources	3

Benefits

A range of social benefits resulted from partnership activities, in particular by increased economic viability of the area and prosperity of the local community. These benefits were ascribed to the growth of tourism, building business and retail capacity and income, increased employment and tourism infrastructure and 'investing in the look and feel of the place'. In addition, communities developed pride in their local environment through seeing the work and value of the partnership.

Understanding of protected area values was increased by the benefits that tourism brought to the area. In one case, tourism led to a much broader recognition of the features of the area and, thereby, to greater environmental protection for it and also to filming by *National Geographic*.

Understanding

An enhanced understanding of protected areas was a highly desirable outcome, with the desire to promote understanding of biodiversity and of the importance of protected areas both contributing to this understanding. This desire was, in most instances, a significant driving force. For some, their purpose was 'education about the values, not only the values of protected areas but also private land, Aboriginal culture and so forth'. Another respondent said:

> 'The more people you bring there, the more chance of values and respect for culture being passed on. Parks are for people, not just bits of land locked up for conservation purposes. There will be more knowledge and respect for the environment, the more people are exposed to it'.

Others said that they wanted to help the local government and community value the protected area to a greater degree:

> 'To get them (key tourism stakeholders) down this road and there is a long way to go. Some operators see the value of national parks, not just as a place to recreate. We hope we can take them to the next level'.

One respondent described how it was important to give:

> 'People the venue to increase their knowledge to a level that encourages protection of biodiversity and the confidence to share this knowledge with others'.

Others referred to the role of raising awareness of the frequency and abundance of species' populations, the location of sensitive species, fire regimes and the aims of protected area agencies.

Factors contributing to greater respect for culture, heritage and traditions were largely related to increased understanding derived from working with partners, some aboriginal, who could pass on knowledge of traditions and heritage to others, including visitors and the local community.

Interconnections

A number of respondents noted that understanding protected area values was gained through recognising interconnections between environmental, social and economic aspects of the partnership. For example, one respondent said 'Seeing that a great park and walk has direct impacts/priority for businesses—it has provided opportunities to build capacity and demand for partner businesses'.

Social benefits also resulted from connections that were developed with other tourism operators and providers and also through visitors themselves. One respondent noted that the 'increase in the right sort of visitors (people that want to look after the area) to the area has been encouraged by the type of development and the associated supporting marketing materials'.

Performance

In a number of partnerships, members contributed directly to biodiversity conservation through monitoring by volunteers, visitor education, promoting responsible visitor behaviour and implementing sustainable management. For example:

> 'If you go out, the country is now in the best condition of any mallee in the world because of management—closing dams and getting rid of herbivore pressure on the environment and the bird and animal numbers have shot up through the roof. '

Another respondent stated:

> 'We don't leave a footprint i.e. make sure there is no litter, recycle things aboard vessels and create no waste. [The protected area manager] initiated the boardwalks, because of they were concerned about erosion of the river banks. They [originally] wanted to slow boats down to stop this, so we compromised with the building of the boardwalks to enable passengers to walk through part of the forest'.

Discussion (Outcomes for Partnerships and Sustainable Tourism)

All of the outcomes for the partnerships and for sustainable tourism were regarded as important by respondents, as illustrated by the questionnaire results. This breadth of response suggests that those managing partnerships should aim towards achieving many rather than few outcomes. The largely negative gaps between satisfaction and importance, revealed through the importance-satisfaction analysis, have several possible explanations. One is that the expectations of these partnerships are beyond what they can currently deliver, thus importance is much higher than satisfaction, resulting in a negative gap score. The other is that, although respondents were largely satisfied, as evidenced by the high satisfaction scores, they expected more from the partnerships than was currently available. If the latter is the case, then outcomes with the largest gaps, such as achieving the partnership goals, improving access to funding for all partners, and reducing conflict, could be the focus of increased attention and effort. The same applies for the sustainable tourism outcomes of improved quality of environmental conditions and the 'brown' outcomes of reduced production of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors, and reduced use of energy. This lack of attention to brown concerns has been identified elsewhere in the

tourism and protected area literature (e.g. Tonge, Moore, Hockings, Worboys & Bridle 2005).

The outcomes where satisfaction exceeded importance have an important story to tell about the benefits of partnerships, especially how they value-add to more traditional models of protected area management (Phillips 2003). The statistically significant outcome for partnerships of economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry and for sustainable tourism of improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourist destination are both economic benefits achievable through tourism – protected area partnering. Both these outcomes provide evidence that these partnerships are collectively helping achieve the Commonwealth Government of Australia's objectives regarding tourism and protected areas (DITR 2003).

In a similar vein, the other outcomes for partnerships with positive gaps are all ones that add to protected area management, especially to the networks, relationships and understandings that respondents identified as essential for partnering. The associated outcomes were strengthening of organisational/business capacity; new relationships with influential people and/or organisations; and improved understanding of others partners' interests. For the sustainable tourism outcomes, the only other one with a positive gap was increased prosperity of the local community. This outcome shows recognition of the broader sweep of sustainability, where social as well as environmental and economic concerns are all pivotal.

The most important outcomes for partnerships, using both the questionnaire and interview results (and these results showed complete concurrence for the three most important) were: the purpose of the partnership being achieved; benefits from the partnership to all partners; and improved information available for protected area management (Table 13). For sustainable tourism, the most important outcomes were: improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners; improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area; greater respect for culture, heritage and/or traditions; and increased social benefits to local communities. Interestingly, these 'most important' results do not explicitly include economic concerns, although these are probably covered in the first two partnership outcomes of partnership purpose being achieved and benefits to all partners. The other point of note is the breadth of coverage of sustainability concerns, with protected area values, biodiversity conservation, cultural respect, and social benefits to local communities all evident as very important outcomes.

Table 13: Summary of importance of outcomes for partnerships and sustainable tourism from the questionnaires and interviews

Outcomes	Questionnaire most important	Interview most important
For partnerships	Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved	Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved
	Benefits from the partnership for all partners	Benefits from the partnership for all partners
	Improved information available for protected area management	Improved information available for protected area management
	Improved relationships with other partners	Economic gain for protected area management
For sustainable tourism	Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners	Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners
	Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area	Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area
	Greater respect for culture, heritage and/or traditions	Increased social benefits to local communities
	Improved quality of environmental conditions	Improved economic viability of the protected area

Giving highest priority to achieving the purpose of the partnership is consistent with previous research that has highlighted the importance of efficiency/productivity gains as partnership outcomes (Gray 1996; Buckley & Sommer, 2001; De Lacey et al. 2002). These studies also noted gains in knowledge, management expertise and problem solving, as well as economic benefits. In this study, respondents have identified benefits to all partners as very important, with an emphasis on benefits for protected areas. Other studies of partnerships describe the importance of outcomes of a more social nature including social equity and empowerment (Himmelman 1996; WTTC, WTO & EC 1996) and reducing conflict (Bramwell & Lane 2000; Leach & Pelkey 2001; De Lacy et al. 2002). These more social outcomes are evident from the results associated with outcomes for sustainable tourism but less so from the partnership outcomes results.

This broader acknowledgement of the facets of sustainability reflects widespread perspectives in tourism about sustainability, namely, that tourism should be economically viable as well as sustaining the natural environment and the social structure of associated communities (Swarbrooke 1999). Since this study focused on protected areas, it is not surprising that enhancing understanding of their values and providing local social benefits would be regarded as important outcomes. In this respect, participant responses are typical of the resource-based tradition of understanding sustainability (Saarinen 2006). They also reflect the community-based tradition, which has developed to bring some harmony between the resource-based tradition and a more industry focused activity-based tradition, which emphasises viability of tourism operations. It could also be that the importance accorded to 'green' issues is a result of a more globalised concern for the environment (McAllister 1999).

The factors contributing most to partnership outcomes were performance, direction, communication and understanding, while for sustainable tourism they were benefits, understanding, interconnections and performance (Table 14). Collectively, these factors are a mixture of contributors to the processes associated with developing and maintaining partnerships and facilitating sustainable tourism (such as understanding, direction, communication and interconnections) and other factors directly tied to or reflecting the outcomes, such as performance and benefits. Previous research has identified understanding as critical in recognising partners' goals (Buckley & Sommer 2001) and gaining respect for different perspectives on problems (McGinnis, Woolley & Gamman 1999; Steffen 2004). Communication, both between the partners and with the general public, is also integral to the success of partnerships (Leach & Pelkey 2001).

Table 14: Factors underlying the outcomes (from the interviews)

Partnership outcomes	Sustainable tourism outcomes
Performance	Benefits
Understanding	Understanding
Direction	Interconnection
Communication	Performance
Inclusion	Inclusion
Interconnections	Direction

Without performance, that is, emphasising the achievement of outcomes and getting things done, no partnership is sustainable, hence the popularity of this contributing factor to both partnership outcomes and sustainable tourism in protected areas. Benefits, the most frequently noted factor contributing to sustainable tourism, are similarly fundamental to partnerships. It is unlikely that partners will collaborate if some partners receive all or more of the benefits than others (Imperial 2005).

A number of social factors that appeared much less influential on outcomes in this study have been described as very influential in other research. Included are commitment (Mohr & Spekman 1994; Dowling et al. 2004), trust (Roberts & Simpson 1999), and leadership and expertise (Leach & Pelkey 2001). One explanation is that factors like trust and commitment are subsumed within other factors, such as understanding. Similarly, context-related factors are not evident from this analysis, such as resources, roles and powers of partners, and regulations and agreements (Wondelleck & Yaffee 2000; Buckley & Sommer 2001; Leach & Pelkey 2001). Their absence from this part of the results emphasises the value of drawing on multiple theoretical perspectives and use of multi-methods, as explained in several places throughout this report. The next chapter focuses specifically on these context-related factors, plus others, emphasising the benefits of the postdisciplinary approach taken in this study (Laing et al. forthcoming).

Conclusion

The most important outcomes of partnerships were goal achievement and providing benefits to partners, especially for protected area management. The most important for sustainable tourism were improved understanding of protected area values, biodiversity conservation and increased local social benefits. There were high levels of satisfaction with outcomes, especially in terms of economic gains for the tourism industry and improved competitiveness of the protected area (where satisfaction was significantly higher than importance). Factors that contributed to both the partnership and sustainable tourism outcomes were the performance of the partnership and development of mutual understanding.

Chapter 5

FEATURES OF PARTNERSHIPS

The previous chapter described and explored the outcomes from tourism – protected area partnerships. It also began an exploration of the factors contributing to these outcomes. This chapter continues this exploration by investigating the features of the partnerships important to respondents. These features were pursued in the questionnaires and interviews and are presented below according to whether they were partner-, process-, or context-related. This partitioning has been successfully used in previous research (specifically in Bingham 1986) and as a way to organise the partnering literature and previous research (Laing et al. 2008). For each feature, the questionnaire results are followed by those from the interviews. Between these results and a discussion, the relationships between features and outcomes are explored through correlation analyses of the questionnaire results. A combined discussion follows, where the collective features contributing to partnerships obtained from this study are considered against previous research and practice.

Partner-Related Features

Partner-related features refer to attributes of members and of the partnership itself that can affect the success or otherwise of a partnership. Included are leadership, the support provided by the protected area agency, and items about power and inclusion.

Questionnaire Results

Respondents were presented with a list of 12 features of partners and partnerships and asked to indicate the importance of each, and presence or absence, in their partnerships (Appendix B, Question 4). Partners responded that all partner-related features were somewhat to extremely important, with mean scores of 3.70 (where '3' is somewhat important) to 4.48 (where '5' is extremely important). The most important partner-related features were: decision makers directly involved in the partnership; support provided by protected area agency; and participation by all partners encouraged. Most of the features were noted as present, with those most evident (to 94% of respondents) being 'participation by all partners encouraged' and 'leadership provided by at least one of the partners'. At the other end of the spectrum, 'power equally distributed between the partners' was identified as present by only 46% of respondents (Table 15).

Table 15: Importance of partner and the partnership-related features from the questionnaires

Features of the partners and the partnership	Mean	Presence (%)
Decision makers directly involved in the partnership	4.48	87
Support provided by protected area agency	4.45	92
Participation by all partners encouraged	4.40	94
Leadership provided by at least one of the partners	4.37	94
Leadership was effective	4.25	92
Empathy between partners encouraged	4.23	92
Inclusion of all people affected by the partnership	4.21	81
Willingness by partners to adapt to changing situations	4.10	86
Issues considered in new ways	4.06	88
Efforts towards power sharing made within the partnership	3.86	64
Power equally distributed between the partners	3.74	46
Leadership provided by a non-government person	3.70	60

Interview Results

During the interview stage of this research, respondents were asked to reflect on their answers to the questionnaire and identify the two to three most important feature/s of the partnership (Appendix C, Question

1a.). In order to gain a deeper understanding of their response, they were also asked how each feature was important and what enabled it to be present in the partnership (Appendix C, Question 1b & c). As explained in the previous chapter, the simplest way to summarise the interview results was to use the 'classes' listed in Table 2 (and Appendix D). The most frequently allocated classes are included for each feature in the third column of Table 16. How the feature was important is not included, as responses to this question overlapped with responses about the contributing factors (i.e. what enabled a feature to be present). No information was lost in leaving out this material.

Table 16: Most important partner-related features from the interviews and contributing factors

Partner related features	Number of responses	Contributing factors
Leadership provided by at least one of the partners	28	Roles & Powers, Communication, Inclusion
Support provided by protected area agency	25	Resources, Roles & Powers
Empathy between partners encouraged	25	Communication, Individuals, Understanding
Decision makers directly involved in the partnership	23	Communication, Processes
Participation by all partners encouraged	23	Communication, Processes,
Willingness by partners to adapt to changing situations	21	Communication, Adaptability & Innovation
Issues considered in new ways	19	Communication, Individuals, Understanding
Inclusion of all people affected by the partnership	15	Inclusion
Leadership provided by a non-government person	12	Commitment, Direction, Individuals
Leadership was effective	12	Individuals, Roles & Powers
Power equally distributed between partners	6	Roles & Powers
Efforts towards power sharing made within the partnership	5	Communication
Total	**214**	

The three most frequently selected features were: leadership provided by at least one of the partners; support provided by protected area agency; and empathy between partners encouraged. These results are almost the same as those for the highest mean scores for importance identified through the questionnaires (Table 15). Both the questionnaire and the interviews produced roughly the same 'top four' features, although ordered differently (Table 17).

Table 17: Comparison of results from questionnaires and interviews regarding most important partner-related features

PARTNER-RELATED FEATURES*	Overall importance ranking based on ...		Comparisons of rankings
	...respondents' mean scores (questionnaires, n=100)	... frequency with which they were identified as top 2 or 3 (interviews, n=97)	
Decision-makers directly involved in the partnership	1	4	Top 5 in both
Support provided by PA agency	2	2	Identical
Participation by all partners encouraged	3	5	Top 5 in both
Leadership provided by at least one of the partners	4	1	Top 5 in both
Leadership was effective	5	10	---

* These are ranked out of 12, given that 12 partner-related features were listed in the questionnaire.

In the interviews, leadership was most often referred to in terms of the necessity for strong leadership and guidance in a partnership. Leadership was noted as instrumental in contributing to a successful working partnership. Respondents commented on the importance of having leaders within the protected area agency to ensure continuity of the partnership, and also to create flow-on benefits to the ultimate beneficiaries of the partnership. Leadership was assisted by communication, inclusion, clarity and the presence of roles and powers (Table 16).

The next most frequent feature from the interviews was 'support provided by the protected area agency'. Respondents described this support as taking on specific roles within the partnership, with their associated power, as well as providing resources for the partnership. Support was dependent on (the factors of) communication, inclusion and resources.

Empathy between partners, the last of the 'top three' partner-related features from the interviews, referred to partners' awareness of what was required to achieve outcomes, appreciating other partners' positions or viewpoints, an appreciation and acceptance of different viewpoints and values, and using information to build and develop understanding. Understanding was the factor central to empathy (Table 16).

As with the interview results for the partnership outcomes presented in the previous chapter, the results here for partner-related features are presented according to the most frequently allocated contributing factors. The 10 most common factors are listed in Table 18, with the 3 most common—communication, individuals, and roles and powers—discussed in the following sub-sections.

Table 18: Factors contributing to partner-related features (from the interviews)

Factors	Number of Responses
Communication	43
Individuals	22
Roles and powers	21
Processes	18
Inclusion	13
Understanding	12
Resources	11
Direction	10
Commitment	8
Expertise	7

Communication

Respondents thought that communication was important to build relationships between the partners and also outside of the immediate partnership. They considered that for communication to be effective, some form of inclusion of partners had to be present. Having communication and achieving inclusion were regarded as important for the partnership to succeed. Respondents noted that communication and inclusion can be achieved through meetings, involvement in decision-making processes, and through communicating plans, strategies, and actions. In their view, all these factors (roles and power, communication and inclusion) were closely linked and played an important part in their partnership. The following excerpts highlight this link:

> 'Leadership was taken by [the protected area agency] of formulating and driving the partnership, such as selling the concept, strong leadership and communication, including providing feedback through conception and development of the partnership'.

and:

> 'The program [partnership] can be pro-active, have the decision makers around the table and decide what to do. The partners can respond quickly on some things'.

As the quotes illustrate, one of the key attributes is having the direct participation of decision makers.

Identifying the agency's support as a partner-related feature positively impacting on partnerships was closely related to the inclusion of others and the respective partners' roles and powers. Some respondents, specifically partners from community groups, were happy with the level of inclusion with regards to the roles and powers of the partners and the associated support the partnership obtained from the protected area agency:

> 'Due to the presence of community consultation committee formed between the protected area agency and the local council'.

Similarly, another respondent mentioned:

> 'The possibility for members to put forward proposals they want to get involved in or otherwise …'

Open, ongoing communication between the protected area agency, tour operators and local communities was highlighted as important by a number of respondents. For example:

> 'We [a protected area agency] try to liaise closely about situations that put pressure on them and phone regularly rather than letting things develop inappropriately. We ring and talk about issues and feel comfortable about doing this. Has been a partnership over some years, so they understand what we want'.

Listening was fundamental: 'The partners are listening to each other'.

Individuals

The 'types' of individuals involved in partnerships was identified as important. Agency people needed to be approachable and open, as the following quote illustrates:

> 'The agency person came in and had a personable nature but didn't pull any punches. Didn't hide behind government speak. Early media reports were pushing 'conspiracy theories' and there was mistrust about [the protected area agency] but they didn't hide behind bureaucracy. They were open about things'.

Personality conflicts were identified as an issue, as was partnerships improving when difficult personalities (both in agencies and the community) moved on. A large part of this conflict was linked to confusion over roles and responsibilities. Partners with passion for the partnership, sensitivity and showing leadership were admired.

Roles and powers

When talking about roles and powers, respondents frequently referred to the protected area agency's legal mandate of management, the issuing of operational licences, and the running of the day-to-day operations in a protected area. Some respondents highlighted the benefits arising if one of the partners/organisations, rather than a particular individual, assumed leadership of the partnership. They referred to providing direction, helping to understand the issues at hand, tapping into existing knowledge as well as using existing resources. The notion of and the importance of having a 'driving force' in order to have direction was mentioned by several respondents from different partnerships.

Leadership was flagged by a number of respondents as a critically important role: 'Because leadership in a partnership is instrumental for the success of the partnership'. Several respondents commented that the allocation

and acceptance of each others' roles and powers, responsibilities, and obligations contributed to leadership by partners. This was frequently described as stemming from the characteristics of particular individuals; their personalities, passion, drive, commitment and engagement. Respondents made comments such as:

> 'The partnership works not because of a 'structural miracle' but because of the personalities involved. Leadership covers commitment, engagement, willingness to set priorities, and giving up time'.

Being treated as equals and 'power sharing' were also noted: 'We feel being treated as equals and are valued' and 'true collaboration with powers being shared among the partners'.

Process-Related Features

Process-related features refer to how the partners worked together, and include the existence of regular meetings, attributes of decision-making such as fairness, flexibility and transparency, and trust and commitment. Because these processes have been the focus of a great deal of research attention, more features (i.e. items) were listed under this part of the questionnaire (Appendix B, Question 5) than elsewhere.

Questionnaire Results

Respondents were provided with a list of 20 processes that have assisted partners in working towards successful partnerships. Partners responded that all process-related features were somewhat to extremely important, with mean scores of 3.91 (where '3' is somewhat important) to 4.57 (where '5' is extremely important). The most important context-related features were: open communication; trust; and commitment to the partnership. Most of the features were noted as present, with those most evident (to 87% of respondents) being 'commitment' and 'good quality information available'. At the other end of the spectrum, 'partners dependent on each other to get what they want', was identified as present by 69% of respondents (Table 19).

Table 19: Importance of process-related features from the questionnaires

Features of working together	Mean*	Presence (%)
Open communication between partners	4.57	82
Trust between partners	4.44	82
Commitment by partners to the partnership	4.41	87
Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership	4.40	85
Problems addressed by the partnership as they occur	4.37	77
Conflict managed as it arises	4.36	72
Fair decision-making	4.29	84
Equal opportunity for every one to contribute at partnership meetings	4.27	84
Transparent decision-making	4.27	77
Agreement by partners on the problem(s) being addressed by the partnership	4.27	77
Good quality information available	4.24	87
Sufficient information available	4.21	86
Flexible decision-making	4.13	74
Partners aim for consensus when making decisions	4.11	79
Partners feel a sense of obligation to each other	4.11	73
Cost-effective process	4.02	77
Regular meetings between partners	4.02	73
Time-efficient process	4.01	73
Partners dependent on each other to get what they want	3.93	69
Access to influential people and/or organisations	3.91	80

Interview Results

As with the partner-related features in the previous section, respondents were asked to reflect on their questionnaire answers for the context-related questions (Appendix C, Question 2a, b & c). The results were then summarised using the 'classes' listed in Table 2 (and Appendix D). The most frequently allocated classes or factors are given for each feature in Table 20. Again, as per the previous section on partner-related features, data

on how the feature was important are not included, as responses to this question overlapped with responses about the contributing factors (i.e. what enabled a feature to be present).

Table 20: Most important process-related features from the interviews and contributing factors

Process-related features	Number of responses	Contributing factors
Open communication between partners	30	Communication, Processes, Trust
Trust between partners	25	Understanding, Continuity
Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership	24	Roles & Powers, Processes
Commitment by partners to the partnership	17	Commitment, Processes
Transparent decision-making	15	Roles & Powers, Individuals, Communication
Regular meeting between partners	13	Processes
Conflict managed as it arises	12	Individuals, Performance
Partners dependent on each other to get what they want	10	Performance, Roles & Powers
Equal opportunity for every one to contribute at partnership meetings	7	Processes
Fair decision-making	7	Roles & Powers
Sufficient information available	7	Processes, Expertise
Partners feel a sense of obligations to each other	6	Roles & Powers
Cost-effective process	6	Processes, Resources
Agreement by partners on the problem(s) being addressed by the partnership	5	
Partners aim for consensus when making decisions	5	Individuals, Roles & Powers
Problems addressed by the partnership as they occur	5	Individuals, Commitment
Time-efficient process	5	Performance
Access to influential people and/or organisations	4	Roles & Powers
Flexible decision-making	3	Processes
Good quality information available	3	Expertise, Communication
Total	209	

The three most frequently selected features were: open communication; trust; and agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership. These results are almost the same as those for the highest mean scores for importance identified through the questionnaires (Table 19). Both the questionnaire and the interviews produced the same ‘top four’ features, ordered differently, although those ranked first and second are the same (Table 21).

Open communication was identified as ‘a foundation for a partnership’. It was linked to a willingness to ‘address problems rather than sticking your head in the sand’. The ready availability of information as well as openness in communication was noted. One respondent commented: ‘Put all the cards on the table and don’t withhold information. Be up-front and open’, which summarised these widely expressed views. Trust was identified as central to open communication.

Trust between partners was also one of the three most frequently selected features (Table 20). As one respondent noted: 'Has to be total trust in each other to work effectively'. Others commented that good working relationships depend on trust. Trust was described as feeling a sense of obligation towards and 'connecting' with other partners and it was noted as taking years to build.

The third important feature was agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership: 'Need this or else the partnership wouldn't go anywhere. Facilitates consensus on decisions'. A number of respondents noted that a written agreement was central. For example:

> 'The Alps memorandum of understanding (MOU) forms the basis of the relationship. It's important for this to be spelt out so it is clear. Probably overrides everything else'.

Others commented that the purpose needs to be realistic and partners benefit from being reminded about it: 'The purpose of the partnership has to be reinforced constantly as you can start to question whether we are all on the same path'.

Table 21: Comparison of results from questionnaires and interviews regarding most important process-related features

PROCESS-RELATED FEATURES*	Overall importance ranking based on ...		Comparisons of rankings
	...respondents' mean scores (questionnaires, n=100)	... frequency with which they were identified as top 2 or 3 (interviews, n=97)	
Open communication between partners	1	1	Identical
Trust between partners	2	2	Identical
Commitment by partners to the partnership	3	4	Top 5 in both
Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership	4	3	Top 5 in both
Problems addressed by the partnership as they occur	5	16	---

* These are ranked out of 20, as 20 process-related features were listed in the questionnaire.

As with the interview results for the partner-related features presented in the previous section, the results for process-related features are presented here for the 10 most frequently allocated contributing factors (Table 22). The three most common—processes, communication, and roles and powers—are discussed in more detail in the following sub-sections.

Table 22: Factors contributing to process-related features (from the interviews)

Factors	Number of Responses
Processes	32
Communication	23
Roles and powers	21
Understanding	15
Trust	14
Individuals	12
Performance	11
Continuity	9
Direction	7
Commitment	6

Processes

Processes underlying the day-to-day running and operation of partnerships were noted as developing and working towards improved and better communication amongst the partners. Open communication was an important element. Examples of how various processes can foster and support communication channels were also mentioned:

> 'Modern electronic technology is fabulous. People are just an email away and communication constantly crackles. That's easy. Email is the key. You can answer it anywhere. [It gives people the] capacity to respond on the spot, using a laptop or a Blackberry [a particular brand of a high technology mobile telephone]'.

> 'Our open-door policy allows for the ability to access people because this facilitates trust between the partners. Having the trust relates or rather results in people having a sense of obligation'.

Respondents commented that the application of processes enabling open communication between participants in the partnerships led to the development of trust between partners. These processes included technological and policy approaches.

Communication

Communication was central to process-related features as it was to the previously described partner-related ones. As one respondent noted:

> 'It [open communication] has happened over time. When the partnership started the relationship was much more prescriptive, ruled by legislation. The contact was largely through letters or discussion about enforcement. The emphasis now is more on dialogue. "How are you going?" We touch base with different officers i.e. guides, staff, including new staff'.

as well as:

> 'The open lines of communication as part of our regular meetings with the advisory committee. Regular meetings with each individual group at the beginning of each financial year'.

As with the previous partner-related features, trust was again important:

> 'Trust comes through communicating where there are problems, transparency [in dealings], get to know people, know their objectives and don't be dishonest. Trust grows over a period of time and not through a two-hour workshop'.

Roles and powers

Roles and powers were closely tied to the feature 'agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership'. Having such an agreement, often written, provided direction for the partners and the partnership as a whole. Most commonly, agreements encompassed the overall objectives of the partnership, and a vision, focus, plans and purpose. Respondents commented that 'good' agreements address the processes of the partnership, specific roles of partners and distribution of power within the partnership.

With regards to processes, an agreement may include business processes, with a focus on administrative arrangements and legal requirements:

> 'We have gone from a conceptual agreement to a document which spells out the accountability [of each partner], what each person has to deliver, grant funds, marketing, budget, timeline. So we know what we are meant to deliver, including priorities'.

and

> 'As long as you've got that agreement in writing it ensures with changing personnel that the partners have a really good understanding of the purpose of the partnership, what we [the protected area agency] are aiming for, what we are trying to achieve. Then it allows the operators to have some comfort in trying to have an understanding what each of us wants. The way the expression of interest process and licensing process works is that the agreements have to be in writing. He [the operator] makes a submission, we [the conservation agency] respond to it and so forth. In the end the agreement reflects the licence conditions'.

Also included within roles and powers, was having access to multiple levels within protected area agencies, especially higher, more influential ones, such that a 'large company can get access to high levels of [the protected area agency]'. A final 'generic' role often mentioned was giving everyone the opportunity to contribute to decision making. The absence of this role was commented upon:

> 'Decision-making and opportunity for everyone to contribute is currently not present. There is a reluctance by [the protected area agency to risk] … the public's disapproval of decisions and therefore the agency often avoids being transparent. Furthermore, middle management is also reluctant to take up additional information from outside'.

Context-related Features

Context-related features were the last of the three sets of features contributing to successful partnerships that were explored in this study. Context includes the legal and legislative environment, the administrative support for the partnership and whether or not there is a written agreement.

Questionnaire Results

Respondents were presented with a list of 12 features of the context (or environment) known or hypothesised to facilitate successful partnerships (Appendix B, Question 6). Partners responded that all context-related features were somewhat to extremely important, with mean scores of 3.82 (where '3' is somewhat important) to 4.34 (where '5' is extremely important). The most important context-related features were: adequate organisational support; current legislation supports tourism in protected areas; and recognition of the legal obligations of partners. Most of the features were noted as present, with those most evident being 'current administrative arrangements (excluding legislation) support tourism in protected areas' (82% of respondents) and 'current legislation supports tourism in protected areas' and 'recognition of the legal obligations of partners' (both 80% of respondents). At the other end of the spectrum, 'shared accountability for decision-making' was identified as present by only 48% of respondents (Table 23).

Table 23: Importance of context-related features from the questionnaires

Features of the working environment of the partnership	Mean	Presence (%)
Adequate organisational support for the partnership	4.34	74
Current legislation (where legislation includes regulations) supports tourism in protected areas	4.31	80
Recognition of the legal obligations of the partners	4.28	80
Adequate financial support for the partnership	4.27	59
Recognition of the goals of the partners	4.25	77
Current administrative arrangements (excluding legislation) support tourism in protected areas	4.24	82
Written agreement developed by the partners	4.22	66
Issues of potential risk associated with the partnership are or have been addressed	4.07	61
Legal arrangements exist to implement the results produced by the partnership	3.94	57
Sufficient time has passed for the partnership to be effective	3.89	82
Shared accountability for actions	3.84	51
Shared accountability for decision-making	3.82	48

Interview Results

As with the other feature-related interview questions, respondents were asked to identify from the questionnaire and reflect on the most important context-related features (Appendix C, Question 3a, b & c). As in previous results sections, the results were summarised using the 'classes' listed in Table 2 (and Appendix D). The most frequently allocated contributing factors are set out for each feature in Table 24. Again, as per the previous sections on partner- and process-related features, details of how the feature was important were not included, as responses to this question overlapped with responses about the contributing factors (i.e. what enabled a feature to be present).

Table 24: Most important context-related features from the interviews and contributing factors

Context-related features	Number of responses	Contributing factors
Written agreement developed by the partners	36	Leadership
Current legislation (where legislation includes regulations) supports tourism in protected areas	26	Regulations & Agreements
Adequate financial support for the partnership	23	Commitment, Communication
Adequate organisational support for the partnership	23	Commitment, Communication
Recognition of the goals of the partners	21	Understanding, Direction, Commitment
Sufficient time has passed for the partnership to be effective	9	Continuity, Leadership
Current administrative arrangements support tourism in protected areas	9	Processes, Regulations & Agreements
Issues of potential risk associated with the partnership are or have been addressed	9	Trust
Recognition of the legal obligations of the partners	7	Regulations & Agreements, Roles & Powers
Shared accountability for decision-making	4	Leadership, Understanding
Shared accountability for actions	3	Regulations & Agreements, Understanding
Legal arrangements exist to implement the results produced by the partnership	3	Understanding
Total	**173**	

The context-related features mentioned most frequently as important were having a 'written agreement developed by the partners', followed by 'current legislation supports tourism in protected areas' and 'adequate financial/organisational support for the partnership'. These results are almost the same as those for the highest mean scores for importance identified through the questionnaires (Table 25). Both the questionnaire and the interviews produced a similar 'top four' features, ordered differently, and with less concurrence in rankings between the two data collection approaches than for the other sets of features. The reason for this weaker concurrence is not clear, however the feature 'current legislation supports tourism in protected areas' was ranked second based on both the interview and questionnaire data. 'Adequate organisational support' was ranked first from the questionnaires, while 'written agreement developed by the partners' was ranked first from the interviews (Table 24). This latter item was ranked seventh from the questionnaires. The ranking for the questionnaire items relies on splitting very closely scored items, with only 0.52 between the highest and lowest items. Therefore, some of these finer differentiations should be treated with caution.

The first most important context-feature, developing a written agreement, referred to both formal (e.g. leases, licences, MOU) and informal arrangements. Such agreements detail 'what we plan to achieve' and 'provide[s] surety and security. It is the nuts and bolts of the actual partnership'. They also make everyone feel involved and document what their role in the partnership might be. A good agreement was described as follows: 'This agreement covers risks, goals, legislation, actions. It is a pivotal point—needs to cover all those elements. Covers things like accountability'.

The second most important context-feature was having legislation that supports tourism in protected areas. Such legislation was considered to be necessary because it provides opportunities for the tourism industry to access protected areas while at the same time is 'important as control measures to promote heritage sites' and protects nature conservation values. Current legislation was also noted as creating a barrier to tourism in protected areas:

> 'At the moment they [legislation/regulations] are barriers to tourism. For example, the NSW Wilderness Act states that a large part of the Alps is declared a wilderness and thus not allowed to permit any commercial operation there'.

Adequate financial support, the third most important context-feature, was identified as critical if partnerships were to survive and flourish over the longer term: 'Certainty is associated with financial support'. This was not necessarily financial support for the partnership but for facilities and staff that make delivery of the tourism product possible. Infrastructure was a concern: 'We need $1 million to fix the roads in the Park, so I've got to say financial support is important'. Staff and associated costs were also often mentioned:

> 'We get paid for our work on the Trail in a fashion but volunteers need meals, accommodation and this is a sticking point—who pays for it? We have funds from the bushwalks we do which we can use. We also need money for projects…to get towns to embrace a marketing strategy which promotes the Trail. To maintain this Crown asset, we should get some support (not all out of our own pockets)'.

Organisational support, a closely related feature, dealt mainly with the resources available to the partnership itself. Such support was acknowledged as reflecting 'the commitment of the partners'. It includes both legislative and administrative support. One respondent commented that field staff involved in partnerships needs to know their organisation supports the partnership: 'This is critical. If a ranger is involved in a working group, they need to know that their organisation supports this and that this is a priority for their organisation'.

Table 25: Comparison of results from questionnaires and interviews regarding most important context-related features

CONTEXT-RELATED FEATURES*	**Overall importance ranking based on ...**		**Comparisons of rankings**
	...respondents' mean scores (questionnaires, n=100)	**... frequency with which they were identified as top 2 or 3 (interviews, n=97)**	
Adequate organisational support for the partnership	1	4	Top 5 in both
Current legislation supports tourism in protected areas	2	2	Identical
Adequate financial support for the partnership	4	3	Top 5 in both
Recognition of the legal obligations of the partners	3	9	---
Recognition of the goals of the partners	5	5	Top 5 in both

These are ranked out of 12, as 12 context-related features were listed in the questionnaire.

As with the previous interview results, those in Table 26 are presented according to the most frequently allocated contributing factors. For these context-related features, the most common contributing factors—understanding, leadership, commitment, and regulations and agreements—are discussed in greater detail in the following sub-sections. The 11 most common factors are listed in Table 26 (11 rather than 10 factors—as given in previous, similar tables—are included because the last two factors were tied).

Table 26: Factors contributing to context-related features (from the interviews)

Factors*	Number of Responses
Understanding	16
Leadership	14
Commitment	12
Regulations and agreements	12
Direction	8
Roles and powers	7
Performance	6
Continuity	5
Inclusion	5
Processes	4
Trust	4

Understanding

Key to understanding was working together to develop and realise both tourism and conservation goals:

> 'I suppose that understanding is a given, we haven't specifically talked about it but once again we recognise that there are certain things which are not negotiable we have to achieve e.g. conservation, visitor satisfaction, social enjoyment. Realising and recognising these goals came through discussions'.

As noted elsewhere in the results, having a written agreement was part of a reflection of a shared understanding: 'We nutted out things and they went into a written agreement'.

Leadership

Leadership by protected area agencies was identified as critical, however leadership by other parties was also influential, such as local government ('The Shire gave administrative support, set up meetings and provided refreshments. The Council offices hosted the meetings') and operators ('The new operator made many efforts to improve and build the partnership'). The contribution of leadership to formulating a written agreement was mentioned; this was leadership either from partners or those outside the partnership. Having a written agreement provides certainty of obligations and responsibilities for all involved:

> 'It [a written agreement] provides certainty. In the past we weren't good with paperwork and, as a result, there were lots of places where people weren't sure where they were or what they were doing. As a result of the agreement, we acknowledge the trail goes over their land, where it goes, and how the government will look after their interest. The agreement covers compensation of landowners (i.e. in the event of that a fire is started by a landowner) and is evidence of our commitment—we will look after the landowners. People [partners] like a piece of paper [agreement] and we have made it more user-friendly, so people know what they are doing and can read and understand it'.

Commitment

Commitment and organisational/financial support were intertwined, with a lack of resources adversely affecting commitment:

> 'This is on a downward trend, which is of concern. Financial support has been withdrawn from the Commonwealth a few years ago. This has a big impact—less projects and less capacity to manage the different mechanisms'.

However, commitment also contributed to the partnership in the face of a lack of resources. One partnership survived because of 'the existing long-term commitment of members rather than support from outside, we do not have enough financial backing for the partnership to be carried out more effectively, the administrative support is also not sufficient'.

Commitment was closely tied to having goals and working towards them: 'Commitment and responsibility to setting goals and to other partners. Keeping the goal in mind means they've always been working forwards'. It was also linked to involving the community in the partnership.

Regulations and agreements

Again, having a written agreement emerged as important when analysing regulations and agreements. Such agreements were important to respondents because they provide continuity as well as regulations. These agreements were described as licences, permits, and lease conditions, often to address legislative requirements. They may be formal agreements such as memorandum of understanding (MOU) between partners. Working jointly on an agreement furthermore provides the partners with a sense of ownership:

> 'It was not a requirement but the Foundation decided to develop a written agreement. There was also something ceremonial about signing off on the agreement, the finalisation and personal involvement from each of us'.

Respondents considered current legislation to support tourism since it sets the rules and regulations, such as licensing, permits and lease requirements and conditions, for tourism operations in protected areas. One respondent commented on the benefits of legislation that stipulated the involvement of multiple government agencies:

> 'The current system with different legislation across the different jurisdictions [is beneficial]. There is less potential for one government to make great changes. The current model actually leads to greater protection. It is less likely to have sweeping and ill-informed changes for political gain'.

Features Contributing to Outcomes

To this point, the findings about the outcomes of the partnerships (Chapter 4) and the features important in those partnerships (this chapter so far) have been analysed separately. This section moves the analysis to the relationships between the two. The analysis here is based on exploring correlations within the questionnaire results (see Chapter 2 for details). These relationships between features and outcomes are explored further through additional analyses of the interview results in Chapter 6 and again when the findings are synthesised in the concluding chapter.

The correlation analysis tested the relationships between the features that respondents regarded as important in their partnership and their satisfaction with the outcomes of that partnership. Such relationships would suggest that it is worth ensuring that certain features are present in a partnership in order to enhance partnership success and sustainable tourism outcomes. The most notable finding was just how few strong or moderate correlations there were. No strong correlations were found and a total of just 62 statistically significant (at $p<0.05$), moderate ($0.30<r<0.50$) correlations or 5% of the total of 1,232 possible correlations were found. Of these, there were far more correlations between features and general partnership outcomes (54) than there were between features and sustainable tourism outcomes (8). A possible explanation of this is that sustainable tourism outcomes appear more remote and affected by many factors beyond the partnership (e.g. biodiversity conservation, enhancement of culture) and thus require a lot of other things to 'come together'. Conversely, most of the partnership outcomes seem more directly associated with the partnership (e.g. partnership purpose achieved; improved relationships with other partners) and are thus more achievable solely through creating and sustaining a partnership. This however is just one of a number of possible explanations for these results and may require future research to explore them further.

Moreover, even for these 62 significant, moderate correlations, features correlated with just one or two outcomes, providing a less-than-compelling argument for investing time and resources to focus on these features as critical for partnership success. In about half the cases, however, particular features were correlated with multiple (4 or more) outcomes. It is this latter finding that is the most relevant and useful to managers, as it implies that inclusion of these features in a partnership may be worth investment of time and resources. Using this rationale, the findings suggest that the following are 'key' features and associated outcomes: decision-makers directly involved in the partnership; commitment by partners to the partnership; adequate financial support for the partnership; adequate organisational support for the partnership; and shared accountability for decision-making (Table 27).

Table 27: Features that correlated with multiple (4 or more) partnership or sustainable tourism outcomes (from the questionnaires)

Features regarded as important by respondents	Moderate significant correlation (r>.30; p<.05) with perceived success of the partnership in achieving ...	
	...general partnership outcomes	...sustainable tourism outcomes
Decision makers directly involved in the partnership (a partner-related feature)	• Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved • Economic gain for protected area management • Strengthening of organisational/business capacity • New relationships with influential people and/or organisations	None
Commitment by partners to the partnership (a process-related feature)	• Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved • Benefits from the partnership to all partners • Stimulation of innovative approaches • Improved understanding of other partners' interests • New relationships with influential people and/or organisations	None
Adequate financial support for the partnership (a context-related feature)	• Benefits from the partnership to all partners • Economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry • Stimulation of innovative approaches • Improved understanding of other partners' interests • Improved access to funding for the organisation, business and/or community	None
Adequate organisational support for the partnership (a context-related feature)	• Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved • Benefits from the partnership to all partners • Stimulation of innovative approaches • Strengthening of organisational/business capacity • Improved access to funding for the site/protected area	• Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area
Shared accountability for decision making (a context-related feature)	• Strengthening of organisational/business capacity • Improved understanding of other partners' interests • Reduced conflicts between partners • Improved access to funding for the site/protected area	• Enhancement of culture, heritage, and/or traditions • Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners

The five features presented in Table 27 account for nearly half (26) of all of the 62 significant correlations found and thus, although all are moderate correlations, these features should be of interest, particularly to managers who are seeking to achieve the specific partnership outcomes presented in this table. Collectively, these features were particularly notable in correlating with five partnership outcomes:

- Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved
- Strengthening of organisational/ business capacity
- Benefits from the partnership to all partners
- Stimulation of innovative approaches
- Improved understanding of other partners' interests

Discussion

All of the features potentially contributing to successful partnerships were identified as important by respondents, as supported by the questionnaire results. All were present, to some extent, although for a few of the partner-related features and more of the context-related features they were noted as absent by more than a third of the respondents (Table 28). For the process-related features, on the other hand, no features were noted as absent by more than a third of respondents.

Table 28: Partner-related and context-related features that were noted as absent by more than a third of respondents

Feature	Respondents noting as absent (%)
Partner-related features	
Efforts towards power sharing made within the partnership	36
Power equally distributed between the partners	54
Leadership provided by a non-government person	40
Context-related features	
Adequate financial support for the partnership	41
Written agreement developed by the partners	34
Issues of potential risk associated with the partnership are or have been addressed	39
Legal arrangements exist to implement the results produced by the partnership	43
Shared accountability for actions	49
Shared accountability for decision-making	52

There was strong concurrence across the questionnaire and interview results for the four most important features for each of the feature sets (i.e. partner-, process- and context-related) (Table 29). The correlation analysis showed that a number of these features had a moderate, significant relationship with outcomes. The only feature evident from the correlations but not in Table 29 was ‘shared accountability for decision making’. For partner-related features, the involvement and support of the protected area agency seemed critical. Leadership was also very important, either provided by the protected area agency or others; it was not solely the domain of the agency. Beierle and Konisky (2000) note the importance of agency leadership, while Leach and Pelkey (2001) add that leadership from the ground up is also valuable and necessary.

Table 29: Summary of importance of features contributing to successful partnerships from the questionnaires and interviews

Feature	Questionnaire most important	Interview most important
Partner-related features	Decision makers directly involved in the partnership*	Leadership provided by at least one of the partners
	Support provided by protected agency	Support provided by protected agency
	Participation by all partners encouraged	Empathy between partners encouraged
	Leadership provided by at least one of the partners	Decision makers directly involved in the partnership
Process-related features	Open communication between partners	Open communication between partners
	Trust between partners	Trust between partners
	Commitment by partners to the partnership	Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership
	Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership	Commitment by partners to the partnership*
Context-related features	Adequate organisational support for the partnership*	Written agreement developed by the partners
	Current legislation (where legislation includes regulations) supports tourism in protected areas	Current legislation (where legislation includes regulations) supports tourism in protected areas
	Recognition of the legal obligations of the partners	Adequate financial support for the partnership*
	Adequate financial support for the partnership*	Adequate organisational support for the partnership*

*Features that were correlated with outcomes as per Table 26.

In terms of the processes of the partnership, three features of working together—communication, trust and commitment—were pivotal. All three are discussed below. And finally, for the context-related features, based on the working environment itself, legislation supporting tourism in protected areas emerged as important. Researchers such as Buckley and Sommer (2001) and Wondelleck and Yaffee (2000) have commented that operational and administrative arrangements (including the legislative setting) can facilitate (or impede) partnership development. This study has also shown that adequate financial and organisational support for the partnership matters. Funding and other resources have been noted by many observers and researchers as critical for partnership success (e.g. Wondolleck & Yaffee 2000; Leach & Pelkey 2001; Imperial 2005).

All of these features are underpinned by factors that have been described in detail in the preceding sections. Those most evident across the sets of features are communication (and its companion trust), roles and powers (and their companion regulations and agreements), understanding and processes (Table 30).

Table 30: Factors underlying the sets of features (from the interviews)

Partner-related features	Process-related features	Context-related features
Communication	Processes	Understanding
Individuals	Communication	Leadership
Roles and powers	Roles and powers	Commitment

Communication appears fundamental in contributing to successful partnership outcomes. The respondents noted that interactions and the associated discourse are instrumental to successful and effective working relationships between partners. Communication is an essential constituent of relationships, both private and professional (Sirakaya & Uysal 1997). It can be understood as: (a) the process of information exchange, and (b) building relationships, in which the information exchange can be formal or informal (Bartol, Martin, Tein &

Matthews 2005). With regards to protected areas and the management of these areas, previous research has identified that communication and good communication skills are important for conservation agencies and are perceived as such by their partners and stakeholders (Wegner, Moore & Macbeth 2007).

Forming relationships with all partners across organisational boundaries through effective communication and collaboration is also a means of building support for much needed management and operational direction. Communication (and specifically open communication) was the most frequently identified important process-related feature in the interviews. The key contributing factor to achieving open communication between partners was trust.

Trust is frequently associated with developing but also maintaining a successful partnership and has the potential to develop from good communication and dialogue (Gray 1996). Environmental dispute resolution, and in particular work by Bingham (1986), strongly influenced the design of this research and the ideas underpinning it. The dispute resolution literature places a strong emphasis on trust as a contributor to successful relationships and resolution of disputes. This emphasis on trust was also apparent from the results in this study. Trust most commonly develops on an individual basis first and, as such, it is important, from a management perspective, to consider individuals and their respective personalities when reviewing difficulties, success, or failures in a partnership. Previous research has shown that inter-personal trust (that is, trust between individuals) can survive and is often more important than trust built between organisations (Moore 1995).

Communication can influence and is influenced by the roles and power of the partners. These roles and powers are influenced to a greater and lesser extent by the legal and administrative context. In the case of conservation agencies in Australia, they have a legal mandate to manage protected areas and this has implications for the distribution of power between partners in a protected area partnership (Hall 1994). The presence of this mandate may explain why only 46% of respondents noted that an equal distribution of power was present in their partnership and why very few respondents identified an equal distribution of power as one of the most important partner-related factors (Table 16).

Leadership was a role identified as important by a number of respondents. It was noted as necessary for the development of a successful partnership. This finding reflects and supports the outcomes of previous studies in various fields, such as watershed management (Leach & Pelkey 2001) and environmental management (Poncelet 2004)). Exercising leadership has an associated risk in terms of how the leadership role applies power; however, this did not appear to be a concern in any of the partnerships studied. Participants in this study did not flag a problem with the abuse of leadership.

As part of roles and powers, having a written agreement developed by partners and relating to the purpose of the partnership, was acknowledged as a central contributor to both process- and context-related features. Such an agreement between partners may be formal, or informal and unstructured. It clarifies the roles and powers of participants and can also provide clear guidance for leaders. Respondents noted that a written agreement was highly beneficial for the development of trust (Cropper 1996). Another benefit of a written agreement, as suggested by previous studies, is the level of commitment by partners.

A sustained commitment plays an integral part in partners' willingness to work towards the success of their partnership. In an ideal world, a commitment to the partnership with all its facets should be made by both the organisations involved and also individuals working as part of the partnership. Having partners (both individuals and organisations) with strong commitment to the cause and operations of the partnership acts to strengthen the intensity of relationships and a desire to succeed (Bramwell & Lane 2000).

Conclusion

The most important features for successful partnerships were: involvement and support of the protected area agency; communication, trust and commitment; and legislation supporting tourism in protected areas, plus adequate financial and organisational support for the partnership. Those features moderately and significantly correlated with outcomes were mostly context-related and included adequate financial and organisational support for the partnership. Factors contributing to these outcomes and influencing each other coalesced around communication and trust. Also central was the roles and powers of the partners.

Communication supported and in turn was enhanced by understanding, inclusion and trust. Understanding of roles and powers and communication of written agreements supported leadership and commitment of partners to their partnerships. In a time when funding for protected area management is decreasing, communication of legal requirements, government policy and initiatives may assist partners in working together to value-add to limited agency resources.

Chapter 6

PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES, FAILURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY PARTNERS

One of the most powerful forms of research is to ask those involved in an activity, particularly an activity that takes place over time like these partnerships, about what has succeeded and failed, how they have solved problems and what advice they would give to others involved in similar activities. This chapter draws on the interview results to examine the factors that have contributed to successes or failures in partnerships, explore problems and solutions, and lastly provide recommendations for policy makers about developing and fostering partnerships. These findings are brought together with information gleaned from previous research and practice in the discussion.

Factors Contributing to Successful and Failed Partnership Outcomes

In the closing stages of the interviews, respondents were asked about what had contributed to the successes and failures of their partnership (Appendix C, Question 7). As with previous results from the interviews, the responses were reduced to a smaller number of classes based on their content (see Table 2 and Appendix D).

Partnership Successes

The three most important factors contributing to successful partnership outcomes were communication, direction and inclusion (Table 31).

Table 31: Factors contributing to successful partnerships

Factor	Number of responses
Communication	28
Direction	19
Inclusion	19
Benefits	18
Commitment	15
Roles and powers	14
Trust	12
Leadership	12
Individuals	10
Expertise	9
Continuity	9
Adaptability and innovation	3
Performance	1
Interconnections	1
Processes	1
Regulations and agreements	1
Transparency and accountability	1
Understanding	0
Resources	0
Total	**173**

Communication

Communication appears to be important because it reduces conflict when issues have built up. One respondent expressed it as ‘knowing what is happening, speaking up and clearing the air’. Being ‘forthright’ allows the

partners to be aware of the 'context for decisions' and provides an opportunity to demonstrate openness and bona fides. As another respondent noted: 'Communication prevents surprises—you need to be honest about the challenges and where we will find the money for this'. This partner saw open communication as an example of leadership by community representatives involved in the partnership.

Communication is also a way to build a relationship. As one partner observed: 'Communication is important but make sure that it is not [the case] that the only time you see them is when you are wielding the big stick'. Communication should ideally occur across all members of the partnerships 'on all different levels, from field staff and volunteers, up to the management'.

Many respondents saw communication as vital in terms of dealing with interests outside the partnership, such as external stakeholders or markets. Examples include branding and marketing campaigns developed or supported by the lead agency or engaging with the local community. As one respondent noted of the lead agency: 'They provide us with good publicity and promote the Park to the public'. Another cited the 'range of materials and information circulated' to the public as a result of collaboration by the partners as a partnership success factor.

The use of face-to-face communication, combined with updates using technology such as telephone and email, appeared to be particularly important for several respondents, as illustrated by the following quote:

> 'The agency staff went out with one of the people working on the new policy and visited operators in their offices to talk about what the licence would entail ... She phones up operators as part of a friendly call and mentions if paper work is outstanding. [The parks agency] tries to meet up with operators once a year to discuss any changes'.

Others referred to the importance of informal communication and social events between partners, such as Christmas parties and 'social interactions between [the lead agency] and the volunteers'.

Direction

The importance of direction for the partnership appears to lie in the existence of a common vision, goals and objectives, as well as a 'shared passion'. As one respondent stated: 'Like [the parks agency], we can see the potential for visitor experience and have the desire to work in partnership to achieve this. There is thus a shared vision/shared goals'. Another noted a '[common] focus on protection of the environment [i.e. closely aligned goals]'.

Even where the partners do not share the same goals, there is 'mutual respect of each other's goals' or at least 'an understanding of each other's objectives and goals'. This can be challenging at times, with one respondent noting that even where a common purpose exists, 'there can be socio-cultural differences, often out of left field', that need to be noted and taken into account. There was also recognition that this is an ongoing process that needs constant attention:

> 'We as a group have a common vision. We know that we have to keep working on our goals and working towards our vision of conserving the area but also for people to appreciate it'.

Some saw direction as a structured process, with 'set milestones to achieve' or 'guidelines set in place early'. For example, the existence of an agreement was seen as important: 'The agreement gave staff a clear direction—we know what we are working towards, including timelines'. For others, it was more about 'being on the same page' in terms of outlook, philosophy or goals.

Inclusion

Inclusion is another key success factor for partnerships and has a number of facets. It includes involvement of key stakeholders in meetings and the partnership process. As one respondent expressed it: 'From the outset, we have involved key stakeholders. This is the most important element of success of this partnership. Even though we have not communicated with a lot of individuals, the stakeholders represent key people. They were brought along in the process'. The community was often cited as a key stakeholder to involve in a partnership and to empathise with. In the words of one respondent:

> 'Engaging the broader community [is important]—we have endeavoured to understand their aspirations. Is this consistent with the expectations of the private sector? We have to balance both community standards and business expectations'.

Inclusion may also result from open channels of communication and maintaining accessibility to partners both formally and informally. A respondent summed this up as: 'Know your operators and be accessible to them. Don't be remote or isolated. Talk to them—be active and seen'.

Inclusion may also require 'persistence at relationship building' involving long-term protagonists as well as supporters, so that contentious issues can be dealt with up-front. As one respondent noted: 'We get all the traditional "warring tribes" in the room', not just the supportive stakeholders'.

The process also needs to be collaborative to be truly inclusive, with partners' views and wants taken seriously, as one respondent explained:

> 'There is a willingness to respond to other stakeholders within the partnership and their needs. We don't just fob them off but have a capacity to react and develop positive outcomes for both parties. We don't force things on them'.

Partnership 'Failures'

Respondents were also asked to talk about 'failures'—factors (or more specifically the lack of) that lead to unwanted outcomes including failures in the partnership (Appendix C, Question 7). The two most important factors contributing to unsuccessful partnership outcomes ('failures') were lack of inclusion and lack of resources (Table 32).

Table 32: Factors contributing to partnership failure

Factor (i.e. lack of)	Number of responses
Inclusion	7
Resources	7
Communication	4
Direction	4
Individuals	4
Commitment	3
Roles and powers	3
Adaptability and innovation	3
Benefits	1
Leadership	1
Performance	1
Processes	1
Regulations and agreements	1
Understanding	1
Trust	0
Expertise	0
Continuity	0
Interconnections	0
Transparency and accountability	0
Total	**41**

Inclusion (lack of)

In some cases, lack of inclusion was the result of a key stakeholder not being involved in the partnership. Others referred to key stakeholders not being 'properly engaged' or discussed the failure of the partnership to 'sit [the partners] around a table to resolve' problems collectively. One respondent saw lack of inclusion as ultimately affecting relations or networks, where the partners 'should have developed a better relationship with local government from the start'.

Insufficient inclusion may lead to misunderstandings or lack of understanding. For example, one respondent noted that:

> 'The Shire could have had more involvement in the management of the Centre. They would have had a better understanding of the difficulties of running the Centre and the difficulties of managing the impacts from tourism'.

Resources (lack of)

Respondents also referred to lack of resources as a strong contributor to unsuccessful partnership outcomes. It is worth noting, however, that in the previous section (and Table 31), 'resources' were not identified as a success

factor. Examples given of lack of resources included lack of funding, difficulties in staffing, insufficient capacity and inadequate involvement of government or the lead agency in the partnership. Funding was a key problem cited as a factor in partnership failure. For example one respondent noted that 'There is a lack of government funding for capital costs due to not being under a management plan', while another observed that their partnership encountered 'difficulty in maintaining goodwill in the face of limited financial capacity'.

With respect to staffing, lack of volunteers was a problem for several partnerships. One partnership suffered from not having 'sufficient capacity … because we insist on all this training, which is too much for volunteers', while another was affected by the increased cost to volunteers – 'In previous years we have had many more volunteers'. The location of some protected areas also contributed to difficulties with staffing. One respondent commented: 'The human resource management issue in the remote regions is huge. The problem is people coming and going'.

The lead agency was sometimes perceived as a resource, with its lack of active contribution or interest in the partnership contributing to failure. As one respondent observed:

> 'There could be more Shire involvement in running the Centre…It would be good to have someone out there to assist them [the protected area agency]'.

Partnership Problems and Solutions

Another way of accessing the factors contributing to the success or failure of partnerships was to ask respondents about problems encountered along the way and how they were addressed (or not) (Appendix C, Question 8). Similarly to the previous section, these results are presented according to the class labels given in Table 2 and Appendix D.

Partnership Problems

The three most frequently mentioned partnership problems were lack of resources, problems with regulations and agreements, and lack of direction (Table 33).

Table 33: Problems encountered in partnerships

Factor	Number of responses
Resources	22
Regulations and agreements	21
Direction	14
Communication	13
Roles and powers	12
Understanding	10
Continuity	9
Individuals	9
Processes	9
Inclusion	6
Commitment	5
Performance	3
Expertise	2
Interconnections	2
Leadership	2
Transparency and accountability	2
Adaptability and innovation	0
Benefits	0
Trust	0
Total	**141**

Resources

Lack of resources was a problem for a number of partnerships. This mainly involved lack of staff and inadequate financial backing, but occasionally insufficient time to devote to the partnership was mentioned. Respondents

referred to financial problems caused by 'withdrawal of support by a major sponsor', the 'frustration' of lack of funding 'for what we want to do' and the fact that some partners were unable to participate in the process due to lack of funding: 'For some [partners], the first question is, 'Will this cost us money?' and because they are limited in funds, they don't always come on board'.

Lack of staff was sometimes due to the 'tyranny of distance' in remote locations or budget constraints. This led to complaints of being 'stretched thin', with a consequential reduction in contact with partners and ability to deal with problems. As one respondent noted, lack of resources resulted in reduced 'staff time to engage more in consultation and problem-solving. This is an ongoing issue'.

There were a number of ways in which the respondents reported dealing with these problems. Extra resources were sought, through avenues such as helping partners to seek funding and getting major sponsors on board. Noted one respondent: 'We help to generate extra funding; we help them with their funding applications'. Some partnerships overcame resource shortages through communication, based on negotiation and 'good rapport with staff', while others worked through problems in meetings 'as well as on a needs basis'.

Regulations and agreements

Lack of or inadequate regulations and agreements were another key problem encountered by partnerships in this study. Respondents mentioned 'inconsistency of regulations across States' as affecting negotiations between partners from different jurisdictions, while 'bureaucratic difficulties' when applying for a liquor licence or regulations prohibiting the service of food in some protected areas meant that potential tourist operations were put in jeopardy. Others referred to the need for lease terms for tourism operators or tourist attractions within parks that are 'commensurate with the level of development, to deliver a viable business'. Licence conditions deadlines need to be flexible. One respondent referred to the need for government agencies to coordinate their licence approval processes:

> 'Sometimes, [the agency] can be regarded as blockers, not because of intentional blocking but because a large number of aspects need to be approved one by one, especially when it comes to legislation. Other agencies are not necessarily aware that this is the role of [that agency]. So when a change in the length of licences comes up, it is only one in a line of hundreds and ... probably not of high priority. More such awareness is required'.

Some expressed frustration with legal requirements that did not cover all stakeholders, citing 'problems with recreational boaters who are not covered by licences and who do not comply with standards set by regulations' and 'non-registered providers from interstate who are not part of the partnership [and] use illegal campsites'. There was a strong feeling expressed by respondents that regulations and laws should be consistent for all stakeholders, based on equity as well as sustainability grounds.

Various solutions to these problems were provided by respondents. Demonstrating adaptability and flexibility were important for one respondent, where an agency gave the operators 'breathing space' when complying with licence timelines. One respondent dealt with problems with agreements through the courts 'but in future, we wouldn't go down the legal route again', preferring to deal with issues through negotiation. Other solutions involved more open communication, where issues were put forward for discussion or undertakings made 'at senior levels by both parties to move [the partnership] forward'. In the latter case, the respondent observed that priorities were set by the partners:

> 'We had to work through [details of a lease agreement] and cut to the chase – what was important...This enabled the works to start without the agreement being finalized ... The lawyers had sweaty palms but there was trust there. People were willing to initiate works and get things happening. We were able to demonstrate the bona fides of the project—this showed our commitment to make it happen'.

Direction

Problems involving direction of the partnership included trying to accommodate diverse needs, ('trying to accommodate the private business needs as well as government needs') and meeting resistance to change. Some encountered misinterpretation of the purpose of the partnership and noted the difficulty of working with different visions or goals. As one respondent explained: 'Some staff misinterpreted what the partnership was about but those people have been spoken to'.

Some dealt with these problems by focusing on priority issues: 'We assessed our efforts with the potential outcomes. Some things we had to let go; others we were pushing through'. Others adopted innovative approaches: 'When something didn't work, we tried alternative ways', or novel solutions such as better designs and new access routes to resolve differences. In some instances, problem solving meant accepting 'philosophical

differences' between partners.

Communication was also used as a tool to address diverging directions. This might involve scheduling meetings or holding further discussions between partners ('addressing the issues through consultation') and being honest and open about unease or disquiet. One respondent observed: 'I believe we have the right to raise and voice our concerns'.

Partnership Solutions

As part of the discussion of problems encountered with their partnership, respondents were also asked to describe how they had dealt with these problems (or not dealt with them). Some of these 'solutions' have been given in the previous section as part of the discussion of the problems, however they are explored in more detail below. The three most frequently mentioned solutions were communication, roles and powers, and adaptability and innovation (Table 34).

Table 34: Solutions to problems encountered in partnerships

Factor	Number of responses
Communication	33
Roles and powers	9
Adaptability and innovation	8
Resources	7
Individuals	5
Understanding	5
Inclusion	4
Processes	4
Regulations and agreements	4
Direction	2
Trust	2
Benefits	1
Commitment	1
Continuity	0
Expertise	0
Interconnections	0
Leadership	0
Performance	0
Transparency and accountability	0
Total	**85**

Communication

Communication was the overwhelming response to this question, whether formal or informal. Formal routes included meetings or stakeholder consultation, including community presentations, while informal ways of dealing with problems involved dealing with things 'on a needs basis' or involving 'constant dialogue' with partners. Having a single point of contact was important for some partnerships, with one respondent appreciating the existence of a 'someone who the organisation can work through'.

Conflict avoidance or resolution was often stated to be the result of open communication. One respondent mentioned the need to 'be upfront about [issue of fire protection] and throw the cards on the table. We start with the hard points/touchy issues, as it is easier to work that way'. Others dealt with problems at the grass roots: 'It was extremely political but not at the ground level, so [the issue] was sorted out there'. This communication process was also facilitated by the existence of a 'good rapport' between partners as well as trust ('Based on the trust between the partners we communicate if we encounter problems'). Honesty was seen as another important ingredient, with one respondent referring to attempts to 'be upfront about [an] issue and throw our cards on the table'.

Communication was used to deal with a variety of problems facing partnerships, including those associated with leadership and continuity, the direction of the partnership, lack of inclusion, lack of resources, processes, transparency and accountability, roles and powers of partners, regulations and agreements and understanding between partners. One example of its potential in overcoming issues of power imbalance can be demonstrated by

the situation where a request for further information and desire to offer tours by one partner was seen as a threat to another partner ('we had the sense of being taken over'). They resolved this by 'talking with him' and have now 'created a win-win situation', where both partners work together to offer tours to visitors.

The importance of communication is illustrated by one respondent, who likened the relationship between partners to 'a marriage'. He commented that:

> 'We now have a good manager who understands us a bit better and is interested in listening to us. We probably listen to him more as well!'

Roles and powers

Reviewing roles and powers of partners was also seen as an important mechanism to solve problems affecting a partnership. For example, sometimes other agencies took over the support role of the partnership, while replacement of a staff member who had left meant that other partners felt 'looked after' again ('Since having a volunteer coordinator responsible for the volunteers, [the partnership] works really well again').

Going above the head of a partner who was causing problems was one option. As one respondent noted: 'Local rangers (lower level) can make it hard for commercial operators … If this occurs, we step above them and go to the people who know of the relationship'. Others relied on 'trying to get clarification about processes/roles so that [conflict over unauthorised work in the protected area] doesn't happen in the future'. This reduction in conflict was the result of the partners having a better understanding of what was expected of them and their role in the partnership. In one partnership, councillors and politicians were seen as having 'overstepped the marks in terms of their role'. One of the partners had to 'hose them down' but felt that this was not really their job to do this. In this partnership, another partner was happy to take on this role, even though it was also not strictly their responsibility; a positive outcome that was seen as the result of 'mutual trust' between partners.

Adaptability and innovation

Adaptability and innovation were also used to deal with problems, including issues with partnership direction and performance, understanding between partners and regulations and agreements. Partners tried alternatives ('When something didn't work, we tried new ways') or were 'flexible and helpful to accommodate [a partner's] requirements'. They also accepted inconsistencies between regulations: 'A good partnership can make that work, rather than putting that energy into jurisdictional consistency'. One respondent explained that honesty and openness were preconditions to an innovative solution being negotiated between the partners: 'The operator contacted us and told us about [their] mistake'.

Recommendations by the Partners about Partnerships

The interviews concluded with a question asking respondents to recommend to policy makers what is needed to develop and foster partnerships between the tourism industry and protected area managers to achieve sustainable tourism in these areas (Appendix C, Question 9). As with previous sections in this chapter, responses are orgnanised and presented using the factors from Table 2 and Appendix D. Recommendations most frequently referred to communication, understanding and inclusion (Table 35).

Table 35: Recommendations for policy-makers provided by respondents

Factor	Number of responses
Communication	41
Understanding	30
Inclusion	30
Processes	25
Direction	24
Regulations & Agreements	18
Resources	17
Benefits	14
Commitment	10
Roles & Powers	10
Adaptability & Innovation	9
Transparency & Accountability	9
Continuity	3
Leadership	3
Expertise	2
Interconnections	2
Individuals	1
Performance	1
Trust	1
Total	**250**

Most of the recommendations align with the features that are required to achieve successful partnerships rather than with the outcomes of the partnerships. Only four recommendations mentioned 'outcome' and only five mentioned 'benefit'. No recommendations referred to 'purpose of partnership being achieved' (the most important outcome identified by respondents (see Chapter 4) and only 14 (6%) of the recommendations related to 'benefits to all partners' (the second most important outcome identified by respondents—see Chapter 4). This may be because these outcomes are already being achieved by the partnerships in this study. In other words, while these outcomes were rated very highly in importance, respondents also rated their satisfaction with these partnership outcomes highly (mean satisfaction of 4.2 and 4.1 respectively).

Similarly, although three recommendations made specific reference to the need to focus on the triple bottom line, overall very few recommendations referred to sustainable tourism outcomes. It seems that respondents did not concern themselves with making recommendations that articulate outcomes but rather with features or factors that might enhance achievement of these outcomes. It is logical that, in a free-response question such as this, respondents would make recommendations regarding what can be done (particularly process- and context-related features) to foster successful partnerships and how it can be done (strategies) rather than the benefits to aim for or why (outcomes of a successful partnership). Respondents may well have had outcomes in mind when making their recommendations, but the recommendations themselves focus on the how rather than the why.

As shown in Table 34, three quarters of the recommendations made by respondents related to seven factors. Further details on these follow. More than half of these factors relate to features of working together (i.e. are process-related) including communication, understanding, processes and direction. A further two describe features of the working environment, that is, they are context-related (regulations and agreements, and resources). The remaining one, inclusion, refers to features of the partnership (i.e. is partner-related).

Communication

In these recommendations, communication was described as 'open communication', 'on-going communication', and 'keeping lines of communication open'.

> 'Keep the lines of communication going, with people specific to the protected areas and local people and industries. Can be both formal and informal. No harm communicating with emails, but it's good to have face-

> to-face contact to explain things, provide information, ask about the facilities needed and ask how the business is going'.

The most common theme around communication was the need for feedback – the need to receive as well as deliver communication about the partnership. Partners need to be 'taken seriously', including 'taking on board outcomes of consultative processes' and 'making decisions which flow from discussions rather than just talking for talk's sake'. Related to this was the need to 'show stakeholders that their contributions are valued', 'provide positive feedback', 'say thanks' and 'provide formal acknowledgement for good ideas'.

A second theme was the need to communicate to others about the partnership. Some respondents noted that the audiences for such communication are more than just the current partners—they emphasised the need to 'get information out about this partnership', 'highlight what works and how ... perhaps through workshops', 'showcase some best practice models on the web', 'provide guidelines to let people know what worked really well' and 'highlight successes'.

Understanding

Closely linked to communication was fostering understanding. Respondents were quite specific about what needs to be understood, the most common being the 'commercial reality' of tourism businesses, i.e. that 'businesses must make a profit'. Government bodies, including park agencies, need to improve their understanding of what it takes to make a business viable— 'to make a buck out of it'. Respondents also mentioned the necessity to better appreciate the 'high financial investment' and the 'risks operators take' in order to find ways to 'make it attractive to invest in these places'. At the same time, it was acknowledged that operators and sometimes tourists could be better educated regarding 'why a particular area has been reserved' and the need to develop an ethos appropriate to a 'business based on nature'.

> 'Get operators and protected area managers to understand each other's position. Provide the environment for operators to understand where managers are coming from e.g. politics and vice-versa as well, as managers need to understand tourism distribution systems'.

Respondents summed up these perspectives as 'understanding of each partners' needs and expectations from the outset', 'respect for what the other partners are trying to achieve', and 'understanding each others' values and goals'. Finally, a number of respondents expressed the requirement for decision-makers to 'get out there', 'get into the protected areas and get out of their windowless, airless offices' and visit the areas for which decisions are being made.

It seems a critical element in these public/private partnerships is for both parties (protected area managers and the private sector) to fully understand and recognise each other's role and responsibility. For example, in Western Australia, the Department of Environment and Conservation has an environmental focus with a resource management role that includes visitor services. The private sector has a development focus (and a profit motive) with some degree of sustainability/environmental ethos in their business (Tourism Co-ordinates 2007; Sargent Tourism WA pers. comm. 2008).

Inclusive

The necessity to be inclusive in processes, decision-making and action was recommended by respondents as frequently as the need for understanding. Engaging a range of stakeholders 'at all levels' was advocated as a way of adding value to a partnership, as 'different groups can make different contributions'. The most prevalent theme was for early involvement of stakeholders, 'buy-in right from the start', to 'allow partnerships to build from the ground-up'.

> 'Get partners involved early—really need people involved right at the conceptual stage or just beyond, so they are involved in the whole decision making process. Don't go in with something as a *fait accompli*. If they are affected by it, better to involve them early than when you have already done the deal. Otherwise there will be problems—they will feel offside and that they don't have a real say in it. Overcome a lot of grief if do it this way. You haven't wasted a lot of time and effort if you talk to them at this early stage'.

In a few cases, specific stakeholders were mentioned as having been excluded from the partnership table, such as Indigenous communities, local communities and the local Shire. Finally, many respondents mentioned a 'sense of ownership', 'feeling of empowerment' and a 'sense of belonging' as an outcome of inclusiveness.

Processes and Direction

Adequate processes included putting an audit system in place, 'to continuously monitor and review conditions and activities'. Others made specific reference to the need for record-keeping about the partnership:

> 'Consistent feedback loop and consistent collection of data—you need concrete data to base decisions on ... Data and feedback are integral to any partnership'.

Several of the recommendations focused on the need for consistency in whatever processes are put in place.

Another more frequently mentioned theme related to having a clear and shared direction or purpose for the partnership. The main point made in these recommendations was for 'a clear understanding of what is trying to be achieved; ambiguous and vague statements need to be avoided' as does 'changing the goal posts'. Some respondents were quite prescriptive about how to do this, recommending a 'top-down approach' for setting direction, roles, responsibilities, resources, and actions, but 'involving the people at the bottom'. Others were equally as prescriptive regarding the focus of the partnership direction:

> 'Agency staff should stay true to the need to protect areas and not build partnerships which end up being a cost to the environment. They should not let operators try to persuade agencies that they need access to certain areas for tourism purposes such as building lodges in or near national parks. Agencies should not regard national parks as a "pie" that can be cut up for different users to "make better use of it for everybody who's interested in it" '.

Others acknowledged that 'one size does not fit all' and that direction needs to be 'set up-front but on a case-by-case basis'.

Regulations and Agreements

Respondents were interested in a good licensing system, with many recommending a longer tenure for licences, with differing opinions regarding where the balance of power should lie. They were also interested in having a written agreement: 'Have a good written agreement on who does what—what resources, funds, time each will provide'.

Resources

A number of respondents commented that more resources should be allocated to partnerships: 'The first year to 18 months can be challenging because of start-up cost and it may take a while for the money to flow in'. Others identified the need for ongoing resourcing from recurrent funds. In addition, staff positions need to be earmarked to manage partnerships—'the partnership doesn't end the day the lease is signed'. The allocation of overworked park staff to oversee partnerships was perceived as a threat to partnerships, as was the inability to access professional people if needed. Some respondents acknowledged that this was not entirely the burden of the protected area management agency:

> **'**Need to have adequate resources from both sides (contribution both ways). While it is not just about resources, human and financial resources do make a difference'.

Discussion

A comparison across the results for successes and failures, problems and solutions, and recommendations shows some commonalities (Table 36). Communication sits at the top of the list for successes, solutions and recommendations. Inclusion was similarly widely mentioned, appearing as a success, failure (though its absence) and as recommendations. Direction was similarly widely evident, as a success, a problem and in the recommendations. Interestingly, two of the three most often mentioned solutions were not mentioned in response to the other questions. These were roles and powers, and adaptability and innovation. This suggests that solutions and innovations for the future may rely on different factors to those perceived as creating current successes, failures and problems.

Table 36: Factors underlying partnership successes, failures and recommendations for success

Successes	Solutions	Recommendations
Communication	Communication	Communication
Direction	Roles and powers	Understanding
Inclusion	Adaptability and innovation	Inclusion
Failures	**Problems**	Processes
Inclusion (lack of)	Resources (lack of)	Direction
Resources (lack of)	Regulations and agreements (problems with)	Regulations and agreements
	Direction (lack of)	Resources

The importance of communication as a success factor has been noted in the literature, including the necessity of an atmosphere of openness (Schuett et al. 2001) and creating channels for sharing information (Imperial 2005). The links between communication and conflict minimisation/resolution have also been identified by Schuett et al. (2001). Inclusion, in the sense of stakeholder participation, has also been identified in the literature as a partnership success factor. For example, Leach and Pelkey (2001, pg. 383) note the importance of a 'broad-based membership and inclusive membership rules' and Buckley and Sommer (2001, pg. 31) advocate 'open and extensive community involvement'. Direction, the other dominant factor, and described as a common vision and goals and an agreed pathway, has been explored in several studies, including Dowling et al. (2004) and Cropper (1996), with its importance linked to helping to prevent a partnership from drifting and providing it with clear and agreed boundaries.

In terms of solutions, communication was often mentioned, with roles and powers, and adaptability and innovation lagging behind as the next most frequently noted factors (Table 33). Communication has been discussed above and at length in previous chapters. In other studies, roles and powers have been considered in terms of power balance and power sharing, with support for redressing power differentials (Rogers 2002) and encouraging leadership from the ground up (Leach & Pelkey 2001), as well as invoking key agency support. There is also literature on participation of stakeholders, as discussed above, which advocates greater input of partners in decision-making and goal setting (Mohr & Spekman 1994). Concerns regarding power sharing were not evident from this study. Although only 46% of respondents noted that power was equally distributed between partners, this feature was one of the least important to them (with a mean importance of 3.74).

Innovation and adaptability have been explored by Imperial (2005), who sees being responsive to changing conditions and open to creative solutions as key attributes of partners, while flexibility, including freedom of negotiation (Buckley & Sommer 2001) and informal processes (Leach & Pelkey 2001), has been identified as important for successful operation of a partnership.

As would be expected, the three most frequently identified problems are picked up in the recommendations (Table 34): lack of resources; problems with regulations and agreements; and lack of direction. The last of these has been discussed above. Resources have been identified as an element in partnership success by a number of commentators and academics. For example, Imperial (2005) has discussed the role played by capacity, including leadership skills, in dealing with conflict and the importance of adequate funding and equipment in partnership success, while Cropper (1996) observes that funding is often overlooked as a contributor to partnership outcomes. For regulations and agreements, the legislative or administrative setting of a partnership has been considered in the literature, but there appears to be a divide as to whether it contributes to partnership success. The majority of studies, however, appear to link a strong legislative or administrative foundation with clear direction and assignment of responsibilities, as well as efficiency gains (Buckley & Sommer 2001).

Conclusion

Not only was communication the most mentioned factor with regards to partnership successes and solutions, the greatest number of recommendations also centered on it. Other critical factors were inclusion, contributing to success and its absence contributing to failure and direction, as a factor in success and with its absence creating problems. Both factors were prominent in the recommendations. The solutions included not only communication, but also two factors not obvious from the responses to other questions—roles and powers, and adaptability and innovation. Adaptability and innovation were used to deal with problems, including issues with partnership direction and performance, understanding between partners and regulations and agreements. Taking a flexible approach to roles and powers also created solutions.

Chapter 7

OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated at the outset, this technical report aims to identify the characteristics and attributes of successful tourism partnerships associated with protected areas, through an examination of 21 case studies across Australia. Chapter 3 has provided a profile of each of the case studies, Chapter 4 has captured the outcomes that flow from such partnerships as perceived by respondents and Chapter 5 has identified the features that respondents perceive to be associated with successful partnerships as well as exploring correlations between these features and outcomes (from the questionnaires). In Chapter 6, respondents' perceptions of the factors contributing to partnership success and failure, their proposed solutions to partnership problems, and their recommendations have been presented (as derived from the interviews). This concluding chapter overviews the study findings and provides recommendations for developing and fostering 'successful' partnerships focused on tourism associated with protected areas.

Overview of the Study Findings

The most important outcomes from the partnerships were goal achievement, benefits to partners, and improved information available for protected area management. These benefits provided direction for and drove the partnerships as well as creating a sense of achievement. Improved information was achieved through sharing and contributed to better management decisions, the community's knowledge of the protected area, and visitor experiences.

This study also explored the outcomes for sustainable tourism from partnerships. This approach enabled respondents to reflect on how partnerships had (or had not) contributed to the broader sustainability agenda covering economic, social, cultural, and ecological concerns (UNEP & WTO 2005). This breadth is evident from the most important outcomes for sustainable tourism for the partnerships studied. These were improved understanding of protected area values, biodiversity conservation, greater respect for culture, and increased social benefits to local communities. Interestingly, these sustainability responses do not explicitly include economic benefits, although these are probably covered in the partnership outcomes of goal achievement and benefits to all partners. The lower importance assigned to 'brown' sustainability concerns, such as waste production, and energy and water use, is a cause for potential concern given that the ways that tourism businesses are established and run offer great opportunities for wise resource use.

Throughout this report, 'factors' have been used as an analytic aid, to assist in pulling together key ideas and moving beyond the somewhat reductionist items in the questionnaire (which were subsequently pursued in the interviews). The factors that emerged as most frequently contributing to partnership and sustainable tourism outcomes were performance and understanding. In terms of overall frequency for all factors (both those describing and contributing to outcomes), these two factors sit second and third (Appendix E). Without performance, that is, achieving goals and obtaining benefits for partners, no partnership is sustainable; hence the popularity of this factor to both partnership outcomes and sustainable tourism in protected areas. Previous research has identified understanding as critical in recognising partners' goals (Buckley & Sommer 2001) and gaining respect for different perspectives on problems (McGinnis et al. 1999; Steffen 2004).

Having obtained insights into the desired outcomes, the other critical component of this overview is exploring the features that contribute to these outcomes. These were initially investigated as partner-, process- and context-related features and then the factors were used to derive more general findings from these sets of features.

For partner-related features, the most important were having decision makers involved, support by the protected area agency and leadership by at least one of the partners. All of these features have been emphasised elsewhere as important (e.g. Bingham 1986; Beierle & Konisky 2000; Leach & Pelkey 2001). Having decision-makers involved had a moderate, significant correlation with at least four outcomes, including the purpose of the partnership being achieved.

Communication, trust and commitment were the most important process-related factors. Commitment had a moderate, significant correlation with at least four outcomes including the purpose of the partnership being

achieved, benefits to all partners, and stimulation of innovation. Commitment has previously been identified as essential if outcomes are to be achieved (Moore, Jennings & Tacey 2001). Trust is essential for successful collaboration (Moore 1995; Cropper 1996; Roberts & Simpson 1999). Open communication underpins a number of the factors as described below.

For the last set of features—context-related ones—the most important were adequate organisational and financial support and current legislation supports tourism in protected areas. Both forms of support (organisational and financial) had a moderate, significant correlation with at least four outcomes including improved understanding, reduced conflicts, improved access to funding, and strengthening of business capacity. Collectively, these features seemed to contribute to better business practices for all concerned. Adequacy of support might include staff levels and expertise, equipment or funding (Imperial 2005). It has been noted on numerous occasions as being an element of successful partnerships (Wondolleck & Yaffee 2000; Leach & Pelkey 2001). Often limited resources need to be allocated efficiently (Augustyn & Knowles 2000). Imperial (2005) linked adequate resources with the ability to innovate. The legislative setting and its influence on partnership success are discussed below, as part of the exposé on roles and powers (an influential factor).

To make sense of the factors collectively contributing to successful partnerships, the results from the questions about outcomes and features (in the questionnaire and interviews) and the results from the more general interview questions about successes, failures, problems and solutions, and respondents' recommendations are presented in a single table (Table 37). For simplicity of analysis and discussion, only the two most frequently appearing factors from each set of results (derived from Tables 14, 30 & 36) are included. Thus, the most frequent are communication, understanding, direction and lack of resources. The first two were among the most frequently allocated of the factors across all of the interview responses (Appendix E). These factors are discussed below, plus roles and powers and the closely related regulations and agreements as both were strongly evident when respondents discussed problems and solutions.

Table 37: Key factors in successful partnerships

Features and other facets	Factors
Partner-related features	Communication
	Individuals
Process-related features	Processes
	Communication
Context-related features	Understanding
	Leadership
Successes	Communication
	Direction
Failures	Inclusion (lack of)
	Resources (lack of)
Solutions	Communication
	Roles and powers
Problems	Resources (lack of)
	Regulations and agreements (problems with)
Recommendations	Communication
	Understanding
Partnership outcomes from …	Performance
	Direction
Sustainable tourism outcomes from …	Benefits
	Understanding

Communication, being able to share information, effectively deliver it and do so in an open way, was the theme (i.e. factor) most frequently raised by interview participants in relation to partnership success, a finding that was also evident from the questionnaire results, with 'open communication between partners' rated as one of the most important aspects of working together. The ability to communicate was a highly valued attribute of partners. Communication was also the focus of more suggestions regarding solutions and recommendations than any other factor (Table 37). It was achieved through meetings, over the phone and via email, and required

adequate time to happen effectively. Informal communication via networking and social events was also noted as important. It was particularly useful when problems in the partnership arose, as a means of resolving conflict and dealing with resource problems, leadership issues, lack of inclusion and with regulations and agreements.

Good communication led to *understanding* which was pivotal to getting the balance right between protecting the natural and heritage values of protected areas and providing for viable tourism enterprises. This includes understanding by protected area managers of the tourism industry's development focus and profit motive, with some degree of sustainability/environmental ethos in their business, and understanding by the tourism industry of protected area managers' environmental focus with a resource management role that includes visitor services.

Respondents recommended that communication be used to foster an understanding in protected area agencies of the commercial realities of the tourism industry. They commented that understanding includes working with other partners' needs and expectations, respecting what other partners are trying to achieve and understanding each others' values and goals. The recent Review of Nature Based Tourism in Western Australia (Tourism Co-ordinates 2007) emphasised the importance of strengthening communication links between protected area managers and the tourism industry. Understanding was the most frequently allocated factor for context-related features and second only to communication for the number of recommendations.

Inadequacy of resources, the third most frequent factor, was identified as a problem and as a failure. Inadequacy referred to lack of staff, poor financial backing and insufficient involvement by the protected area agency in the partnership. Solutions pursued to address this problem included working with other partners to source funding. A lack of resources for protected area management reflects broadscale government cutbacks (Bramwell & Lane 2000). Part of the enthusiasm for partnerships within government rests on the assumption that such arrangements will create efficiencies (Himmelman 1996) and require the allocation of less rather than more resources to protected area management. It seems, given this context, that more resources for partnerships are unlikely to be forthcoming and that other solutions will be required.

Direction, the equal third most frequent factor, refers to having a shared purpose and agreeing on this at the outset. It was the most frequently mentioned contributor to sustainable tourism outcomes. It was also an important contributor to successful partnerships mentioned by partners in interviews, when asked about key factors contributing to success. The other important contributor was communication.

Roles and powers were clearly evident in the solutions suggested to problems with partnerships and, as such, warrant a mention here. They include the allocation and acceptance of partners' roles, responsibilities and obligations, and the distribution of power. This factor overlaps with regulations and agreements, which includes legislation, licences, leases, permits and formal agreements such as MOUs. The latter provides the context for the former. Roles and powers was the second most frequently identified factor for solutions to partnership problems (Table 36), contributing to solutions by the existence of flexible, re-negotiable roles and working with multiple levels in partner organisations. Leadership was an important role mentioned by respondents.

Regulations and agreements were closely related to roles and powers. As part of these regulations and agreements, respondents identified having a written agreement as a basis for the partnership and current legislation supporting tourism in protected areas as important. Issues with regulations and agreements was one of the most frequently mentioned problems, with aspects including inconsistency in regulations across state boundaries, a lack of coordination in licensing approval processes within governments, short lease/licence terms, and regulations not covering all protected area users/visitors. Adaptability and flexibility were proposed as solutions to these problems.

Recommendations

The following recommendations all aim to support establishing and maintaining successful partnerships. Success, as defined by the partners in this study, includes achieving the purpose of the partnership, benefits to partners, improved information on protected area management, and economic gain for the protected area. It also includes outcomes from partnerships which support sustainable tourism: improved understanding of the values of the protected area; improved biodiversity conservation; greater respect for culture; and increased social benefits for local communities.

Managing the Features of Partnerships for Success

The first set of recommendations relates to managing specific features of the partners and partnerships, managing how the partnerships work (and partners work together), and managing the context (the working environment) within which partnerships work. These features have been identified by this study as the most important contributors to partnership success.

Recommendation 1. Ensure that partners are *selected* and the partnership itself is *managed* to achieve partnership success:

a. By including those partners and individuals with the ability to make decisions about the protected area and the tourism venture in the partnership.

b. Through support for the partnership by the protected area agency (e.g., with staff, publicity, funding, information).

c. By facilitating and supporting leadership by at least one of the partners.

d. Through encouraging all partners to participate and develop empathy for each other.

Most of this recommendation is self-explanatory, although facilitating leadership and encouraging empathy require some more detail. Leadership is assisted by communication, inclusion, and clarity of roles and powers. Leadership from within the protected area agency seems particularly important. Empathy relies on being aware of what is required to achieve outcomes, and appreciating others' values and viewpoints. A strong contributor to building empathy is understanding, made possible by communication.

Recommendation 2. *Manage* how the partnership *works* to make sure the following occurs:

a. Open and ongoing communication between partners.

b. Development and maintenance of trust between partners.

c. Commitment by partners to the partnership.

d. Agreement by partners on the partnership purpose.

Communication underpinned much of partnership success and is covered in its own recommendation below. Trust and commitment are well-known for their contributions to collaboration and partnering. They are made possible by relationships over time (i.e. continuity) between partners based on honesty and reciprocity. Commitment is often a product of/associated with working together to achieve a shared goal.

Recommendation 3. *Manage* the *working environment* (i.e. the *context*) by ensuring:

a. Recognition of the legal obligations of partners.

b. Development of a written agreement by partners.

c. Supportive legislation for tourism in protected areas.

d. Adequate organisational and financial support for the partnership, often but not always provided by the protected area agency.

Managing the context is the simplest and yet most difficult of recommendations. It is simple in that it is very clear what needs to be managed, but often this is the most challenging as institutional inertia, and lack of political will and resources are widespread impediments. Recommendations 3b and 3d were both regarded as very important and noted as absent by over a third of respondents. Resources are never likely to be adequate, however, making the most of available skills and expertise, working across levels in organisations, and using the partnership to pursue extra funding and sponsorship were all successful approaches that had been used in the partnerships studied. Developing a written agreement is a simple yet effective step towards success. It is self-explanatory and probably needs to be achieved in tandem with Recommendation 2d. 'Agreement by partners on the partnership purpose'. Legislation is covered below as part of regulations and agreements.

Managing the Overarching Factors for Success

Two factors in particular contribute overwhelmingly to successful partnerships: communication and understanding. Recommendations associated with these follow, as does a set of recommendations about regulations and agreements. Regulations and agreements and inadequate resources were the most often mentioned problems (the latter is covered in the next section).

Recommendation 4. Achieve open *communication* by:

a. Two- and multi-way exchanges through meetings, emails and phone calls, and also less formally through networking and social events.

b. Paying attention to communication within the partnership as well as with external stakeholders.

c. Addressing problems and potential conflicts as soon as they arise, especially those associated with regulations and agreements, lack of inclusion, resource problems, and leadership issues.

d. Allocating staff to partnerships who have or can receive training to enhance their communication skills.

Communication is an absolutely critical influence on success as it is an important feature of the partnership itself and the processes by which the partnership operates, and was central to solving the problems that partners in this study described. Its presence was also evident in the successful partnerships that study respondents described. Communication to address these concerns is important but apparently was not working as well as it might.

Recommendation 5. Improve *understanding* between the tourism industry and protected area managers by:

a. Facilitating communication between all levels of the industry and protected area agencies through seminars, social events and joint field activities.

b. Encouraging industry groups such as TTF Australia and Ecotourism Australia to support such communication activities.

c. Ensuring that protected area staff understand and acknowledge as valid the business imperatives of the tourism industry.

d. Ensuring that the tourism industry builds on and complements with their activities the conservation mandate that is central to protected area management.

Understanding is a critical part of communication as well as being important in its own right.

Recommendation 6. Work effectively with the *regulations and agreements* available to partnership members and others by:

a. Encouraging partners to work innovatively with current legislative and regulatory arrangements.

b. Supporting the enactment of legislation that supports tourism in protected areas or interpretation of existing legislation in ways that engender such support.

c. Continuing to pursue, within and across government, similar licensing provisions between and across states as well as licence and lease terms commensurate with levels of investment.

d. Acknowledging and working with all partners' various and varying legal obligations and liabilities.

Some of these recommendations are not new and appear in other reports such as the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre's commissioned report *Licensing Nature Tourism Operators in Western Australia: Business Impediments and Recommendations* (Genter, Beckwith & Annandale 2007). Recognising the legal obligations of partners has also been noted previously, for example Buckley and Sommer (2001) recommended that partners needed to recognise each other's different legal constraints and liabilities.

Avoiding Failure

Given the risk-adverse nature of today's public sector (Beckwith & Moore 2001), avoiding partnership breakdown and failure is paramount. Two ways of doing so are by paying attention to regulations and agreements (addressed above) and issues with resources. A lack of resources is a common 21st century lament, and as Bramwell and Lane (2000) note, cutbacks are now a permanent part of the public sector landscape (encompassing protected area agencies). Innovation and adaptability seem to be part of the solution, as are partnerships themselves. Recommendations to create these opportunities are given in the next section.

Creating Opportunities for the Future

The previous sections have detailed what works or needs to be improved in current approaches. This section suggests some directions for the future. These are opportunities not only for improving partnerships through research and practice, but also a final recommendation about continuing to enhance the relationship between the tourism industry and protected areas. Improving the outcomes for sustainable tourism is one of these opportunities.

Recommendation 7. Improve the outcomes for *sustainable tourism* by:

a. Encouraging all partners to explicitly focus on increasing the economic viability and prosperity of local communities as a result of their joint tourism activities.

b. Improving knowledge of the protected area (and dissemination of this knowledge) by working with as a diversity of stakeholders.

c. Actively involving the tourism industry in sustainability activities such as environmental monitoring, visitor education and promoting responsible behaviour.

Recommendation 8. Create opportunities for *innovation and adaptation* in tourism – protected area partnerships by:

a. Involving and communicating with partners at multiple levels in the partner organisations.

b. Fostering honesty and openness as precursors to innovative problem solving.

c. Taking a flexible, adaptive approach to the direction of the partnership and its performance, and to regulations and agreements.

These recommendations, similar to those regarding regulations and agreements (above), are derived directly from the interview results. They are opportunities that have been realised by those succeeding in partnerships. A flexible approach might include more 'generous' interpretations of legislation and regulations by government departments to favour the tourism industry. It might also include the tourism industry trying to work with current regulatory arrangements rather than giving up and walking away.

Recommendation 9. Further *improve the performance* of partnerships by pursuing *research* on:

a. Better understanding how communication contributes to partnerships and how it can be improved.

b. Further enhancing the sustainable outcomes from partnering and more generally from tourism in protected areas.

Communication is critical to good partnering. Given its strong influence on partnership success, understanding it more deeply seems a good research investment. Sustainable tourism is an obvious goal for all involved in tourism and protected areas. The results suggest that more attention to the 'brown' components (e.g. waste reduction) is needed, either through research or attention through practice (i.e. by managers). They also highlight how partnerships are contributing to sustainability outcomes for tourism in protected areas.

Recommendation 10. *Continue to improve the relationship* between the tourism industry and protected areas by:

a. Using successful partnerships as a way of showcasing the benefits of tourism associated with protected areas.

The results from this study clearly illustrate the benefits for protected areas, the tourism industry and local communities from these partnerships. And, they can help dispel arcane views that such partnerships are problematic. A wise investment by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre would be to promulgate the results of this research as part of a broader agenda supporting and enhancing partnerships between tourism and protected areas. Such an approach would also support Commonwealth Government (e.g. DITR 2003) and industry (TTF Australia 2004; 2007) policy positions and initiatives.

Additionally, these results have broader applicability to partnerships in a variety of settings. In particular, the focus on factors (such as communication, inclusion, and roles and powers) means these results have interdisciplinary relevance. The findings also help dispel the arcane view that partnerships and their management are problematic. A wise investment by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre would be to promulgate the results of this research as part of a broader agenda that is not only supporting and enhancing partnerships between tourism and protected areas but also of tourism partnerships at all levels. Such an approach would also support Commonwealth Government (e.g. DITR 2003) and industry (TTF Australia 2004; 2007) policy positions and initiatives.

APPENDIX A: MATRIX OF CASES AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Case studies*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
Australian Capital Territory																
1. Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve	T	F	G	S	A	SI	F				P U	✓			✓	
Australian Capital Territory / Victoria / New South Wales																
2. Australian Alps National Parks	T	M	G	L	A	SI	F					✓		✓		✓
Northern Territory																
3. Savannah Guides	T	M	N G	L	M	N I?	I					✓				✓
Queensland																
4. Lamington National Park – O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat	T	F	G	S	A	SI	F					✓				✓
South Australia																
5. Deep Creek Conservation Park	T	F	G	S	A	SI	F					✓				
6. Gluepot Reserve	T	M	N G	S	M	N I?	I					✓				
7. Heysen Trail	T	M	G	S	M	N I?	F					✓	L G	✓		
Tasmania																
8. Cradle Mountain Huts	T	F	G	S	A	SI	F	✓				✓				✓
9. Gordon River Cruises	T	F	G	S	M	SI		✓				✓				
10. Ross Female Factory	T	F	G	S	M	SI	F					✓			✓	
Victoria																
11. Dolphin Tours – Port Phillip Bay	M	F	G	S	M	SI		✓	✓			✓				✓
12. Great Ocean Walk	T	M	G	S	M	SI	F	✓				✓	R P		✓	
13. Mt Buffalo Chalet	T	F	G	S	M	SI	F		✓			✓				✓
14. Queenscliff Harbour Redevelopment	T/ M	F	G	L	A	SI	F				U	✓	L G		✓	✓
Western Australia																
15. Bibbulmun Track	T	M	G	S	A	SI	F	✓				✓	R P/ L G	✓		✓
16. Jurabi Turtle Interpretation Centre	T	M	G	S	M	SI	I			✓		✓	L G	✓	✓	✓
17. Ningaloo Reef Retreat	T	F	G	S	A	SI	F	✓				✓				✓
18. Penguin Island Conservation Park	T/ M	F	G	S	M	SI	F	✓				✓				
19. Purnululu National Park Safari Camps	T	F	G	L	A	SI	F	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
20. Rockingham Lakes Regional Park	T	M	G	S	M	SI	I				U	✓	L G		✓	
21. Walpole-Nornalup National Park – WOW Wilderness EcoCrusies	T	F	G	S	M	SI	F	✓				✓				✓

*Note. The shaded cell for each case study is the key criterion for that case. The key for the criteria (numbers 1-16) is given below.

Key to symbols used in the above table

Criteria	Description
1	Marine **(M)** and terrestrial **(T)** partnerships (not both but examples of each) – M/T
2	Partnerships with many **(M)** and few **(F)** members – M/F
3	Government **(G)** and non-government **(NG)** protected area partnerships with or to provide tourism – G/NG
4	Partnerships with large **(L)** and small **(S)** tour operators/operations – L/S
5	Cover different facets of tourism (access, accommodation, attractions, activities and amenities) – all **(A)**, most **(M)**
6	Partnerships associated with protected areas that have significant infrastructure **(SI)** development through to those with no infrastructure **(NI)** development – SI/NI
7	Formal (legal statutory or written base) **(F)** and informal **(I)** (none of these) partnerships – F/I
8	Best practice examples from each state and territory (at least one from each) where there has been a successful outcome, and three examples (at least) from each of Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia
9	At least one partnership from Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia that has had problematic elements
10	At least one Indigenous partnerships case study
11	At least one urban **(U)** or peri-urban **(PU)** protected area involved in a tourism partnership U/PU
12	No duplication of the case studies selected by TTF Australia or Southern Cross University
13	Partnerships including regional planning **(RP)** authorities and/or local government **(LG)**) – RP/LG
14	Joint planning for and management of protected areas (e.g. trans-boundary parks)
15	Partnerships resulting from community-based initiatives
16	Partnerships in potentially high-conflict locales (e.g. marine parks, peri-urban protected areas, old growth forests and wilderness areas)

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Murdoch UNIVERSITY MONASH University

Tourism Partnership Survey
We value your feedback

Hello,

Murdoch and Monash Universities, in cooperation with the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, are conducting research investigating stakeholders' perceptions of tourism partnerships associated with protected areas. You have been invited to participate due to your knowledge of and involvement in these partnerships.

Your involvement will make a valuable contribution to sustainable tourism in protected areas. Participation involves completing this questionnaire which will take approximately 20 minutes and a follow-up interview, either in person or by phone. This questionnaire is voluntary and you can choose not to answer a question.

Thank you for contributing your time.

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If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey, please contact us, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee on (08) 9360 6677 or Monash University's Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH) on (03) 9905 5490.

Part 1 – General details

1) Information about yourself:

a) Which organisation/business do you work for? _____

b) What is your position within your organisation/business? _____

c) How many years have you been in this position? _____

d) In which town/city are you based? _____

2) Information about the partnership:

a) Which protected area(s) is the focus of your partnership? _____

b) What was the start date (approximately) of the partnership? _____

c) What is the purpose of the partnership? _____

_____

d) What stage is the partnership at? Can you please '✓' the stage of the partnership.

Recently initiated ☐ Consolidating ☐ Established ☐ Phased out ☐ Other ☐

If other, please specify _____

e) Who are the partner organisations (including your own)? _____

_____

_____

_____

3) Can you please indicate on the following scale using a '✓' how you would describe this partnership.

	Very	Fairly	Slightly	Neither	Slightly	Fairly	Very	
Inclusive	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Restricted
Collaborative	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Conflictual
Communicative	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Uncommunicative
Fair	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Unfair
Sincere	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Insincere
Flexible	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Rigid
Effective	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Ineffective

Part 2 – Features of the partnership

4. To determine the **features of your partners and the partnership**, can you please:
   - Identify ('✓') if each of the following features are or were present ('Yes') or absent ('No') in your partnership.
   - Fill in the second column for each feature so we know whether it has changed or stayed the same through the partnership (↑ *= increased over time of partnership,* ↓ *= decreased,* — *no change).*

   Indicate their importance in terms of contributing to the success or otherwise of the partnership by ticking one of the associated boxes labelled from 'extremely important' through to 'not at all important'. Please tick an importance box for each feature irrespective of whether you ticked 'Yes' or 'No'.

	Presence		**Change**	**Importance**				
Features of the partners	Yes	No	Trend ↑/↓/—	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
a)Leadership provided by at least one of the partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b)Leadership provided by a non-government person	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Leadership was effective	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Support provided by protected area agency	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e)Decision makers directly involved in the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f)Empathy between partners encouraged	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Issues considered in new ways	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h)Willingness by partners to adapt to changing situations	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i)Power equally distributed between the partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j)Efforts towards power sharing made within the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k)Participation by all partners encouraged	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l)Inclusion of all people affected by the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. To determine the **features of working together**, can you please:
   - Identify ('✓') if each of the following features are or were present ('Yes') or absent ('No') in your partnership.
   - Fill in the second column for each feature so we know whether it has changed or stayed the same through the partnership (↑ *= increased over time of partnership,* ↓ *= decreased,* — *no change).*

   Indicate their importance in terms of contributing to the success or otherwise of the partnership by ticking one of the associated boxes labelled from 'extremely important' through to 'not at all important'. Please tick an importance box for each feature irrespective of whether you ticked 'Yes' or 'No'.

	Presence		**Change**	**Importance**				
Features of working together	Yes	No	Trend ↑/↓/—	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
a) Regular meetings between partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Agreement by partners on the purpose of the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Agreement by partners on the problem(s) being addressed by the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Equal opportunity for every one to contribute at partnership meetings	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Partners aim for consensus when making decisions	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Transparent decision-making	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Fair decision-making	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Flexible decision-making	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Problems addressed by the partnership as they occur	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j) Conflict managed as it arises	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) Open communication between partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l) Partners dependent on each other to get what they want	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m) Commitment by partners to the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n) Partners feel a sense of obligation to each other	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
o) Trust between partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
p) Access to influential people and/or organisations	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
q) Sufficient information available	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
r) Good quality information available	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
s) Time-efficient process	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
t) Cost-effective process	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. To determine the **features of the working environment**, can you please:
   - Identify ('✓') if each of the following features are or were present ('Yes') or absent ('No') in your partnership.
   - Fill in the second column for each feature so we know whether it has changed or stayed the same through the partnership (↑ *= increased over time of partnership,* ↓ *= decreased,* — *no change).*
   - Indicate their importance in terms of contributing to the success or otherwise of the partnership by ticking one of the associated boxes labelled from 'extremely important' through to 'not at all important'. Please tick an importance box for each feature irrespective of whether you ticked 'Yes' or 'No'.

	Presence		**Change**	**Importance**				
Features of the working environment	Yes	No	Trend ↑/↓/—	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all
a) Written agreement developed by the partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Adequate financial support for the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c)Adequate organisational support for the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Sufficient time has passed for the partnership to be effective	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Shared accountability for decision-making	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Shared accountability for actions	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Current legislation (where legislation includes regulations) supports tourism in protected areas	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Current administrative arrangements (excluding legislation) support tourism in protected areas	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Recognition of the legal obligations of the partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j) Recognition of the goals of the partners	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) Issues of potential risk associated with the partnership are or have been addressed	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l) Legal arrangements exist to implement the results produced by the partnership	☐	☐	____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 3 – Outcomes from the partnership

7. To determine the **outcomes from this partnership**, can you please:
   - Indicate ('✓') the extent of your agreement or otherwise with the following statements from 'strongly agree' through to 'strongly disagree' regarding the presence of each outcome.
   - Give each statement an importance score, from 5 to 1, where 5 is 'extremely important' through to 1 'not at all important'.

5 = extremely important,
4 = very important
3 = somewhat important
2 = not very important
1 = not at all important

	Satisfaction					**Importance**
Outcomes from this partnership	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	**(5 to 1)**
a) Purpose of partnership achieved or being achieved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Benefits from the partnership to all partners (win-win)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Economic gain by one or more members of the tourism industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Economic gain for protected area management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Stimulation of innovative approaches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Strengthening of organisational/business capacity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Improved information available for protected area management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Improved relationships with other partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Improved understanding of other partners' interests	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j) Reduced conflicts between partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) New relationships with influential people and/or organisations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l) Improved access to decision-making	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m) Improved access to funding for the organisation, business and/or community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n) Improved access to funding for the site/protected area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 4 – Outcomes for sustainable tourism

8. In order to determine the **outcomes from the partnership for sustainable tourism** in protected areas, can you please:

- Indicate ('✓') the extent of your agreement or otherwise of the following statements from 'strongly agree' through to 'strongly disagree' regarding the presence of each outcome.
- Give each statement an importance score, from 5 to 1, where 5 is 'extremely important' through to 1 'not at all important'.

5 = extremely important,
4 = very important
3 = somewhat important
2 = not very important
1 = not at all important

	Satisfaction					**Importance**
Outcomes from the partnership for <u>sustainable tourism</u> in protected areas	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	**(5 to 1)**
a) Improved economic viability of the protected area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Improved competitiveness of the protected area as a tourist destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Increased prosperity of the local community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Increased social benefits to local communities (e.g. community well-being)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Increased engagement of the local community in tourism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Greater respect for culture, heritage, and/or traditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Enhancement of culture, heritage, and/or traditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Improved biodiversity conservation in the protected area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Improved quality of environmental conditions (e.g. water, soil, air quality)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j) Reduced use of energy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) Reduced use of water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l) Reduced production of waste by tourism enterprises (e.g. waste reduction from packaging)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m) Reduced production of waste by visitors (e.g. rubbish)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n) Improved understanding of the values of protected areas by partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your participation. We will contact you to arrange a convenient time for the follow-up interview.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

First a few questions (5) relating to your answers to the questionnaire:

1) From Question 4 in the questionnaire (which was about the features of partners and the partnerships that contributed to the success or otherwise of your partnership) you have identified X, Y and Z as 'extremely important'.
[determine these from their completed questionnaire – aim here through discussion with the respondent to get down to 1-2 'most important' features]

a. If you had to identify the most important of these what would it (they) be?

b. How was this/these feature(s) important?

c. What enabled it/them to be present? *[Note – may not have been present]*

2) From Question 5 in the questionnaire (which explores the features of 'working together' that contributed to the success or otherwise of your partnership) you have identified X, Y and Z as 'extremely important'.
[determine these from their completed questionnaire – aim here through discussion with the respondent to get down to 1–2 'most important' features]

a. If you had to identify the most important of these what would it (they) be?

b. How was this/these feature(s) important?

c. What enabled it/them to be present? *[Note – may not have been present]*

3) From Question 6 in the questionnaire (which explores the features of the working environment that contributed to the success or otherwise of your partnership) you have identified X, Y and Z as 'extremely important'.
[determine these from their completed questionnaire – aim here through discussion with the respondent to get down to 1–2 'most important' features]

a. If you had to identify the most important of these what would it (they) be?

b. How was this/these feature(s) important?

c. What enabled it/them to be present? *[Note – may not have been present]*

4) From Question 7 (which explores a number of possible outcomes from your partnership) you have identified X, Y and Z as 'extremely important' and that they are present (i.e. strongly agree).
[determine these from their completed questionnaire – aim here to get down to 1–2 'most important' features]

a. If you had to identify the most important of these what would it (they) be?

b. Why was this/these outcome(s) important?

c. What enabled it/them to be achieved?

[Could probe here (if there's time) on outcomes that were identified as 'extremely important' but the respondent <u>disagreed</u> that they were present]

5) From Question 8 (which focuses specifically on how your partnership might have contributed or could contribute to sustainable tourism in protected areas) you have identified X, Y and Z as 'extremely important' and that they are present (i.e. strongly agree).
[determine these from their completed questionnaire – aim here through discussion with the respondent to get down to 1–2 'most important' features]

a. If you had to identify the most important of these what would it (they) be?

b. What was it about your partnership contributed to these outcomes?

[Could probe here (if there's time) on outcomes that were identified as 'extremely important' but the respondent <u>disagreed</u> that they were present]

The remaining 4 questions are more general.

6) This question asks about the steps or stages that your partnership has moved through. Could you describe where it is at the moment (in Q2d in the questionnaire you identified it as being _____)?

a. Can we explore the other stages it has moved through?

[Probe on possible stages – recently initiated, consolidating, established, or phased out, what is done to maintain/foster the partnership?]

7) In summary, what do you think contributed to the outcomes (may be 'successes' or 'failures') of your partnership?

[If prompt is needed, remind respondent here of their answers to Qs 7 & 8. Also need to make sure here we clarify with the respondent and record the outcome(s) they're talking about.]

8) What problems has your partnership encountered along the way?

a. How did you deal (or not deal) with them?

9) What would you recommend to policy makers as the most important things they can do to help develop and foster partnerships between the tourism industry (including individual operators) and protected area managers to achieve sustainable tourism in protected areas?

APPENDIX D: QUALITATIVE CLASS LABELS AND EXPLANATIONS

Adaptability & Innovation
***Components**:* Flexibility, responsiveness, learning, innovation, risk management
Relationships with other categories: *Understanding* is required for, and is a product of, effective learning, innovation and risk management.

Individuals
***Components**:* Personalities, predispositions (intentions, sensitivities), individual work styles, attitude of one person towards another (including empathy), attitude of one person towards the partnership (including towards direction, methods, outcomes)
Relationships with other categories: Certain individuals are more likely to be *inclusive*, *committed*, *expert*, *communicative* and *understanding*.

Benefits
***Components**:* Benefits to partners associated with outcomes (not the outcomes themselves), 'spin-off' benefits (including increased visitation; recognition and understanding from external parties), benefits to external parties (including public good, social and economic), benefit distribution, cost sharing
Relationships with other categories: Some benefits involve *interconnections* with natural or social systems; some involve increased *understanding*.

Commitment
***Components**:* Commitment of partners (including time, resources), non-resource-based organisational support, sense of ownership
Relationships with other categories: Commitment sometimes relates to *continuity* or depends on *individual* attitudes (but individual passion for the partnership has generally been included under 'Individuals').

Communication
***Components**:* Communication mechanisms (meetings etc), relationships between partners, with outside parties (including consultation, education, media, marketing)
Relationships with other categories: Effective communication is dependent on *individual* characteristics, as well as i*nterconnections* and good *processes and structures.*

Continuity
***Components**:* Longevity, opportunity to develop over time, maintenance of corporate knowledge, ongoing security of the partnership
Relationships with other categories: Continuity can require or be a product of *commitment*; continuity can be dependent on *resources* and be fostered by *regulations*.

Direction
***Components**:* Visions, goals, objectives, plans, focus, shared purpose (this is not about realising goals [Performance] but having clear and agreed goals, or not), conflicting purposes
Relationships with other categories: Purposes may be articulated in *regulations*; shared purpose generally established through good *communication*.

Expertise
***Components**:* Knowledge, experience and capabilities of partners, access to knowledge and capabilities of or external parties, training, capacity building
Relationships with other categories: Particular expertise is possessed by *individuals*.

Inclusion
***Components**:* Involvement (or not) of partners in processes, decisions and actions, involvement (or not) of stakeholders (including local communities) in processes, decisions and actions
Relationships with other categories: Inclusion can be fostered by *interconnections* and achieved through *communication*; some *individuals* are more likely to be inclusive than others.

Interconnections
***Components**:* Connections with communities, other outside parties, natural and socio-economic systems; interdepednenceis between partners

Relationships with other categories: Interconnections can enable *communication* and *inclusion* as well as generate *benefits*.

Leadership
Components*:* Individuals or organisations (partners or external parties) providing leadership
Relationships with other categories: Leadership can be undertaken by *individuals*, and fostered by *processes and structures*.

Performance
Components*:* Emphasis on achievement of outcomes, getting things done, 'win-win', partnership success, cost-effectiveness
Relationships with other categories: Successful performance requires clear specification of *direction*, *expertise* and adequate *resources*; and can be fostered by good *leadership* and *communication*, *inclusion*, effective *processes and structures*, and supportive *regulations*.

Processes
Components*:* Administrative arrangements, business processes, decision-making and planning procedures, conflict resolution processes
Relationships with other categories: Processes may provide (or work against) for *communication*, *inclusion*, *adaptability*, *accountability* and *transparency*.

Regulations & Agreements
Components*:* Legislation, licences, leases, permits, formal agreements (MOUs etc)
Relationships with other categories: Regulations and agreements can establish *direction*, require *accountability* and *transparency*, enable *continuity* and establish *processes*.

Resources
Components*:* Finance, infrastructure, staff, volunteers, time
Relationships with other categories: Resources can enable *performance* and *continuity*.

Roles & Powers
Components*:* Allocation and acceptance of partner's roles, responsibilities and obligations; distribution of power
Relationships with other categories: Roles and powers can be established by *regulations* and *agreements* or *processes*; can identify *accountabilities.*

Transparency & Accountability
Components*:* Information readily available on decision process, decisions, expectation, outcomes; open and – up-front' decision process and actions, those with power have accountability (to partners, to stakeholders)
Relationships with other categories: Transparency and accountability can be required by *regulations* or *agreements* , instituted though *processes*, and influenced by partners' *roles* and *powers*.

Trust
Components*:* Relationships between partners characterised (or not) by trust
Relationships with other categories: Trust is required for effective *communication* and *understanding*.; some *individuals* are more trusting and/or trustworthy than others.

Understanding
Components*:* Partner's awareness (or lack thereof) of what is required to achieve outcomes; appreciation of another partner's position or viewpoint; partner's appreciation (or lack thereof) of a stakeholder's position or viewpoint; appreciation of values (economic, social, environmental); use (or lack thereof) of information to build understanding
Relationships with other categories: Some *individuals* are likely to be more understanding than others (through empathy, for example); understanding generally underpins *adaptability* and *performance*; understanding is developed through education (*communication*).

APPENDIX E: FREQUENCY OF FACTORS FROM ALL ANALYSED INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Factor	Number of responses
Communication	**271**
Performance	**228**
Understanding	**214**
Inclusion	**194**
Direction	**182**
Roles & Powers	**161**
Processes	**132**
Commitment	**114**
Benefits	**108**
Regulations & Agreements	**100**
Resources	**90**
Individuals	**74**
Adaptability & Innovation	**67**
Trust	**64**
Leadership	**63**
Continuity	**61**
Interconnections	**60**
Expertise	**35**
Transparency & Accountability	**28**
Total number of responses	**2,246**

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Susan Moore is Associate Professor in the School of Environmental Science at Murdoch University and leads the Nature Based Tourism Research Group with colleague Dr David Newsome. She is a natural resource sociologist with expertise in biodiversity conservation policy and natural area tourism and extensive experience with government and non-government natural resource management organisations. She has over 100 publications on environmental policy, natural resource management and natural area tourism in journals, books and reports and has successfully led more than 20 research projects delivering outputs to industry, research and development corporations, government and non-government organisations and the Australian Research Council. Her current research interests include evaluating and transforming protected area governance, monitoring and managing the management effectiveness of protected area agencies (especially with regards to visitor use), and integrating biodiversity conservation and visitor management in natural area tourism.
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Professor Betty Weiler

Betty Weiler is Professor of Tourism and Director of the Tourism Research Unit at Monash University. She has degrees in recreation administration and regional planning/resource development, as well as a PhD in geography. Betty leads a team of researchers specialising in visitor services and tourist experience management and has been teaching, researching and writing about tourism planning, management and marketing for twenty years. In that time, Betty has published over one hundred journal articles and book chapters. She is an ARC Assessor and is on the editorial board of six international peer-reviewed tourism journals including Tourism Management and JOST. Betty has managed or co-managed 25 major funded research projects and nine international and national consultancy projects related to ecotourism, heritage and nature interpretation/communication. She has also served as principal investigator on many nationally competitive grant-funded projects including two ARC Linkage grants and four STCRC projects. However, Betty is best known for her applied research focus and close work with industry, including current projects with Zoos Victoria, Parks Victoria, Sovereign Hill Museums Association, and Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service.
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Dr Glen Croy

Glen Croy is a Lecturer in Tourism in the Department of Management, Deputy Course Director of the BBusCom, and a member of the Tourism Research Unit at Monash University. His research interests include tourism and media, destination image, tourism education, and tourism in natural and protected areas. Glen has degrees in commerce, tourism and higher education, and has completed a PhD on the role of film in destination decision-making. Current projects Glen is involved in include a study of marketing practices designed to influence pre-visit decision-making and assessing barriers and incentives for the use of urban and semi-urban parks.
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Dr Jennifer Laing

Jennifer Laing is a Lecturer in Tourism in the Department of Management and Executive Director of the Tourism Research Unit, Monash University. Her research interests include nature-based tourism, heritage tourism and health and wellness tourism. Jennifer has degrees in law and business management and completed a PhD in 2006 as an STCRC Scholar on motivations behind frontier travel experiences and implications for tourism marketing.
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Dr Diane Lee

Diane Lee is a senior lecturer and Chair of the Tourism Program at Murdoch University. The concept of sustainable tourism development, incorporating the environment in all its aspects, underpins all areas of Diane's research interests. Sustainable tourism development includes research of cultural tourism, nature based tourism and resource economics, where tourism resources are valued in the same manner as the resources of other industries. She has led or been involved in tourism research projects on regional development, the management of iconic wildlife as a tourism resource, user pays and valuing tourism. Current research interests include wildlife tourism, tracks and trails as tourism resources and regional tourism issues.
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Dr Michael Lockwood

Michael Lockwood is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania. He is a natural resource social scientist with expertise in protected area management, environmental evaluation and environmental planning, as well as having extensive experience with government and non-government natural resource management organisations. Michael has degrees in science and environmental science and his PhD focused on an integrated value assessment of natural areas. Michael's research engages with four interrelated themes: understanding and documenting people's values for nature; identifying best practice management for protected areas; understanding and improving environmental governance; and developing methods to inform environmental decision-making. Much of his work has been done in a multi-disciplinary context. His current research projects include pathways to good practice in natural resource management governance; social science underpinnings for connectivity conservation initiatives, and protected area governance evaluation.
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Dr Sharron Pfueller

Sharron Pfueller is a Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Master of Environment and Sustainability Program within the School of Geography and Environmental Science at Monash University. Sharron has degrees in science and environmental science and a broad expertise spanning tourism and sustainability, environmental governance, climate and sustainability, multistakeholder and community involvement in environmental and tourism management, and evaluation of environmental education programs. Current research projects include an exploration of models of community-led partnerships with government for sustainability in biosphere reserves and insights into community values with respect to sites for conservation, camping, tourism and recreation along the Victorian bank of the Murray River.
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Dr Aggie Wegner

Aggie Wegner is a Tourism Research Fellow at Charles Darwin University at the Institute of Advanced Studies in the School for Social and Policy Research. She completed her PhD at Murdoch University as a recipient of an STCRC Industry Scholarship in partnership with the Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM). Aggie has a degree in environmental science and tourism and worked in the industry prior to her studies. At present Aggie is working on various national as well as State projects relating to protected areas, Indigenous tourism, as well as collaboration in tourism settings. Her research interests include nature based tourism, the management of natural resources with respect to tourism, the human dimension of interactions within natural settings, Indigenous tourism, and associated policy implications. Email: Aggie.Wegner@cdu.edu.au

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COMMERCIALISATION

EC3
EVALUATE COMMUNICATE EVOLVE

EC3, a wholly-owned subsidiary company, takes the outcomes from the relevant STCRC research; develops them for market; and delivers them to industry as products and services. EC3 delivers significant benefits to the STCRC through the provision of a wide range of business services both nationally and internationally.

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SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM
CRC

Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) is established under the Australian Government's Cooperative Research Centres Program.

STCRC is the world's leading scientific institution delivering research to support the sustainability of travel and tourism—one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries.

Introduction

STCRC has grown to be the largest dedicated tourism research organisation in the world, with $187 million invested in tourism research programs, commercialisation and education since 1997.

STCRC was established in July 2003 under the Commonwealth Government's CRC program and is an extension of the previous Tourism CRC, which operated from 1997 to 2003.

Role and responsibilities

The Commonwealth CRC program aims to turn research outcomes into successful new products, services and technologies. This enables Australian industries to be more efficient, productive and competitive.

The program emphasises collaboration between businesses and researchers to maximise the benefits of research through utilisation, commercialisation and technology transfer.

An education component focuses on producing graduates with skills relevant to industry needs.

STCRC's objectives are to enhance:

- the contribution of long-term scientific and technological research and innovation to Australia's sustainable economic and social development;
- the transfer of research outputs into outcomes of economic, environmental or social benefit to Australia;
- the value of graduate researchers to Australia;
- collaboration among researchers, between searchers and industry or other users; and
- efficiency in the use of intellectual and other research outcomes.