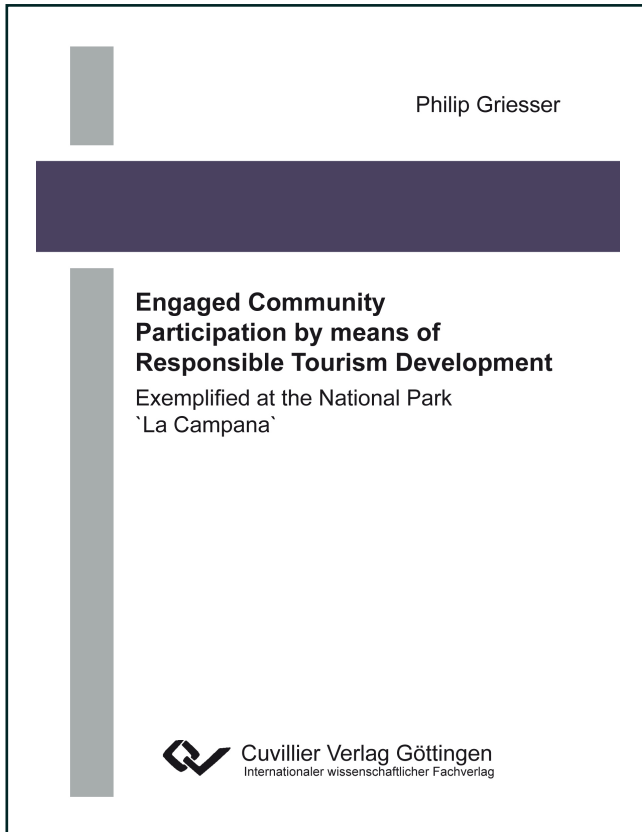




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**Engaged Community Participation by means of Responsible
Tourism Development**

Exemplified at the National Park `La Campana`



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Summary of the Dissertation

The aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate that the development of a management model for National Parks Management in Chile that is based on the principles of responsible tourism will increase economic, social and environmental benefits for the communities living in and around Chilean National Parks.

In addition to a detailed analysis of the National Park administration system in Chile, the state of research for Responsible Tourism development and community engagement has been indicated. Apart from the investigation of the exemplifying National Park 'La Campana', two further protected areas are being assessed in reference to international best practice. As a result, the consequent issues have been revealed that need to be addressed in/at National Parks in Chile and conclusively, the deriving hypotheses from the issues and best practice analysis have been pointed out.

The theoretical basis of the work is characterized by the differentiation of definitions for the identification and evaluation of relevant determinants. In addition to behavioural decision theories derived from the marketing science, further micro-economic theories and sustainability models are used for the clarification of the prerequisites for an enhanced community engagement. Theories of the cognitive dissonance, attitude theories, the concept of the resilience cycle, as well as sustainability theories, are brought together into a common explanation model.

An essential result of the thesis is that the undertaken empirical analysis clarifies that the general willingness by stakeholders is obtained to engage in responsible tourism- related processes in order to benefit the local community. These benefits will improve the livelihood of the local residents in terms of economic, environmental and social determinants. The thesis reveals, in addition, that the National Park 'La Campana', including the defined stakeholders, can be an internationally attractive responsible tourism product in reference to the introduction into the international market.

However, particular prerequisites are indicated and identified and positive effects can be derived, depending on the particular stakeholders.

In this case, the methodological approach of the thesis is based upon a primary onsite research of about 430 surveys with particular stakeholders. In this case, tourists, community members and local authorities have been questioned, using quantitative and qualitative semi-structured interviews, open-dialogs, workshops and discussion groups. A data set of socio-demographic and behavioural data of a visitor and community member cohort



constitutes the derived basis. Distinctive scales, motives and socio-economic profiles and the significant determinants of community engagement and visitor travel motives have been revealed.

In the empirical part of the thesis proceeds an investigation of the issues and hypotheses by means of statistical analyses. In this case, the objective has been to empirically verify the previously indicated theoretical constructs.

The discussion of the work serves for the response of the posed research questions, issues and hypotheses. In addition, limitations of the empirical evaluation and the further need for research have to be considered. Within this process, conclusions and implications are discussed in further reference to internationally conducted studies. The thesis concludes with a brief definite conclusion, emphasizing on the previously mentioned prerequisites for a responsible tourism development, as described in the following.

In addition to the understanding of the various issues in and around the NP 'La Campana', also the understanding of the particular travel motives of domestic and international tourists needs to be considered. Conclusively, the legal framework, the legislative basis for the protected area management, is characterised as an aspect that needs to be adjusted in order to create a social equilibrium in which the community can strengthen its position and its engagement in the tourism development.

However, the thesis revealed that one major consideration needs to be pointed out. The success of such an initiative for engaged community participations predominantly depends on the time dedicated by the other stakeholders to making community members aware of tourism-related impacts and how this affects their life and livelihood.



1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

The Chilean National Forest Association (CONAF) was created in 1970 as a dependent organisation of the Ministry of Agriculture. Its mission is to guarantee the society the sustainable use of the forest ecosystems and an efficient administration of the National System of Protected Wildlife Areas of Chile (SNASPE). Its objective is thereby the contribution to the improvement of the quality of life of current and future generations.¹

As indicated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (2008), natural and semi-natural ecosystems cannot be managed without recognising how human cultures have influenced them. In this case, the Chilean Ministry of Public Property has identified the need to make progress in citizen participation in decision-making, either prior to or during the concession allocation process.² “The local population are regarded merely as landowners or as a reserve of labour, not as people entitled to participate in the decision making” (Krippendorf 1982)³. Goodwin (2011) states in this process that the principals of the responsible tourism approach reside clearly at the locals and local participation and that engagement is essential to build trust, receive support and to facilitate the fair distribution of benefits.⁴ This is of utmost importance for Chile in protected areas with rural and/or indigenous populations in need of an economic lift. The institutional structure of tourism must reflect the economic importance of the sector, as well as its multiple relationships with other services.

Honey (2008) furthermore argues that in reality, many community-based tourism and conservation programmes are relational rather than participatory. They seek to improve the relationships between the community and either the state or the private enterprise through trade-offs, rather than to develop ownership or management of the protected area or tourism project to the local community.⁵

Although the introduction of the first Chilean comprehensive government policy on tourism in 2005 demonstrates that this issue is being given higher priority, the mechanisms to put this policy into practice are still lacking. They also do not take full account of tourism’s potential to contribute to the alleviation of poverty, nor to conservation efforts.

¹ cf. CONAF (2010a).

² cf. IUCN (2008), p.15ff.

³ cf. Krippendorf, J. (1982), p.142.

⁴ cf. Goodwin, H. (2011), p.117.

⁵ cf. Honey M. (2008), pp. 445-448.



1.2 Aim and research objectives

The aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate that the development of a management model for National Parks Management in Chile that is based on the principles of responsible tourism will increase the economic, social and environmental benefits for the communities living in and around Chilean National Parks.

This study will determine and measure the economic, environmental and social relationships between a responsible tourism development, the alleviation of poverty and nature conservation with the following research objectives.

- I. To review international best practice methods in managing protected areas of providing economic, social and environmental benefits for the local community by examining means of improved site and visitor management.
- II. To identify international best practice strategies for delivering community benefit through responsible tourism initiatives.
- III. To examine challenges facing local communities living in and around Chilean national parks in terms of their relationships with the National Parks Management and the tourism sector.
- IV. To understand the motives of tourists travelling to a Chilean National Park.
- V. To use the outputs from the previous areas of research to prepare a model that combines responsible tourism development and natural resource management in Chilean protected areas, in a way that will deliver real economic and social benefits to the host communities around those national parks.

1.3 Relevance to application

As indicated, community engagement, the community based natural resource management approach, combines conservation objectives with the generation of economic benefits for rural communities and improvements of their living conditions. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), supported by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) indicates the particular relevance by constituting community based natural resource management in their global agreement.⁶

In this case, modelling techniques for tourism and community development with the following key assumptions will be analysed in the outline of the thesis. The United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development UNCSD (1999) emphasizes that if local people's quality of life is enhanced, their efforts and commitment to ensure the future well-being of the resource are also enhanced.⁷ The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2005) concludes as a result that a responsible tourism synergy between local community and other stakeholders considers the effectiveness of park management, improving therewith the status of the region, and the strengthening of the information system. Thereby, the focus of this thesis is on joint tourism development with neighbouring protected area managements in the region and on the benefits for the local community, particularly on policy development and the implementation of cooperation (including community-based tourism development).⁸

As it will be discussed in the thesis, the problem of community based natural resource management is the difficulty of successfully combining the objectives of socio-economic development, biodiversity protection and sustainable resource application. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (2006) argues that modelling techniques must be implemented by focussing on the concept and the conflicting interests of community based natural resource management. In this process, an adaptive management process with the support of NGOs working with local groups and communities and national and transnational organizations provides a valuable framework.⁹

1.4 Contribution to knowledge

This dissertation focuses on the development of a linkage model between the local community with tourists and national park administration. This will enable a positive contribution for real economic and social benefits to the host communities around those national parks. In addition, favourable inputs will be delivered to the natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of Chile's, respectively the world's ecological diversity. In this

⁶ cf. CBD (2010), p. 4ff.

⁷ cf. UNCSD (1999), p. 6.

⁸ cf. UNEP (2005), p. 3ff.

⁹ cf. WWF (2006a), p.2.



process, the dissertation enhances the development of unique experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people. The linkage model supports business and employment opportunities to local communities and encourages tourists to visit rural and indigenous areas. Furthermore, it promotes a sustainable development of the local infrastructure and improves the standard of living and well-being of these local communities. By creating respect between the local communities, the tourists and the protected area management, the dissertation indicates, for the first time ever in Chile, the mandatory consequences of the internationalisation and globalisation of tourism. The successful positioning of responsible tourism approaches in protected areas in Chile will deliver increased local pride and confidence. Thereby, the local communities will be involved in the decision-making process that affects their lives and life chances.

1.5 Course of the examination

Subsequently to this introduction follows an illustration of the National Park Administration system in Chile, including the touristic pattern in Chile and the legal framework, respectively its concerning limitations (Chapter 2).

In a further step, the state of research for Responsible Tourism development and community engagement is indicated in a detailed way (Chapter 3). Aside from the investigation of the exemplifying National Park 'La Campana', two further protected areas are being assessed in reference to international best practice. As a result, the Chapter reveals the consequent issues that need to be addressed in/at National Parks in Chile and conclusively points out the deriving hypotheses from the issues and best practice analysis.

The fourth Chapter reveals and identifies the theoretical bases for the differentiation of definitions for the identification and evaluation of relevant determinants. In addition to behavioural decision theories, derived from the marketing science, further micro-economic theories and sustainability models are used for the clarification of the prerequisites for an enhanced community engagement.

Theories of the cognitive dissonance, attitude theories, the concept of the resilience cycle, as well as sustainability theories are brought together into a common explanation model.

Chapter five describes the methodological approach of the thesis. Thereby, the selection process for the distinctive cohorts is indicated by revealing the different procedures and approaches, including the survey pattern and the analysis of the representativeness for the specific target individuals, respectively groups.

In the empirical part (Chapter 6) of the work proceeds an investigation of the issues and hypotheses by means of statistical analyses. In this case, the objective is to empirically verify the previously indicated theoretical constructs. A data set of socio-demographic and behavioural data of a visitor and community member cohort (more than 400 participants)

constitutes the basis for this. Distinctive scales, motives and socio-economic profiles and the significant determinants of community engagement and visitor travel prerequisites are supposed to be revealed.

The following discussion (Chapter 7) serves for the response of the posed research questions, issues and hypotheses. In addition, limitations of the empirical evaluation and the further need for research will be considered. Within this process, conclusions and implications will be discussed. The thesis concludes with a brief definite conclusion (Chapter 8). The following Figure 1 illustrates the described procedure.

Figure 1: Course of the examination

Concept (Chapter 1)					
Background (Chapter 1.1)		Aim, objectives and relevance and contribution (Chapter 1.2 – 1.4)		Course of examination (Chapter 1.5)	
Analysis of Chile's National Park Administration System (Chapter 2)					
Introduction (Chapter 2.1)	Visitor pattern (Chapter 2.2)	Legislative framework (Chapter 2.3)	Financial parameters (Chapter 2.4)	Evaluation of an exemplifying NP (Chapter 2.5)	NP 'La Campana': situation analysis (Chapter 2.6)
State of research for Responsible Tourism development and community engagement (Chapter 3)					
Principles of Responsible Tourism (Chapter 3.1)	Analysis of the key issues (Chapter 3.2)		Best Practice Review (Chapter 3.3)	Deriving hypotheses (Chapter 3.4)	
Theoretical bases for identification and evaluation of relevant determinants (Chapter 4)					
Definitional differentiation (Chapter 4.1)		Behavioural decision theories (Chapter 4.2)		Sustainability theories and model (Chapter 4.3)	
Methodology (Chapter 5)					
Introduction (Chapter 5.1)		Primary data (Chapter 5.2)		Secondary data (Chapter 5.3)	
Surveys of the cohorts (Chapter 5.4 – 5.7)		Representativeness of the cohorts (Chapter 5.8)		Analysis of the data (Chapter 5.9)	
Empirical investigation: visitor and community- related procedures and processes (Chapter 6)					
Analysis of the univariate and bivariate results and the regression analysis results of the visitor survey (Chapter 6.1 – Chapter 6.3)			Analysis of the univariate and bivariate results and of the results of the regression analysis of the community survey (Chapter 6.4 – Chapter 6.6)		
Discussion of the results and outlook (Chapter 7)					
Answering of the research question (Chapter 7.1)		Limitation of the research (Chapter 7.2)		Implications (Chapter 7.3)	
Final consideration (Chapter 8)					

Source: own presentation.