













Furthermore, traditional reporting templates are not able to accommodate for reporting of a qualitative nature, which is what many of the social objectives require. This often results in intangible impacts (both positive and negative) being ignored in cost-benefit analyses. Additionally, benefits operate at various levels, with those that operate closer to the source (primary benefits) being clearer and easier to identify, and more quantifiable, than others which operate as 'knock-on' or added value benefits (secondary or tertiary benefits).

Monitoring the social impact is important in order to be aware of and to monitor any social benefits, as well as to mitigate any negative consequences of outreach or beneficitation initiatives. Social impact assessment (SIA) is a tool used to assess, or estimate in advance, the social consequences that are likely to follow from specific outreach initiatives or projects (Lahiri-Dutt, Nair & Dowling 2008). In other words, SIA allows for the identification of the likely and realised impacts of a project on people. Examples of social impacts could include changes that occur in people's way of life (how they live, work, play and interact with one another on a daily basis), their culture (shared beliefs, customs and values) and their community (its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities) (Lahiri-Dutt *et al.* 2008). The primary objectives of these in the case of SANParks, would be to ensure that local communities are not adversely affected by initiatives and to facilitate their ability to reap sustainable benefits from development activities (Lahiri-Dutt *et al.* 2008). SIA can be used in the planning stages of projects, as well as in ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes (Lahiri-Dutt *et al.* 2008).

The outcome of well planned monitoring programmes for social projects and programmes should include adequate and relevant data at the correct scope and scale that can be evaluated and analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to determine whether set objectives are being met and where adjustments in management are necessary or appropriate. This highlights the need for clear objectives at a project, programme, park and organisational level. These objectives need to be aligned in a way that park-based implementation is guided ultimately by its respective contribution towards the achievement of the SANParks desired state or mission statement (Roux & Foxcroft 2011). This, in turn, calls for an aligned and hierarchical monitoring and reporting process from a project level to a national level that facilitates careful evaluation and analysis of data. The current national corporate strategy is articulated in the 'corporate strategic balanced score card' (SANParks 2010c), the measurables of which do not necessarily accurately reflect the objectives derived via the articulation of the desired state. One example of this is the corporate strategic objective relating to the growing of constituencies and the provision of access to benefits from the National Parks System. The three measurables identified here include, (1) the number of participants in environmental education programmes, (2) the number of internal awareness interventions and (3) the number of sustainable resource use projects. Where the objectives are to provide benefits and build constituencies, the true measurables should reflect both a measure of benefits and of what was learnt during the

educational programmes; however, the current measurables fail to do this. This does not reflect well at a project level and does not guide the reporting and monitoring process at this level. Similarly, whilst the corporate objective related to the facilitation of socioeconomic development is measured as a count of the community-based socioeconomic initiatives implemented, the objective is actually about beneficitation and livelihoods, but, again, the measurables do not reflect this.

## Conclusion

It is clear that events during the 80-year evolution of the current people component of SANParks management has had a profound influence on the degree to which formal strategic adaptive management has been adopted in the social components of parks. However, despite the fact that biodiversity conservation has a much longer history of this type of management, and is considered to be primarily measurable and achievable, the effective implementation of SAM in these more 'tangible fields' is also fraught with challenges. The concept of parks providing benefits to people other than direct employment opportunities and recreation is even more difficult to define, measure and, importantly, deliver on, but it is widely accepted that benefit sharing through biodiversity conservation is crucial for the long-term success of protected areas.

The effective implementation of the people objectives is also full of challenges. Apart from the theoretical difficulties in identifying, quantifying and monitoring both tangible and intangible benefits, contradicting values and belief systems between stakeholder groups partially dictate how benefits are viewed and prioritised by different parties. Often, the expectations or demands for benefits far outweigh the reasonable possibilities or sustainable opportunities that arise from protected areas, with the protected areas being viewed naively as a solution to national poverty. Within SANParks, there is a need to clearly align the objectives for park-based projects and programmes with national corporate programmes. Following this, there is a need for the alignment of associated monitoring and evaluation techniques and reporting protocols at these various levels within the organisation. The formal adoption of SAM into the social components of SANParks is becoming more evident and, to date, has been implemented most successfully in the natural resource use arena. However, SANParks is currently attempting to use SAM more extensively in other aspects of the people objectives in order to facilitate learning whilst attempting to predict drivers of change that could ultimately impact on the effectiveness of promoting benefits through conservation, specifically in the sense of benefits which support livelihoods whilst reducing vulnerability.

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