

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TOURISM:
CONFLICTS BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE.
THE CASE OF THE ANNAPURNA REGION OF NEPAL.**

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Abstract

This research investigated the conflicts that existed between the theory and policies of tourism as a tool for sustainable development, and the reality of their implementation in the Ghorepani and Tatopani areas of Annapurna, Nepal. It studied the attitudes, values, and practices (with reference to tourism and sustainable development) of the various actors in tourism in the area, and the environmental contexts and processes at work. The current theory and policy underpinning measures to implement tourism and sustainable development in the area was examined. Conclusions were subsequently drawn about the impact of present policies and theory on sustainable development and sustainable tourism on the area.

An interpretivist paradigm provided the basis for this study, with elements of a critical social science approach included. An emic approach enabled the researcher to uncover the specific understandings and actualities of stakeholders, along with the underlying environmental structures and conditions of sustainable development through tourism in the area. These factors, along with the interrelationships between them, formed the basis of a fieldwork period whereby data was gained from key stakeholders through the utilisation of a variety of interviewing and observational techniques.

This study contributes further to the debate surrounding the use of tourism as a tool for sustainable development. It finds that the traditional but naïve western dualist assumptions of tourism impacts as propounded by research, policy, and management do not account for the processes in which tourism is working on and through actors and their communities in the Tatopani and Ghorepani areas of Nepal (and vice versa). It consequently finds that sustainable development, when interpreted as a western construct, can be seen to be occurring to a limited and beneficial degree in the areas, but also at a cost to the communities involved which is not being recognised.

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A special thanks to all those above, and others who helped with the research. I hope that this thesis can encourage the reader to consider again the relationship between tourism and the people of underdeveloped countries, and that in the future a more equitable relationship between all the stakeholders and their environments is found.

Author's declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Brunel (Buckingham Chilterns University College). The material in this thesis has not been published previously. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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Abbreviations

ACA -Annapurna Conservation Area

ACAP -Annapurna Conservation Area Project

CAMC – Conservation Area Management Committee

FIT(s) – Free and Independent traveller(s), with or without a guide

GT / GTs – Group Trekkers; people on an organised group trek with a guide

INGO – International Non-governmental Organisation

KMTNC – King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation

LMC – Lodge Management Committee

NGO –Non-governmental Organisation

NTB – Nepal Tourism Board

TAAN – Trekking Agencies’ Association of Nepal

TMSC – Tourism Management Sub-Committee

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WTO – World Tourism Organisation

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The need for development in the world's least developed nations remains one of the most important issues facing the international community today. Historically, development efforts have not met expectations, and have in some quarters actually been equated with underdevelopment, exploitation and endemic poverty (Escobar, 1995:4). This failure of past development efforts, coupled with the overuse of natural resources and related environmental impacts, has resulted in the concept of 'sustainable development' occupying a central role in the policymaking and planning discourse of international and national agencies in recent decades.

The concept has subsequently become the dominant international development paradigm within western neo-liberalist economic frameworks. Yet the nebulous nature of the notion of sustainable development's two terms has meant it is highly contested by a range of 'sometimes conflicting ideologies' (Moffat, 1996:182). While its non-specificity has allowed it to be appropriated by various interests, the dominant hegemony behind the globalisation (and discourse) of sustainable development is undoubtedly that of western society (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Palmer, 1992).

The last two decades have witnessed the tourism industry receive considerable attention as a potential development tool. The increased profile afforded to the natural environment by the West in the 1980s resulted in the World Commission

on Environment and Development (WCED) Report, the Rio Earth Summit and World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and the popularisation of ‘sustainable development’ in development discourse. These in turn all resulted in renewed attention being paid to the apparently benign industry of tourism by development agencies.

It was this potential for supposedly benign, principally economic, development (Sharples, 2000) that justified tourism’s role as a vehicle of development. It encouraged nations, along with international agencies and non-governmental organisations (e.g. aid and conservation agencies) to promote and encourage tourism over the more traditional resource extraction industries. As Dann (2002:236) noted;

...it was largely and uncritically accepted by economists and such international organisations as the World Bank and the United Nations that tourism’s financial benefits, in terms of balance of payment surpluses, foreign exchange earnings, job creation and infrastructural development well outweighed the potential costs.

Evidence that tourism was accepted by international institutions as relatively benign was perhaps most apparent in the failure of the 1987 ‘Brundtland’ (WCED) Report to address tourism, despite the fact that it was recognised as one of the world’s larger industries (Wall, 1997a).

Yet as Holden (2000a) notes, and as this thesis demonstrates, the contested nature of the concept of sustainable development is reflected in its application to tourism. This research examines concepts of sustainable development through tourism in two district wards in the Himalayan country of Nepal. This chapter provides an introduction to the study. In the following section (Section 1.1) a rationale is presented, the problem and sub problems explained, and impacts upon the research of political disturbances in the region discussed. Section 1.2 then contextualises this by examining the research case, and development attempts at a national and local level within it. An explanation of the approach this research

adopts toward the definition of several contentious but key concepts featuring in the text is then presented (Section 1.3). Finally this introductory chapter is concluded in Section 1.4.

1.1 Validations and Conditions of the Research

Section 1.1.1 provides a rationale for the research and hence the justification behind it. It then outlines the study's primary aim, and the objectives the research endeavours to address in order to meet the primary aim. The study's contribution to the field is then outlined. Section 1.1.2 then examines the ramifications upon the research of the political situation existing in Nepal at the time of the fieldwork.

1.1.1 Rationale

The example of Nepal represents a microcosm of the issues associated with tourism in under developed countries (Simmons and Koirala, 2000; Sparrowhawk and Holden, 1999; Belk, 1993). As this section will explain, the area of Annapurna in particular provides a useful example of problems associated with attempts at achieving sustainable development through tourism.

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) was established in 1985 on principles involving sustainability and participation (WWF, 2001:1; Nepal, 2000a:83) and is often cited in the literature as a successful example of community development through tourism (Simmons and Koirala, 2000; Nepal, 2000c; Gurung and DeCoursey, 1994). The administering authority and its staff have also received various international agency, governmental and industry citations (e.g. the WWF Conservation Merit Award 2000, and the 1991 British Airways 'Tourism for Tomorrow' Award).

However, research has highlighted the continuing problems associated with the development of tourism in the area (Gurung and DeCoursey, 2000; Nepal, 2000b; Chhetri 1999; Pobocik and Butalla, 1998; Parker, 1997). These problems have included: a lack of support from communities¹ within the area for externally developed ACAP goals which jeopardise the local peoples survival (Chhetri, 1999); major leakage from the area of the financial returns from tourism (Banskota and Sharma, 1997); the wide disparities in the benefits received from tourism in the area and an associated increasing potential for social disharmony and antagonism towards tourism (Nepal, 2000b); the lack of success at a practical level of ACAP to act as a catalyst between locals, outside aid and government agencies due to lack of staff and lack of funding (Lew, 2001); funds allocation; differences in cultural contexts; lack of awareness of ACAP and its goals (Pobocik and Butalla, 1998;); and ACAP's focus on conservation objectives (Nepal, 2000a).

These issues are compounded by issues identified in past research. In the previous decade concern was expressed over the uncertain nature of ACAP due to political problems (Shackley, 1996); the lack of local involvement in evaluation procedures (Parker, 1997); the lack of awareness amongst visitors of the area's 'Codes of Conduct' - one of ACAP's principal tools to achieve sustainability (Mason and Mowforth, 1996); and finally the continued growth of tourism to unsustainable levels (Weaver, 1998, Gurung and DeCoursey 1994). None of these potentially important issues, nor their influence upon sustainable development in the region, has been investigated in depth since last decade.

Such differences of perception between what constitutes successful development through tourism in the area can be partly attributed to the multi-dimensional and value laden nature of the concept of sustainable development. The instance of the Annapurna Conservation Area presents itself as an example where claims of sustainable development are 'contested by a range of sometimes conflicting

¹ For example in non-compliance with goals determined by external agencies for conservation (Chhetri, 1999).

ideologies' (Moffat, 1996:182). The industry and international agency claims and those in some of the literature would seem to conflict with research in the area.

In addition the problems highlighted by this past research suggest that the interpretations of sustainable development currently being implemented through tourism in Annapurna, with their basis in the current western discourse on sustainability, show a lack of sufficient awareness or consideration of the environmental (social, cultural, economic, political, and ecological) factors working *on* and *through* tourism, and which tourism itself works *on* and *through* (Mowforth and Munt, 1998:2). As a consequence of these interpretations the policies of ACAP have sometimes suffered from a lack of currency and credibility in parts of the Annapurna, with the result that often local communities have no sense of ownership of such policies, and as a result no sense of commitment to them².

Thus there is a need for research into perceptions of sustainable development through tourism that exist amongst stakeholders in the area, as well as the environmental contexts, dynamics and various forms and domains tourism works on and through and is subject to in the area. This research aims to address this need. It aims to attend to calls for research into the dynamics of sustainable tourism development in Nepal and further evaluations of present approaches towards sustainable development in the region (MacLellan et al, 2000; Nepal, 2000b; Pobocik and Butalla, 1998; Parker, 1997).

Consequently, the primary aim of this research is to investigate the understandings, interpretations and 'actualities'³ of the theoretical constructs of 'sustainable development' (through tourism) and 'sustainable tourism' both within the Ghorepani and Tatopani villages of Nepal and vis-à-vis external interpretations of the terms. Additionally it explores the ramifications any differences in these understandings and interpretations have for the

² As evidenced in the work of Chhetri (1999) and Nepal (2000a) for example.

³ I.e. the various 'realities' of the situation for stakeholders.

implementation and operationalisation of tourism as a form of sustainable development, in the research area and on a wider basis.

In order to meet the primary aim, the following objectives are undertaken:

1. Investigate understandings of the terms ‘development’ ‘sustainable development’ and ‘sustainable tourism’, and the beliefs, theories and issues underpinning these understandings in the context of the academic literature, and in terms of industry policy and discourse (See Chapters 2 and 3)
2. Investigate understandings of the relationship between tourism and development existing at a wider structural level and in the literature, and their relationship to the contexts in which they take place (See Chapter 3)
3. Examine how attempts at sustainable development are being realised through tourism in the Ghorepani and Tatopani villages of Nepal and how they are perceived (See Chapter 5, 6 and 7)
4. Ascertain the fundamental issues of sustainable development and sustainable tourism for key actors and additional stakeholders in the communities of Ghorepani and Tatopani (See Chapters 5, 6 and 7)
5. Evaluate the extent to which tourism can achieve contemporary conceptualisations of sustainable development in the current environmental context of the Ghorepani and Tatopani region according to local perceptions, and according to the dominant hegemony. This is undertaken with the acknowledgement that no ‘final’ state of sustainable development as such can be achieved (See Chapter 8)
6. Compare and contrast the understandings and actualities of sustainable development and sustainable tourism of the various actors according to its earlier objectives (See Chapter 9).

As Hall (2000a:1) observes, “tourism is intimately connected with issues of sustainable development”. Indeed the Nepali government’s slogan for its ‘Visit Nepal Year 1998’ was “Sustainable Development through Sustainable Tourism” (Acharya, 1999:44). Yet past research has questioned the achievements of enterprises which claim to protect the environment while providing an economic benefit through tourism. Holden and Sparrowhawk (2002:435) maintain that “without properly planned development and visitor management, the success of ecotourism is likely to be ephemeral”. The research noted above illustrates that the conceptualisations of sustainable development through tourism being implemented within the Annapurna Conservation Area are problematic and not universally accepted as successful.

1.1.2 Ramifications of the Political Situation

On the 13th of February 1996 the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched a ‘People’s War’ in Nepal (Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist, 2002). This initially involved localised attacks on police forces and occasionally civil servants who were perceived as corrupt. However, on the 21st of November 2001 the Maoists declared an end to a four month long cease-fire agreement with the government and began also targeting the Royal Nepal Army, police and government officials and administrators, and administrative buildings. This resulted in meetings between the various political parties, and a subsequent declaration on Monday the 26th of November 2001 by Prime Minister Deuba and King Gyanendra of a State of Emergency.

The Royal Nepal Army (RNA) was mobilised to take action against the Maoists, whereas previously this had been purely a remit of the police. The mobilisation of the RNA resulted in the Maoists widening their conflict to include attacks on infrastructural targets, especially those which were utilised by the RNA and the police. This included utility supplies, bridges, telecommunications, and roads, which, in conjunction with the suspension of fundamental rights of the Nepali

people under the State of Emergency, caused widespread disruption throughout the country for the local population.

The political situation undoubtedly had a considerable impact on the field research period. Maoist rebels were active in the areas used for the pilot study and the research proper (see Plate G, Appendix 4), and the researcher encountered them. The village of Tatopani was actively and publicly under Maoist control for a period of the research. The village of Ghorepani was under a form of indirect control of the Maoists. Later events were to impact more directly upon the management of the research area; for instance in 2003 the Ghandruk ACAP office was raided and razed and ACAP forced to close all its offices (including Ghorepani) in the southern belt of the ACA (Basnyat, 2003:4).

While there are undoubtedly a number of ways the situation impacted upon the research, some of the key areas are now listed:

1. Reduction in the number of tourists, (trekkers) and consequently, other stakeholders (see Appendix 3 for an illustration of relative numbers of tourists in the ACA in the year 1999-2000⁴ and numbers during the field research period). Baral et al (2004:186) note a fall in international tourist arrivals during 2001-2002 of over 20%. The political climate created a relatively non-typical situation in terms of the sum total of trekker arrivals in the area and an associated decline in earnings (the first such since 1993) as illustrated in Table 1-1 on the next page (Baral et al, 2004:188).

⁴ The year 1999 was selected as a baseline “normal” year for trekkers to the area. A return to the level of visitor arrivals of 1999 constituted the “first projected milestone” for the Nepal Tourism Board to achieve by 2006 in its Tourism Marketing Strategy 2005-2020 (Travers, 2004. 19).

<i>Year</i>	<i>Earnings in US\$ (millions)</i>	<i>Contribution to GDP (%)</i>
1983	35.67	1.4
1985	31.18	3.0
1990	63.70	3.2
1995	116.78	4.1
2000	166.85	3.2
2001	140.28	2.9

Table 1-1: Tourism's Value to the Nepal Economy, 1983 – 2001

Source: Economic Survey 2002, Nepal Ministry of Finance

However, there were clear benefits from a research standpoint arising out of this situation. The main benefit to arise was ease of access to almost all of the stakeholders involved in the study throughout the whole study period (exceptions to this are listed below). Stakeholders generally had more time to converse with the researcher than would otherwise have been the case, especially during the peak season. Nevertheless, this can be seen as an atypical situation.

2. Some reduction in the amount of local stakeholders in the area. Due to the political situation, there was considerable migration to the cities (principally Kathmandu) from countryside areas.
3. Restriction of travel and access in the fieldwork area. The researcher was not able to visit villages which were more than a day from the main trekking trail. Although this could have been achieved safely with Maoist accompaniment, the risks to residents in these villagers were perceived to be too great.
4. Restriction of communication. This was in a technical sense – the communications infrastructure had been destroyed by the Maoists, but also in a personal sense, in that political discussion was not always open and relaxed. Patience, and the subsequent use of occasional, softer probes (after no probes or statements on this matter in the early part of the research), as well as participant observation proved constructive to counteract this.

This section has explored the impact of the political situation on the research during the fieldwork period. This was considered necessary to explore given that a Maoist insurgency was taking place within Nepal at the time. The above summary suggests that there were a number of impacts upon the research fieldwork phase; however some of these in fact aided the research, whilst the others did not critically impede the research or its scope.

1.2 The Research Case

The previous sections have introduced the research and its aim and objectives. This section provides a background to the study at a wider contextual level, and at the local level in which the fieldwork was conducted. The section examines the research case and attempts at development at a national and local level within it. The first part, Section 1.2.1, explores the relationship between the nation of Nepal and issues of development. The second part, Section 1.2.2, surveys the use of tourism as a form of development in Nepal, and specifically the Annapurna region of Nepal. In doing so it introduces the fieldwork areas of this study.

1.2.1 Nepal and Development: A Failed State

Nepal is an extreme case, although not exceptional - small, landlocked, without many natural resources; a periphery of a periphery - inhabited by a peasantry dying on its feet. Either the capitalist or socialist road could seldom look steeper

(Blaikie, 1983:19)

The country of Nepal provides a useful example of the difficulties inherent in implementing conceptualisations of 'development' in an undeveloped nation. The country shares geopolitical features with many other United Nations defined

“Least Developed Countries” (United Nations, 2006), for example its landlocked borders and politically unstable conditions. Furthermore, like other Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Nepal also provides its own unique set of contextual factors.

Nepal has an area of 147,181 square kilometres (Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Nepal, 2007) and shares its borders with China to the north and India to the south. It has a population of approximately 27.1 million with a growth rate of 2.25 % per annum (United Nations Population Fund, 2005). The country can be divided geographically into three distinct areas – the Terai, or plains, the middle hills and the high Himalaya (see Map 1, Appendix 1) and is divided politically into five Development Regions, of 14 Zones, 75 Districts and 3914 Village Development Committees, each of these with an average of nine wards. Ethnically the country is diverse; Frank (1977) discovered over 60 different ethnic groups in an investigation of the middle hills. He noted that "contrary to all comparable places in the world, there are hardly any areas in Nepal which can be considered to be the area of a certain ethnic group, and on the other hand, we find distinct differences from ethnic group to ethnic group if we look at the populations as a whole" (ibid:87).

The Nepal Human Development Report 2001 identifies weak internal governance as “the root of disappointments in development” (United Nations Development Programme, 2002:iii). The internal political situation has been volatile and unstable in recent years. As this impacted directly upon the research fieldwork of this thesis it was explored in greater depth in Section 1.1.2. The political unrest within the country can be largely attributed to the fact that the local society remains stratified by the same social and economic positions Shrestha noted over a quarter of a century ago (1979, in Uphoff, 1991:507-508).

When media such as ‘The Economist’ claim that “Nepal is fast becoming a failed state” (2003:66) they are not only labelling (it could perhaps be argued sentencing) the civil, but the economic and the political structures also. Due in

part to the conditions imposed by the contextual factors outlined above (but mostly, it is argued, to the implementation of conceptualisations of development outlined in the following chapters) development efforts in Nepal have not been particularly successful. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cites an estimate that approximately 42% of Nepal's population live in poverty, primarily in rural areas (UNDP, 2002:2). This includes observations that Nepal's income poverty has not improved over a 20 year period, there is chronic malnutrition, and the proportion of people not expected to survive beyond the age of 40 years is amongst the worst in the world (UNDP, 2002:20). For illustrative purposes, Table 1-2 displays some contemporary international indices of development with reference to the Myagdi District in Nepal in which the research area of this study is located. Further detail on the research area is presented in the following section (1.2.2).

Indices	Myagdi
United Nations Human Development Index Rating	144
Life Expectancy at Birth	66.62
Chronic Malnourishment among children (Under 5 years old)	63.2
Mean Years of Schooling	2.59
Adult Literacy	48.9
Gross Domestic Product per capita (PPP \$US)	1209

Table 1-2: Selected Contemporary International Indices of Development of the Research Field Area (2001 figures).

Sources: UNDP, 2004; and Informal Sector Research and Study Centre, 2001.

The data in Table 1-2 indicate broader problems; how development efforts by international agencies in the past decades have failed to advance the country's economy or keep up with population growth rates (Lohani, 1999:3-4). The scale of the problem can be appreciated when it is recognised that Nepal's population has grown from 11 million in 1975 to 23 million in 2001, to 27 million in 2005, and is estimated to further spiral to approximately 38 million in 2025 and 51 million by 2050 (United Nations Population Fund, 2005; Ministry of Population and Environment Nepal, 2002; Stevens, 2001).

Whilst the contextual factors undoubtedly impact upon the implementation of (predominantly western) development policies within Nepal, they do not fully illustrate the level of perceived failures of previous development efforts and/or the subsequent disillusionment of those who have been subjected to them. The Nepal Human Development Report 2001 (UNDP, 2002:34) observes that “one striking feature in Nepal is the persistence of poverty despite almost 5 decades of planned development”. Hancock’s (1989:155) earlier observations were more damning. He claimed that “the extent of foreign involvement in the national development effort is so great that, in some schemes, it is genuinely difficult to discern whether the real beneficiaries are even *intended* to be the Nepalese poor or whether, in fact, the whole exercise has been designed around the needs and interests of expatriate corporations”.

The statistics presented in Table 1-2, after all, illustrate the situation in a country following fifty years of externally-inspired development efforts by outside agencies. Indeed the number of non-governmental organisations has grown from 220 registered with the government in 1989, to 5,978 registered with the government’s Social Welfare Council (SWC) in 1997, through to a total of 12,600 registered with the SWC in 2001, an estimated 30,000 otherwise registered and a possible total of 60,000 operating throughout the country (Asian Development Bank 2005; Heaton-Shrestha, 2002; Rademacher and Tamang, 1993).

The situation has shown no sign of abatement since Dixit wryly observed twenty years ago that “the Development industry has blossomed into the single largest source of valuable foreign currency for this country. It has even overtaken the tourism and jute industries put together” (1986:134). During this research it was repeatedly personally communicated to the researcher that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were the biggest growth industry in Nepal (see also Chitrakar, 1988:11-12), and that they provided the best opportunities for employment. One media estimate suggested that each of Nepal’s human settlements (including each of its estimated 3,995 villages) should be receiving services from between three to eight

international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (The Himalayan Times, 2002:6).

To understand the ramifications of such circumstances it must be appreciated that development has produced a profound shift in the consciousness of Nepali society. As Pigg (1993:47) notes, "...in Nepal, development has proved much more effective as an ideology than as a set of technical solutions". It is thus ironic that where so many planned development programmes fail in Nepal, the western inspired ideology of development has been diffused throughout the country so successfully (Pigg, 1992:492). It has, as Pigg observes, transcended, and /or replaced "differences of language, region, caste, and ethnicity, creating a common terrain or social territory: the condition of underdevelopment at which development interventions are aimed" (1992:499).

In conclusion, attempts at development in Nepal have proved problematic. Nepal remains, as Gurung noted in 1970, 'over advised and undernourished' (Simkhada and Olivia, 2006:145). Although the contextual factors listed earlier in this section have undoubtedly hampered attempts at development, they cannot account for over 50 years of development failures, nor the way that conceptualisations of development (or underdevelopment) have become the lens through which Nepalis often view themselves.

1.2.2 Tourism and Development in the Annapurna Area

The Nepali context as outlined in the preceding section limits the paths of development open to the nation. Nepal has a dearth of raw materials to exploit and a lack of financial, institutional and knowledge capital with which to exploit them. The development of rural areas⁵ presents additional significant difficulties. The fragility of mountain environments in Nepal is echoed in the United Nations desire "to raise attention to the problems facing mountain areas because they are

⁵ Over 80% of Nepal's population is rurally based (MacLellan et al, 2000:174; KMTNC, 2006a).

inhabited by some of the most vulnerable people, who can lose their livelihoods with even the smallest shifts in climate or insensitive developments” (Vidal, 2002:7).

In such circumstances, the exploitation of *any* opportunity of development must be considered. It is thus not a case of *whether* to develop tourism (hence implying an automatic rejection of the dichotomy implied by Jafari’s 1990 Advocacy - Cautionary platforms) but *how* (see Holden and Ewen, 2004:61; Poon 1993:287-288, and Bjønness, 1983:264)⁶. In this respect Nepal does have the available raw material in the form of natural resources. As Bishop (1989:84-85) noted:

The most immediately striking quality about the Himalayan region is, of course, the immensity of its mountains... Yet the Himalayas were more than just mountain peaks. The valleys and their inhabitants, the rich flora and fauna, the complex cultural and political networks, all played their part in the creation of the Himalayan 'frontier'.

The splendour of this Himalayan frontier (in particular its romantic aesthetics) led to early perceptions of the country being the original Shangri-La. This same visual grandeur and exoticism which saw the first tour in 1955 organised by Thomas Cook (Richter, 1989:168) these days continues to draw tourists from industrialised nations to the country. As Table 1-3 on the following page illustrates, much of this tourism is to rural mountain areas (through trekking and mountaineering) which are most in need of development, rather than solely to larger urban centres as is common with much casual tourism (Bhattarai, Conway and Shrestha, 2005:677).

⁶ In developing countries this is frequently the case; Briedenham and Wickens (2004:191) give the example of South Africa, where in many rural areas tourism “...is frequently perceived as the only economic option”.

	Trekking or Mountaineering	Holiday / Pleasure	Business or Official	Pilgrimage	Other	Total
India	-	64	24	2	10	100
UK	47	43	7	-	3	100
USA	40	45	8	-	7	100
Japan	30	59	5	3	3	100
Germany	45	46	6	-	3	100
France	43	52	3	-	2	100
Sri Lanka	2	5	3	85	5	100
Spain	21	75	2	2		100
All visitors	28	52	10	4	6	100

(no information available on China or Korea)

Table 1-3: Reasons for Visiting Nepal in 2001 of Top Countries in Percentages

(Source: Nepal Tourism Board Research Department in Travers, 2004:7)

While Nepal's market share of world tourism and travel total demand at 0.01% is globally insignificant (World Travel and Tourism Council - WTTC, 2005), the significance of the industry to Nepal is considerable. The WTTC estimates the industry was directly responsible for, or a contributing factor in 7.1% of total employment (773,506 jobs or one in every 14.1) in 2005⁷. It estimates the industry contributed 7.9% of gross domestic product and generated 17% of total exports in the year, and it expects the industry in Nepal to grow by 5.6% in real terms between 2006 and 2015 (WTTC, 2005:3). Previous figures have led to claims that tourism is Nepal's "most important earner of foreign exchange" (Nepal, Kohler and Banzhaf, 2002:13) and while this may be debateable, the most recent Nepal Tourism Policy of 2052 (1995) did identify the development of tourism as "a main economic sector of the nation" (His Majesty's Government of Nepal: Ministry of Tourism and Aviation, 1997:1). Current figures suggest that tourism remains of critical importance to the country, although it is worth noting that the Indian market is traditionally greater numerically than the western market (Sill, and Kirkby, 1991:72).

The Annapurna Conservation Area, situated approximately 200 kilometres west of the capital Kathmandu (see Map 2, Appendix 1), is one of the principal attractions in Nepal for tourists from industrialised countries. The area surrounding the

⁷ Such claims should be considered after consulting Bhattarai, 2003a and 2003b however. Bhattarai claims: "From the point of view of generating employment... this sub-sector of economy [tourism] cannot be said to have attained any degree of social significance" (2003a:355).

55km long Annapurna massif perfectly encapsulates Bishop's earlier quote, and also the potential for development through tourism in the rural mountain areas of the country. Gurung and DeCoursey (1994:177) referred to the area as "one of the world's most spectacular landscapes", and Wells labelled it "arguably the most geographically and culturally diverse conservation area in the world" (1994a:325). It is an area which encourages superlatives; Lucas (1992:112) noted its catchment area included "the world's deepest valley... lying between two of the world's highest mountains", and contained an exceptionally high diversity in vegetation, a number of diverse ethnic groups, 441 bird species and rare and endangered mammals. Schnaiberg (2003), in awarding the Annapurna Circuit trek number one status in a grouping of the world's best hikes and treks, described it thus:

This classic Himalayan trek is a classic for good reason: it encapsulates the best of Nepal, wrapping around the stunning Annapurna range to put you in the shadow of peaks that pierce 26,000 feet. Yak herds, eagle-like Himalayan griffon, blue sheep, fluttering Buddhist prayer flags, and hot springs dot this central Nepal route, which starts in lush green foothills and climbs into high-altitude desert typical of the Himalayan plateau.

Yet Puntenney observed in 1990 that the area was "plagued by paltry economic opportunity, limited agricultural production, seasonal famines, and high infant mortality rates – conditions that are familiar across much of Nepal" (1990:11). More than 90% of the local population were reported to be subsistence farmers in 1992 (Lucas, 1992:112), with other occupations including labourers, herders, and traders (Gurung and DeCoursey, 1994:177). In 1989, an estimated 97% of these farmers relied on fuelwood for their local energy needs (Hough and Sherpa, 1989:436).

Also familiar to much of Nepal were the development efforts in the region. The Annapurna area was subject to an externally-derived NGO development effort with a large budget and a technical focus. Like many other such attempts across Nepal, the project ended in failure. In the case of the Annapurna area it was the USAID-inspired Resource Conservation and Utilisation Project (RCUP) which lasted from the mid 1970s until 1985. Its legacy largely consisted of a collection

of Western-style buildings (built with beams of the native timber it was charged with preserving), some of which have since been dismantled or washed away in floods. The International Science and Technology Institute completed an evaluation of the project in 1985 and labelled it a waste of its US \$27.5 million budget (Shrestha, 1999:224-225; Armington, 1997:226; Chitraker, 1988:11-12).

At the same time as the externally planned RCUP project was ending in failure, the largely unplanned and unmanaged tourism industry was gaining considerable momentum. Although the nation as a whole had initially been attracting less than 10,000 visitors per annum prior to 1965⁸ (Honey, 1999:54), Nepal (2000a:82) notes the number of international tourists visiting the Annapurna area rose from 14,332 in 1980 to 33,620 in 1986. This rapid increase in tourist numbers in the early 1980s coupled with an increasing local populace in the Annapurna's fragile environment began to place considerable strain upon the area's natural resources and cultural integrity. Tourism was blamed in part for worsening levels of deforestation and subsequent soil erosion, littering, pollution of local streams and rivers, inflation of prices, begging, and the development of an inferiority complex based around material wealth amongst locals (Holden and Sparrowhawk, 2002:437; Nepal 2000b:668-669; Curry and Morvaridi, 1992:136).

The need to more directly manage the Annapurna area (and the tourism within it) was consequently recognised by Karna Sakya, a leading conservationist in Nepal, who in turn helped convince the monarch at the time, King Birendra Bikram Shah. Early consultancy research in the area recommended that the 'National Park' status employed elsewhere in Nepal should not be implemented due to its possible exclusion of local communities (Wells and Brandon, 1992:11; Hough and Sherpa, 1989:438). The area was instead granted a Royal Decree in 1985 permitting the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) to manage the area under the auspices of the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP).

⁸ Bhattarai, Conway and Shrestha (2005:672) claim that 6000 tourists landed in 1962.

The project was designed to address three principal issues simultaneously: human development, nature conservation and tourism management (Gurung, 1992:38). An Operational Plan was produced by the project's designers in 1986 on occasion of the 25th anniversary of the WWF (see below), and Phase One of the project, based on a 200km² operational pilot of the Gurung village of Ghandruk, commenced that same year. The local resident's initial fears of government intervention in the area's use and management were transparent in demonstrations in Ghandruk after the announcement of the programme⁹. Stevens (1997:246) observes that if a referendum had been called on the ACAP in 1986 "there is no doubt... it would never have been created".

However by 1990 the ACA (Annapurna Conservation Area) had been extended to encompass an area of more than 1500km² incorporating 16 Village Development Committees (Roe and Jack, 2001:45). Fees for trekking in the area were subsequently introduced with the view to providing the bulk of the operational budget and, alongside revenues from endowments, making the programme self-sufficient. Donors to the programme, and to KMTNC, included WWF (formerly the World Wide Fund for Nature) USA, the King Mahendra UK Trust, the Netherlands Development Organisation – SNV, USAID, the German Alpine Club – DAV, and the Tibetan Refugee Society, who collectively supplied 75% of ACAP's 1989-1994 budget (Stevens, 1997:247). Yet the project's initial coordinator viewed ACAP's future self-sufficiency as "an essential part of the Annapurna concept" as it avoided dependency and the problems associated with maintaining expensive infrastructure (Hough and Sherpa, 1989:439). Government regulations were enacted in 1989 to ensure these fees were paid directly to the KMTNC¹⁰.

Following subsequent expansion, full government recognition finally arrived (after the comparatively rapid speed of implementation) and the ACA was

⁹ Sourced from Wells and Brandon, 1992; Lucas, 1992; Gurung 1995; Stevens, 1997; Heinen and Mehta, 1999; and Sofield 2000a.

¹⁰ This was in contrast to the fees for entrance into the Solu Khumbu National Park which were paid directly into the treasury and subsequently gave rise to allegations of underfunding of the park.

officially gazetted in 1992. The KMTNC was legally entrusted with the management of the area for the next ten years, after which the ACA was to be administered by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and the local communities (Sofield 2000a; Stevens 1997).

Yet as early as 1997 there was discontent being voiced about this arrangement; Stevens voiced uncertainty over the background and gender composition of management agencies after such a transferral and reported a director-general of the DNPWC as claiming that “existing staff would be almost entirely replaced by departmental personnel” (1997:259). In addition Stevens raised the issue of whether co-management of the area by the KMTNC or the DNPWC could be phased out in favour of local management. He noted that some ACAP staff viewed this as a primary goal, as did some local leaders, who perceived themselves as ready to assume responsibility for ACAP operations.

This view was supported by ACAP’s initial coordinator who noted a reluctance on the part of development and conservation agencies to let go and allow communities their independence (Stevens, 1997:259). Alternatively, such development assistance also risked parties from both sides coming to view NGO (e.g. ACAP and its sponsors) assistance as a “vehicle for service delivery rather than development advocacy” (Sparrowhawk and Holden, 1999:42, citing Khadka, 1997). Despite this, the WWF Nepal programme listed one of its targets for the financial year of 2001 as “support to initiate handing over process” (WWF Nepal, 2001).

At the time of the field research the ACA was 7629 km², with the area under investigation part of an approximately 5300km² area.¹¹). The Annapurna Conservation Area Project was headquartered in Pokhara and included seven Unit Conservation Offices (UCOs) consulting with 55 VDCs and their associated Conservation Area Management Committees (CAMCs). Part 1, Appendix 2 illustrates the organisational structure of ACAP.

¹¹ The additional approximately 2350km² constitutes the Upper Mustang Conservation and Development Project (UMCDP) expansion area (KMTNC, 2000a; Sharma and Gautam, 1999).

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project was initiated under a premise which in community development and planning is commonly referred to as a “Bottom-up” model. Table 1-4 presents a characterisation of this “Bottom-up” model and the associated heterarchical power structure as envisaged by the project’s initial coordinator and an additional author in 1989 (Hough and Sherpa, 1989:437).

<u>Institutional Characteristics</u>	
Role:	Facilitator
Power Flow:	Heterarchical
Decision Making:	Decentralised Local Participatory
Emphasis	Means/process
Technology:	Appropriate
Financing:	Low cost External capital useful
Timescale:	Intergenerational Slow, sustained results
<u>Social Implications</u>	
Sovereignty:	Local
Economy:	Self-sustaining Equitable
Society:	Empowered
Local institutions:	Empowered
Culture:	Norms and symbols incorporated
Local Expertise:	Developed

TABLE 1-4 Envisaged characteristics of the “bottom-up” model of the Annapurna Conservation Area.
(Source: Hough and Sherpa, 1989:437).

These authors viewed the “Bottom-up” model implemented via ACAP as respecting and enhancing local sovereignty, which they perceived as “a function of ownership and power and manifested through both the ability of the people to determine their own future and the belief that they can do this” (Hough and Sherpa, 1989:440). The guiding principles of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature

Conservation and the goal and objectives of ACAP are presented in Parts 2 and 3 of Appendix 2¹².

The ACA has the highest tourist visitation rate and is the most populated of all of Nepal's protected mountain areas (Heinen and Mehta, 1999:23). Acharya (1999:45) and Weaver (1998:144) estimate that 60% of all trekkers in Nepal visit the Annapurna region. Appendix 3 illustrates the Annapurna area's visitation statistics and illustrates its importance to tourism within Nepal. It also illustrates the downturn in tourism during the research period, which was further explored in Section 1.1.2, and which latest available figures suggest remains the case in the research area¹³.

Approximately 60 % of this total visits the area between four months of the year: March and April, and October and November (Gurung, 1992:37; Sill and Kirkby, 1991). To cater for these numbers, Nepal (2000a:82) claims that in the seven years leading to 2000, 300 new lodges were built, with a capacity of more than 6000 beds per night.

As illustrated in Appendix 3, in 2001 approximately 65,313 people visited the Annapurna area¹⁴. Furthermore, this figure, although considerable, does not include Indian pilgrims in the area, visiting holy sites such as Muktinath. The significance of the number of trekkers visiting is accentuated when estimates of one supporting employee per trekker are considered (KMTNC, 1999). Nepal (2000c:356) cites a figure of 75,000 "porters and guides deriving their income directly from trekking" in the Annapurna, whilst Poudel (2002:26) suggests the trekking industry employs more than 100,000 workers nationally. Chand estimates these figures are partly constituted by 25,000 seasonal positions and 2000 permanent positions for local peasants (2000).

¹² Further detailed analysis of the administrative structure of ACAP and other Nepali conservation areas is contained in Heinen and Mehta, 1999.

¹³ The KMTNC suggests "more than 36,200 tourists visited the ACA in 2005" (KMTNC, 2006b:4) which is sufficiently lower than in previous years as Table 4 illustrates.

¹⁴ This was 64.3% of the registered trekkers visiting Nepal, and approximately 14% of the total of 464,000 (Bhattarai, Conway and Shrestha, 2005:672) tourists visiting the country.

While some estimates put the population of the ACA at 120,000 (KMTNC, 2001:1; Nepal, 2000a:77), such figures are approximations only. Population figures for the area vary considerably and do not take into account either transhumance or rural to urban migration/displacement brought about by the Maoist insurgency at the time of the research (see Section 1.1.2).

However such estimates would suggest that in addition to an estimated 120,000 residents in the ACA, the trekker visitation figures for 2001 could be matched by support staff and a possible total of 130,000 visitors to the area in 2001 (Holden and Ewen, 2004) could be suggested. Twenty years ago the area was estimated to have a resident population of 40,000 (Gurung and DeCoursey, 1994) and be host to 14,332 trekkers per annum. Considering that the region has little modern infrastructure, a wide variety of ethnic groups and a principal energy source of firewood (which trekkers are estimated to consume at twice the rate of locals - KMTNC, 1999:115) the environmental and socio-cultural management issues would appear significant.

The field areas chosen for this research provide a useful microcosm of issues related to these factors. The wards¹⁵ of Ghorepani and Tatopani (in the Sikha and Tatopani-Bhurung Village Development Committee areas of Myagdi district respectively – see Map 3, Appendix 1) are both situated at major trail intersections for trekkers on alternative routes through the ACA, in addition to being major attractions in their own right.

The ward of Ghorepani is centred upon the Pun Magar village of Ghorepani (see Plate A, Appendix 4). The village is situated on the route of trekkers attempting the Annapurna circuit, and in addition is a principal destination for trekkers on shorter routes (see Map 3, Appendix 1). The village is overseen by the Ghandruk UCO and has a Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC), a Women's Group, and a Tourism Management Sub-committee/Lodge Management

¹⁵ Wards are the smallest administrative district in Nepal. The two wards were chosen as opposed to the villages as firstly they reflect the administrative designations, and secondly they provide scope for the study to investigate the areas adjacent to the physical structures of the villages (e.g. Poon Hill).

Committee. The village of Ghorepani owes its existence almost entirely to tourism. The name of the village “Ghore” meaning ‘horse’ or ‘mule’ and “pani” meaning ‘water’ - refers to the traditional practice of mule drivers using a creek at the bottom of the present principal village as a watering area for their mules, before or after taking them over the pass.

There are variations in the village’s story however - Acharya (1999:45) believes the village started out as “a high pasture with three cowsheds in 1975” whereas Banskota and Sharma speak of “the once dense Ghorepani forest... in which people feared to travel through alone for fear of attack by wildlife” (1995:66-67; see also Bezruchka, 1997, and Swift 1989 for alternative versions of the village’s past). However these differences can most probably be explained by the fact that Ghorepani actually constitutes two separate areas of urban dwelling – Ghorepani and Ghorepani ‘Duerali’ (or ‘pass’, as in mountain pass). Whilst Acharya (1999) was in all probability referring to the original, Ghorepani, Banskota and Sharma are likely to be referring to the more recent, and substantially bigger Ghorepani Duerali (hereafter the two are collectively referred to as ‘Ghorepani’ due to their proximity, as they are separated by approximately 60 metres of slope and track through forest).

Regardless, by the 1980s the panoramic views from Poon Hill had resulted in the village becoming a key tourist stopover in the ACA¹⁶ (Acharya, 1999) due in large part to the building of an observation tower at “Poon” Hill (see Plate B, Appendix 4). At the time of the research fieldwork there were 27 lodges (and 42 households) primarily built using the funds of ex-Ghurkha soldiers originally from the nearby village of Khibang.

The village of Ghorepani presents a number of management challenges. At 2870 metres it is an alpine environment. The village’s situation near the Poon Hill

¹⁶ Kyle (2001:16) describes Poon Hill as thus; “The great view in the world (sic) was an understatement. From the top of Poon Hill, at 3210 metres, we watched the sun inch its way over the ridge... One by one 15 different peaks emerged from the shadows and glowed from dusky pink to golden yellow in the new light. Cradled in the roof of the world this spectacular sight has been described as “one of the best Himalayan viewpoints in Nepal”. It was truly awe inspiring”.

observation tower and at the aforementioned trail intersections results in a ‘bottleneck’ of trekkers (Gurung and DeCoursey, 1994:178). These management challenges led to the village’s designation as a “Special Management Zone” by ACAP, which signifies that “special management strategies are needed to overcome the serious environmental problems and impact on the resources directly and indirectly due to tourism” (KMTNC, 2001:3).

The other ward in this study is centred upon the village of Tatopani (see Plates C and D, Appendix 4). The village is named after its hot springs (“Tato” meaning ‘hot’, “pani” meaning ‘water’) which have traditionally been used for meditative and health purposes by locals. The village of Tatopani is consequently a popular stopover for trekkers on the Annapurna Circuit and the Jomson/Muktinath treks travelling through the ACA. However for administrative purposes the village of Tatopani is juxtaposed *to* the ACA rather than *within* it¹⁷. This decision was reportedly taken because the ACAP management believed the village of Tatopani was wealthy enough, and not in essential need of further development (personal communication with ACAP official, 2002).

Tatopani is at an altitude of 1400 metres, and, although less than a day’s walk from Ghorepani, has a sub-tropical climate with citrus fruits thriving as opposed to Ghorepani’s alpine climate. However the village’s location in a narrow section of the Kali Gandaki gorge results in it being predisposed to many natural disasters. In addition to past devastation caused by flooding, the village has been subject to landslides, in particular the landslide of 7:15am 26th September 1998 (See Plates E and F, Appendix 4). This landslide, which reputedly resulted in the loss of a porter’s life, deposited thousands of cubic metres of debris in the Kali Gandaki river channel and blocked the river for several hours, causing the flooding of the village and destroying buildings and a large section of the trail in and out of the village (Sikrikar and Piya, 1998).

¹⁷ The opposite bank of the river from Tatopani, and the next village north on the same bank, are within the ACA.

Tatopani village is overseen by the Tatopani-Bhurung Village Development Committee (based in the nearby village of Bhurung), and an informal Lodge Managers Committee (see Appendix 5). The lodge owners are of the Thakali ethnic group and are mostly related, whereas other villagers are of a variety of other ethnic groups. The surrounding areas to the south, east and west also constitute a variety of other ethnic groups, however they are principally Magar.

Whilst MacLellan et al (2000:182) claim that “in Tatopani, agriculture has gradually become secondary to tourism-related activities”, this is not entirely true. Although surrounding villagers may have previously been based upon subsistence agriculture and increasingly contribute to the tourist trade, Tatopani has historically been an important market village. It was a stopping point on the historic salt trade route that disappeared following both the Chinese invasion of Tibet and the construction of a road from Pokhara to India. Much of the wealth in the village is held by the five lodge owners and their families, and is based on inheritances.

Despite these circumstances, MacLellan (2000) is correct in identifying the importance of tourist-related activities to the town. As such it is subject to many of the same pressures of tourism as Ghorepani, although it, like Ghorepani, provides its own unique set of contextual environmental factors. As Nyaupane et al (2006:1373) note, these contextual factors vary greatly in mountain regions. This study examines the unique set of factors providing the context for tourism and sustainable development in the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani.

The previous section explored the “failed state” of development in Nepal. This section has expanded upon that and investigated tourism as a form of development within Nepal, and specifically within the Annapurna area. It identified two wards, those of Ghorepani and Tatopani-Bhurung, as useful examples of the relationships between tourism and development within the Annapurna Conservation Area and Nepal. These wards thus constitute the fieldwork areas for this research. The following section highlights the need for research into issues of tourism and

development in these wards. Following this it outlines the research aims and objectives this study addresses in order to attend to deficiencies uncovered in the literature.

1.3 Definitions of Contentious Terms

The social sciences and their corpus of theoretical knowledge are almost entirely rooted in the historical and social experiences of a few industrialised societies of the West. Development Studies, on the other hand, are all about the problems of economic growth, political development and social change of developing societies which have come through historical and cultural experiences of a different kind. Moreover, the variety of backgrounds of different developing societies has also differently influenced their own development processes. However, the existing development studies, and their corpus of theoretical knowledge, which has come largely from the social sciences, show little or no sensitivity to the basic differences in development experiences of different societies. The net result of this is that we are often unable to pay sufficient attention to some of their crucial problems

(Somjee, 1991:ix).

Williams (1983:103) adds to Somjee's assertions when he states: "Very difficult and contentious political and economic terms have been widely obscured by the apparent simplicity of these terms." The contested and value-laden nature of several terms key to this thesis has engendered a need to examine their conceptualisations in further depth later in the study. However it is first necessary to indicate the meanings which are attributed to them for the purposes of this study, and in the process declare any values ascribed to them by the researcher. The terms below have principally been defined and determined using conceptualisations derived from western critical thought – this is due both to the context in which they are being examined and used, and the context of the researcher's interpretations and background.

1.3.1 Development

The definition of ‘development’ adopted by this thesis is grounded in an alternative conceptualisation of the term and a distinct values basis which is further revealed in the following chapters. This study considers development as a process (which can sometimes be seen as a series of distinct periods or phases). In this process a sometimes loosely defined community attempts or aspires to achieve a level which it perceives as higher or more full across one or more environmental contexts. This definition recognises that the developmental values and aspirations of communities may conflict, or when put into practice may impair the abilities of other communities in their attempts to further develop.

This definition is similar to that proposed by Din (1997) and Binns (2001), with the important proviso that it recognises development as largely a process of change and as such maintains that a community will never reach its full potential. However it acknowledges that the use of such determiners as targets in the ongoing process of development has merit.

1.3.2 Sustainable Development

Although alternative definitions of sustainable development are suggested at a later stage in the thesis, at this point a suitable definition is that proposed by Berke and Conroy (2000:23), who view sustainable development as “a dynamic process in which communities anticipate and accommodate the needs of current and future generations in ways that reproduce and balance local social, economic, and ecological systems and link local actions to global concerns”. This definition is utilised with the proviso that it is merely a loose prescriptive statement and does not acknowledge the variety of processes and values working on such systems, nor elements of hegemonic control over them.

1.3.3 Tourism

Whilst claims that tourism is the world's largest or the world's fastest growing industry are debateable due to the umbrella nature of the term, there is no doubt tourism is one of the defining cultural practices and remains "one of the human activities most representative of present times" (United Nations Environment Programme – UNEP / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - UNESCO, 1984:181). The definition of tourism utilised in this research is based on a United Nations and World Tourism Organisation (1994) definition, which states that tourism involves:

the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited

(UN, WTO 1994:5).

However it is appreciated that the above definition obviously cannot give depth to the complexity of tourism in the modern world; whereby tourism is "a complex world of organisations, services and specialists, reaching into all corners of the globe" (UNEP/UNESCO, 1984:181).

1.3.4 Environment

This study utilises Barry (1999) and Cooper's (1992) concept of 'environment as milieu' as its starting point, but develops this further. As Chapter 2 (Section 2.6) argues, it is important that any definition of environment to be used in the context of sustainability acknowledges all the relationships and influencing factors between humans and their environment. Barry (1999:11) identifies social, physical, political, economic, cultural, moral, epistemological, and philosophical relationships, "...covering a multi-faceted, multi layered, complex and dynamic

interaction between society and environment”. This research, then, contends that the study of a community’s ‘environment’ as milieu involves an acknowledgment not only of the relationship that society and its individual members or cliques has with its environment, but also the processes and daily actualities/connections that layer this relationship. This is further elucidated in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.

1.3.5 Stakeholder / Player / Actor

This study alternates between the use of the titles “stakeholder” “player” and “actor” to signify those peoples involved, whether directly or indirectly, in tourism and development issues in the Annapurna region of Nepal¹⁸. None of these terms totally portray the stake or role (or the variations between them) in tourism in the area that these peoples may or may not possess in an accurate sense. All these terms are in fact deficient or have additional connotations when defining those whose life is impacted on by tourism, and/or who participate in the social, economic, and/or ecological environments (for example) through and on which tourism occurs. Thus the alternations are made in the absence of any suitable term in an attempt to prevent any of the terms used being attributed a *carte blanche* definition and to prevent any misunderstandings occurring due to such prescriptions.

Appendix 5 provides important background information on the actors involved, in order to further justify and contextualise the choice of research techniques. It notes the key stakeholder groups directly involved in the use of tourism to achieve sustainable development in the research fieldwork area.

¹⁸ In the case of this research these individuals / groups are either trekkers, lodge owners, guides, and/or ACAP officials unless otherwise mentioned (see Appendix 5).

1.3.6 Majority / Minority and Less developed / Developed World

English language terminology utilised to refer to the so-called ‘less developed’ world is often inaccurate or inappropriate. For example, one of the more common references for the area from the latter part of the twentieth century has been the ‘third world’. However this descriptor was originally utilised by French demographer Alfred Sauvy in 1952 as an analogy with the ‘third estate’. Following this usage, it was appropriated to mean the politically non-aligned countries in the lead up to the ‘Cold War’ (Chaliand, 2005). The definition ascribed to it since – as defining countries which are economically ‘underdeveloped’ (commonly with widespread poverty and highly dependent economies based around a limited number of primary products), has negative connotations and in itself is not a useful reference point. As Meier and Rauch (2000:94-95) note:

Perhaps more significant, however, is the marked variation of growth rates *among* third-world countries... At the bottom of the league are Ghana, Nepal, Sudan, Uganda, and Zaire, whose per capita income growth since 1950 has been zero or negative. This growing disparity of income levels makes it less and less meaningful to speak of all third-world economies as a group.

Other terms are also problematic. The descriptor “the South” (as employed by the Brandt Commission; 1980, 2002) is obviously flawed given that there are countries regarded as “developed” in the Southern Hemisphere (and countries regarded as ‘underdeveloped’ in the Northern Hemisphere). The increasingly used “majority world” is also not without problems, given that in the English language a ‘minority’ group in sociological terms is commonly considered to be a disempowered group within society. Terms such as ‘less developed’, ‘underdeveloped’ and ‘undeveloped’ are flawed due to a combination of the factors noted previously; i.e. they imply an end point to the development process, have value-attributed connotations, and they lack the specificity and/or agreement of definition necessary for close analysis.

In the absence of any value-free descriptors which accurately portray the variation between states yet remain free of negative connotations, alternations are made between the use of the terms majority / minority world and developed / less developed world (these alternations are made for the same reasons as those listed under the terms ‘Stakeholders / Players / Actors’ previously). The use of these terms is due to their currency in recent times, and the acknowledgement that this currency is due to attempts to negate the negative connotations mentioned above. However, their application is undertaken with the appreciation that none of the terms are value free, and the intention that the values inherent in western conceptualisations of development and undevelopment will be investigated at a later stage in the thesis.

This section has identified key terms utilised within this research and wider arenas which remain open to interpretation and subjective conceptualisation. While it may seem conceptually deficient to attack the semiotics of the terms listed in this section even whilst using them, the lack of any acceptable alternatives and/or interpretive labels without negative connotations in the English language results in this being unavoidable. Furthermore, it is hoped the following chapters clarify the deficiencies inherent in conceptualisations of these terms, with the final chapters offering insight into alternative conceptualisations of them with reference to the field of study of this research.

1.4 Summary

This chapter began by outlining a rationale for the study and a synopsis of the impacts upon the research of the political situation at the time of the fieldwork. Following this it presented the research case and contextual background. Next it examined definitions of the contentious terms used by the study.

Section 1.0 provided an introduction to the chapter, after which Section 1.1.1 provided a rationale for the study. Section 1.1.1 noted the considerable variation in assessment of the success or otherwise of measures to promote and/or manage sustainable development in the ACA, and the calls for further research within the area. The primary aims and objectives of the study were then presented, and reference was made to the envisaged contribution this research makes to knowledge both within the field and within the literature.

Section 1.1.2 examined the impacts upon the study of the political situation which existed at the time of the research. It found that while there were undoubtedly impacts such as a drop in visitor numbers, there were also some benefits in the situation for the researcher, including increased access to key actors.

Section 1.2 noted the lack of development options available to Nepal and the unsuccessful attempts at development within the country. The ideology behind this homogenised development being implemented in the country and in other LDCs is further explored in the next chapter. In particular, the next chapter analyses the ramifications of the fact that

the style or approach of development, the rhetoric and the fads all bear the cultural imprint of the West. It is as though the world of international development, although ostensibly geared towards maximising its relevance to the poor of the Third World, has become like a mirror in which the values, interests and philosophies of the West are reflected

(Stone, 1989:206).

Section 1.2.2 noted the use of tourism as a potential form of development within Nepal, and particularly within the Annapurna Conservation Area of Nepal. It examined the background to present attempts at managing development through tourism, and identified two areas within the ACA which are particularly suitable to investigation of the issues surrounding the use of tourism to achieve sustainable development. The key actors involved in these attempts are detailed in Appendix 5.

Finally Section 1.3.1 examined some of the disputed terms utilised in the research, and noted the manner in which they would be utilised within this study.

PART TWO

CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

Take up the White Man's burden-
 Send forth the best ye breed-
 Go bind your sons to exile
 To serve your captives' need;
 To wait in heavy harness,
 On fluttered folk and wild-
 Your new caught, sullen peoples,
 Half devil and half child.

Kipling, Rudyard. From "The White Man's Burden"
 (1899)

...we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.

Truman, Harry S.
 US President's Inaugural Address
 1949

After having gone through many trials over several decades, developing countries seem to have failed in achieving sustained human-centred development. Many of the plans, policies programs and projects that have been tried in these countries for the last fifty years or more have either failed to accomplish their attempted goals or have been abandoned due to one problem or another. As such, developing countries are still searching feverishly for what it will take to help them attain sustained human-centred development

Adjibolosoo, Senyo B-S. K.
 1999

CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENT AND HEGEMONY

2.0 Introduction

The following analysis highlights and discusses some major definitions and conceptualisations of development in order to determine the ideological groundings of the term in modern times and the current status of the theoretical debate. In doing so it investigates the hegemonic power behind modern conceptualisations of development. This is essential given the highly contested nature of the term and its failure to date to deliver upon its promises. Furthermore it enables the study to embed the term - as currently espoused in the international discourse - in its proper context and thus illustrate the vast historical, ideological, and cultural disparities between these conceptualisations of the term and their roots, and the nature of the field under study in this thesis.

Section 2.1 examines a pivotal moment in these conceptualisations of development and hence development practices. Truman's inaugural address of the 20th of January 1949 served to introduce conceptualisations of "underdevelopment" into the development lexicon. The inherent reductionisms in his address, especially in its dualist conceptions of "underdeveloped" and "developed", enabled a range of subjective (and importantly - negative) values to be attributed to 'underdeveloped' nations including one could perhaps argue, the contemporary phrase "failed state" (see Section 1.2.1) In addition this section

explores the situating (by Truman) of the root causes of underdevelopment (and hence, given the previous sentence, inferiority) as consisting of a lack of certain economic and technological traits. As such, it identifies and provides evidence that Truman's speech was a pivotal source of the subjective values which have labelled Nepal as "undeveloped" and conditioned Nepalis to view themselves through such a lens (see Section 1.2.1).

The practice of implementing conceptualisations of development was perhaps destined to fail given the findings of the first section of this chapter. Section 2.2 examines the various theoretical analyses of this failure - highlighted in Adjibolosoo's (1999) quote which opened this chapter. It finds that despite seemingly contrary positions these theories share basic assumptions that the first two sections of this chapter have worked to disprove. Following this, the rise of postmodernism theory in recent decades and its pervasiveness in the critical analysis of development theory is explored in Section 2.3. This section examines the deconstruction of 'development' through the postmodern analysis and critique of development ideology. Yet it highlights the fact that despite this deconstruction of the term and its ideological background, the postmodernists¹⁹ have left a void in their failure to reconstruct an ideology of development free of its past failings²⁰.

The natural environment constitutes a central role in this thesis; in determining the context within which tourism and development in the field area are both centred around and upon. Section 2.4 thus examines the conceptualisations of environment inherent within most contemporary development western initiatives, and their basis in western historical conditions and rationalistic science. In particular it notes the disparity between such conceptualisations and those which exist in non-western societies.

¹⁹ For example Cooper and Packard (1997); Marcussen and Arnfred (1998); and Feminist theorists such as Marchand and Parpart (1995) and Saunders (2002).

²⁰ Whilst it must be acknowledged that in the early years of this century some postmodernists have attempted to reply to such criticisms (such as Escobar, 2000), the above contentions remain valid.

Contemporary conceptualisations of development are explored in Section 2.5. It examines and critiques the contemporary discourses of development (in particular ‘sustainable development’) that have arisen due to, or sometimes in spite of, the deconstruction of the term investigated in the previous sections of this chapter. Finally Section 2.6 concludes this chapter by summarising its contents.

2.1 Exploring ‘Underdevelopment’ and the Economic Prerogative

This section explores the appropriation and consequent transformation of the term ‘development’ in the first half of the 20th century by western political agendas. This is significant because these transformations have subsequently been echoed in the ideologies and discourse of international (and regional/local) institutions charged with effecting development, and in turn have been adopted and in fact used for self-analysis and introspection by less developed countries, such as Nepal (the work of Shrestha, 1995, 1993, provides a particularly good illustration of this).

By the end of the Second World War, conceptualisations of the term ‘development’ held in the West were already bound in the materialist and positivist ideology prevalent there.²¹ This included the ideology’s Cartesian reductionist conceptualisations of the environment (see Macnaghten and Urry, 1998), techno-rational conceptualisations of progress (as evidenced in the 1949 Truman quote preceeding this chapter), its scientific version of the truth (whereby science was God, following the work of Descartes) and its centring of society

²¹ As evidenced in the World Bank’s first major action in the majority world (see later in this section) and in the prevailing development perspective, which Nederveen Pieterse (2001:7) refers to as “Development Economics”. Nederveen Pieterse claims that development at this time meant “economic (growth) and industrialisation” (ibid). The connections between these and a materialist and positivist ideology are further explained in Sections 2.2 – 2.4.

around the capitalist market economy (as later evidenced in the 1960 work of Rostow)²². Although the influence of western conceptualisations of development had already been evident on the world stage for over a century, the institutionalisation and international legitimisation of these conceptualisations occurred as a result of events at the conclusion of World War Two (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001). While colonialism had enabled the other western nations to establish their economic, political, and social ideologies in much of Asia and Africa, it was at the conclusion of the Second World War that the United States turned its attention to the undeveloped nations and their “relationship to the new hegemony’s desire for an international capitalist order” (Moore, 1995:30).

Consequently the formation of organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the UN Monetary and Financial Conference held in July 1944 at Bretton Woods can be viewed as serving a dual purpose for the West. Whilst primarily established to assist in the reconstruction of Europe and to address the economic and financial causes of the Second World War, Capps (2001:36) notes an additional agenda at Bretton Woods: “a struggle between the USA and Britain for leadership of the capitalist world”.

The resulting Bretton Woods System of international monetary relations in effect articulated the liberal doctrine of the US treasury²³ as reflected in the stipulated conditions attached to the IMF loans. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)²⁴, despite its admirable title, typically provided money on commercial rates of interest also with stipulated conditions attached. While the development section of the World Bank, the “International Development

²² As will be outlined in the Sections 2.2 - 2.4.

²³ This was evident in the strict loan conditionalities the US stipulated for nations borrowing from the IMF, and the US dollar as a fixed exchange-rate mechanism - which, as well as providing a mechanism to deal with the shortage of US dollars in the marketplace, also conveniently tightened the US “grip on the world market, as the rest of the world was now forced to accumulate US dollars in order to pay for transactions in trade (Capps, 2001:37).

²⁴ The IBRD ostensibly exists “to assist in the reconstruction and development of territories of members by facilitating the investment of capital for productive purposes [and] to promote private foreign investment by means of guarantees or participation in loans [and] to supplement private investment by providing, on suitable conditions, finance for productive purposes out of its own capital...” (World Bank, 1989). The International Monetary Fund is ostensibly charged with stabilising international monetary rates and promoting foreign exchange cooperation (IMF 1990).

Association”, lent at concessionary rates to the most poverty-stricken countries, this constituted less than 10% of the Bank’s lending (Capps, 2001:36). The use of the designation of “development” by these institutions, and the mandates they were respectively given, demonstrates the grounding of a western capitalist hegemonic discourse in these emerging institutional conceptualisations of development.

The focus on economic concerns of these newly created institutions was reflected in conceptualisations of development. In 1948 the World Bank first correlated global poverty with a nation’s gross national product (Rahnema, 1992:161). Nederveen Pieterse (2001:7) notes that meanings of development at the time centred upon economic growth and industrialisation, through the perspective of development economics, and he notes the prevailing US hegemony.

The very first major action the World Bank undertook in the less developed world in Columbia reflected both this perception of the primacy of economic growth as signifying development, and the overriding influence of western ideological and teleological beliefs²⁵. Escobar (1992:135-6) observes that the World Bank project had clearly discernible western colonial and Christian overtones. The ‘mission’ noted that it was an inescapable conclusion that “with knowledge of the underlying facts and economic processes, good planning in setting objectives and allocating resources and determination in carrying out a programme for improvement and reforms, a great deal can be done to improve the economic environment by shaping economic policies to meet scientifically ascertained social requirements” and hence assist Columbia to “accomplish its own ‘salvation’ and simultaneously “furnish an inspiring example to all other underdeveloped areas of the world”. Through their incorporation of economic priorities along with ‘scientific’ and semi-religious justifications into international

²⁵ I.e the assumption that there existed a higher (possibly divine) directive purpose in the processes of their conceptions of development

institutions they conferred a respectability and an unchallengeability to the western ‘hegemony’²⁶.

The international institutionalisation of development (within western ideological frameworks) has had profound ramifications for the conceptualisation and implementation of development in modern times. Whilst conceptualisations and implementations of development within western ideological frameworks existed prior to this international institutionalisation, it nevertheless contributed, along with Truman’s inaugural address of 20 January 1949, to the globalisation of the scope of ambition and endeavour in those conceptualisations of development (Cowen and Shenton, 1996:8). By adopting the cause of ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’ on an international scale, Truman effectively nationalised it, and along with the United Nations and the Bretton Wood Institutions internationalised and institutionalised it – thus robbing it of any ‘revolutionary content’ it possessed and ‘reducing it to hollow, alternatively formal or reactionary incantations’ (Kay, 1975:1-2, in Cowen and Shenton, 1996:8).

Perhaps the greatest legacy of Truman’s address has been its subjugation of cultures and societies to a status of “the undeveloped world”. The inherent ideology born out of a fear of communism was expressed in the form of what Germino (1984:21) labelled “the new note of the quasi-apocalyptic transformation of the world in a final battle with demonic communism”. Whilst the Manichean logic underwriting the demonisation of communism was patent in the speech, the presumptive framing of other concepts within this dualist logic was to have profound ramifications on the course of history also. The application of Manichean reasoning to development, and in particular the ‘underdeveloped’ was not subtle; Truman’s depiction of the underdeveloped areas was one where the populaces

²⁶ Which Mowforth and Munt (2003:47) describe as; “the ability of dominant (*i.e. western*) classes to convince (*or persuade*) the majority of subordinate classes to adopt certain political, cultural, or moral values” (italicised information added).

...are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.

Yet Truman's omission of colonialism in his address, coupled with its focus upon communism, was largely effective in shielding these presuppositions inherent within his speech from closer examination at the time. Truman's couching of this rhetoric within the United States' pronouncements of what Germino refers to as "the Supernation" (1984:19) and the associated international positioning of the pronouncements, meant that

...on that day, two billion people became underdeveloped. In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of others' reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in the terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority

(Esteva, 1992:7).

Truman did not invent the concept of underdevelopment, and as Cowen and Shenton (1996) note, the colonialists were enacting similar conceptualisations of the term. Yet his Manichean use of the term to represent the global other half – a reductionist view which implied a homogenous population living in misery and despair, cursed by their misfortune – "provided the cognitive base for arrogant interventionism from the North and pathetic self-pity in the South" (Sachs, 1992:2). Sach's use of the terms 'North' and 'South' in itself reflects the longevity of Truman's dualist notions.

Development has long since left behind the historical conditions (including Truman's speech) and zeitgeist which formulated modern conceptualisations of it. Yet western ideological assumptions remain tacit in each of the new theoretical turns the concept has taken to date (Sachs, 1992:4-5). Truman's conceptualisation of the term (and more specifically the occidental ideology it prescribes to) has remained fundamentally unchanged and unchallenged throughout the modern era.

Originally this was in part due to development's ostensibly moral occupation of the territory previously occupied by the now dishonoured colonialism (Kothari, 1988 in Watts, 1995:55) and the creation of the post-war international institutions "which produce, transmit, and stabilise regimes of development 'truth'" (Watts, 1995:55). However the conceptualisations of these international institutions have been tacitly supported by the development industry²⁷ (which in the post war era grew exponentially), and by the academic, economic and political discourse, all of which, while in truth representing "a series of 'situated knowledges'" (Haraway, 1992, in Watts, 1995:56) avowed the supposedly 'neutral' sphere they operate in.

This section has thus demonstrated through the above argument how in the modern era development has become 'artifactual' (Haraway, 1992, in Watts, 1995:57); that is to say its underlying authorities and benefactors/patrons of power, knowledge, self-asserted righteousness and institution have become sacrosanct and unassailable.

2.2 Reviewing the Relationship between Development Theories

This section explores and critiques the relevant theoretical approaches to development. It does so following the insights into the concept's genealogical inheritances and the associated weaknesses of the western ideologies adopted by international institutions explored in the previous two sections.

²⁷ For example, international Non-governmental Organisations have predominantly worked within the conceptualisations of development communicated by international institutions such as the World Bank and United Nations institutions, rather than actively resisting them.

Development in the years following Truman's address has largely been perceived as (and reduced to) modernisation on the back of economic growth achieved through rapid industrialisation. This is evidenced in Rostow's work on "The Stages of Economic Growth" (1960) encapsulating the approach to development that was being taken politically and scholarly as well as economically in the postwar era. The McCarthyite fervour generated by the earlier stages of the Cold War effectively silenced development theorists and neutralised them from applying critical social science to development and its capitalist history. Thus it effectively further entrenched the western ideological inheritances of the concept.

As Leys observes, whilst the majority of international development theorists (most of whom were western) did not emulate Rostow and explicitly subtitle their compositions "A Non-Communist Manifesto", the subtitle was in fact manifest in their work. In not investigating the "historical [and] philosophical roots and presuppositions" (1996:5-6) of development and development studies, they were locating the concept's roots in a specific post-World War II context within their own political and ideological commitments. They were hence assigning it with a "degree zero of history corresponding to a natural state of underdevelopment" (Rist, 1997:95). Thus in its extinguishment of "an entire generation of radical intellectuals" (Schrecker, 1978:341, cited in Leys, 1996:6), the United States academy's imposition of McCarthyism in effect succeeded in providing the international template for an ostensibly "objective" view of development, which was in reality a post-World War II western capitalist dogma (see Ley's 1996:6 example of Almond, 1987:444-468).

However such an approach to development theory clashed culturally with traditional societies. The theory of modernisation through economic growth and industrialisation as propounded by Rostow in which the "broad lines of societal change necessary to prepare a traditional society for regular growth" were well known and men (sic) in underdeveloped countries must "become prepared for a life of change and specialised function" (Rostow, 1960:26) required the rejection of past cultural histories, fundamentals and groundings. The international

institutions of the era were compliant with, and in fact promoted this occidentalisation of development theory and practice, and hence a virtual desecration of the non-conformist aspects of developing countries' cultural, community and societal traditions. While such a statement may perhaps seem somewhat extreme, it is, however, supported by a reference to the institutional literature at the time:

There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustments. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated. Very few communities are willing to pay the full price for economic progress

(United Nations, Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 1951; cited in Escobar, 1995:4).

It is to be acknowledged, as Escobar does, that such a quote is grounded in the particular political, economic and cultural context of a half century ago. Nonetheless, it proves illuminative of the conceptualisations and implementation practices of economic growth as development that were occurring after the Second World War, and as argued in Section 1.1 of this thesis, are still occurring now in the context of Nepal.

The failure of these strategies (despite the superficial benefits accrued from the 'long boom' economic period over the next three decades) is transparent in their provision of benefits to small numbers of local elites and the continued subjugation of the masses in underdeveloped countries (Conway and Heyen, 2002:97). Such failures and the associated political - economic relationships between the undeveloped and developed areas resulted in increased scrutiny of the modernisation theories. The dependency theorists' conceptions of the "Development of Underdevelopment" as espoused popularly by Frank (1966; also see the papers in Chew and Denmark, 1996) and more academically by Amin, Cardoso, Furtado, and Leys (Streeten, 1984:353) briefly gained support in the underdeveloped nations and in Europe in the 1970s (Leys, 1996:11).

While the differences between the various theorists were such that Rist (1997:109) and Skarstein's (1997:44) depiction of a "dependency school" appears optimistic, there was a shared fundamental belief between the dependency theorists that the direct and financial investment of the developed West (the 'centre') would bind the undeveloped nations (the 'periphery') into the capitalist structures/system of the centre, and the profits that accrued from this investment would be expatriated to the centre, hence enhancing the poverty of the periphery. The dependency theorists also shared the belief that the prerequisite for such conditions was the predilection of the centre towards capital accumulation (Skarstein, 1997:45). They perceived the key to eliminating dependency to lie in the reduction of links to the centre or core (or 'delinking'), in order to bring about 'autocentric' economic growth (Leys, 1996:13). However as Närman (1999:157) observes, "in retrospect, strategies of delinking have been rejected because there would be no way to implement them. The powerful are unlikely to give up a position of power for the benefit of the less advantaged"²⁸.

Though it is not within the scope of this work to offer a critical analysis or view of arguments surrounding theories of dependency²⁹ it is nevertheless pertinent to note some key suppositions arising from the disagreements. The arguments of dependency theorists such as Frank, Amin and Rodney³⁰ and the development theorists or orthodox economic theorists in the form of Billets³¹, for example, shared three vital assumptions. Each assumed a view which was teleologic, centrist, and based upon economism (Nederveen-Pieterse, 2001:25).

Seer's (1981:13) protestation that dependency theories had barely registered with western social scientists was a reflection both of the parochial insularity of the western academia as he noted, (and which it could be argued still remains) and

²⁸ See Frank, 1991:25.

²⁹ And as Streeten (1984:353) notes, any brief review of the debate is necessarily limited by its need to simplify.

³⁰ See Conway and Heynen, 2002:97.

³¹ ...who commented that "While the majority (of the underdeveloped world) live in squalor, it is the pompous minority that have the time, energy, resources, and desire to debate the merit of modernisation and dependency theory" – 1993:114).

also of the bond that existed between the orthodox conceptualisations of development and this same academia. Yet as Rist (1997:154-157) observes, there were alternative visions of development being espoused at the time which had been born out of the dependency theorists' critiques of mainstream development. The visions of alternative development espoused by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (in their "What Now" Report of 1975, and Nerfin, 1977 for example) differed from those of the dependency theorists however, in that they emphasised agency as opposed to structure as the dynamic of development. The focus of the dependency theorists upon a transformation of the structural macroeconomic conditions was discarded, for a conceptualisation which emphasised the capacity for development to be generated by social participation at a grassroots level, the so-called "bottom-up approach" (Nederveen-Pieterse, 2001:75).

The shift towards this form of alternative development has occurred principally at NGO level, although it has been reflected to some degree in changes in the overseas development plans of some western nations. Nevertheless, these approaches were not in fact 'alternative'; the ideological assumptions and implementation practices underlying mainstream development remained the same – as "custodian of the international economic order conceived at Bretton Woods" (Sheth, 1987:155). The principal concession which the inescapable failures of development theory and practice did force from the mainstream development theorists was lexical – "growth" became "growth with distribution" for example – and "the political force of the original theory" was preserved (ibid. 155-156).

The debt crisis triggered by the default of Brazil and Mexico in the early 1980s and the resultant structural intervention into the economies of the underdeveloped nations (through the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the IMF) entrenched the mainstream focus on economic growth as development. It enabled the IMF to impose a neo-liberal doctrine across much of the less developed (and developed) worlds. In doing so the institution was unequivocally declaring its continuing commitment to economic growth as an engine of linear progress towards a stage of maturity and mass consumption. Furthermore, it was persevering with the

assumption that there existed a singular (culturally and ideologically western) economic system which was universally applicable, with the principal difference being the substitution of the market for the state in these ‘economies’ (read ‘countries’) as the regulator of internal economic systems. The Structural Adjustment Programmes, for example, could be viewed as “the economic project of a class coalition, rather than the universal consensual wisdom of a neutral development economics” (Bracking, 1999:208) in which the dependency arrangements of past colonial relationships were updated and strengthened through the intermediaries of the international finance institutions. This has had devastating effects, especially in the initial years, and the subsequent results (or lack of them) especially in Africa and Asia, speak for themselves³².

The influence of institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank upon the economies of the underdeveloped nations was such that by the late 1980s “the only development policy that was officially approved was not to have one – to leave it to the market and not to the state” (Leys, 1996:24). Leys supports this claim with the 1991 World Development Report’s (WDR) statement that “New ideas stress... effective government as a scarce resource”. This emphasis on the market extended to the environment in the following year’s WDR which claimed that “Market-based instruments are best in principle and often in practice” in environmental management (Adhikari, 1998:89). The removal of the state from direct involvement in the development and environment equations initiated a proliferation in non-governmental organisations and in their resources and responsibilities. The consequential growth of critical discourse of mainstream structuralist theory resulted in renewed attention being paid to concepts of ‘alternative’ development. The NGOs soon realised that “in the course of the [previous] two decades, the reality of underdevelopment had moved ahead of the

³² Despite the high social, economic and environmental costs of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), by 1988 only two of the 28 Latin American and Caribbean nations with IMF derived SAPs implemented in 1982 had managed to meet payments (Todaro, 1997:421 in Capps 2001:49). The World Bank discovered a similar story when it estimated after fourteen years of structural adjustment policies in Africa that it would take the region another forty years to return to the mid-1970’s capital levels (Panayiotopoulos, 2001:88). Nixon states that “during the 1980s IMF approved Structural Adjustment Programmes ordinarily exacerbated the unequal distribution of wealth inside countries of the South, while also increasing the South’s poverty relative to the North” (1992:248).

theory of development” (Sheth, 1987:155). Lehman (1997:568) cites this period as conversant with the beginning of the post-modern turn in development theory³³.

This section has examined theoretical approaches to development and found them to be limited in their analysis. In particular it has been argued that they are limited by the same ideological constraints which western conceptualisations of development have inherited (as demonstrated in Sections 2.1). This was argued to be evident in the manner in which they presume development to be a teleological, linear concept based upon economic fundamentals, and in particular economic growth. This comparative lack of opposition/resistance to the application of what has been in effect, a failed economic construct is evidence of what Bracking accurately labels a “loss of critical perception” amongst the academic community (1999:224).

The next major challenge to the development orthodoxy following the attempts of conventional dependency theorists and alternative development was the rise of postmodern critiques. The following section examines the implications of this.

2.3 Analysing the Post-Modern Theoretical Turn

This section further explores the key theorising on development, in particular the contemporary post-modern analysis of the concept. The 1980s witnessed ‘postmodernism’ seemingly “slip into every imaginable theoretical discussion” (Callinicos, 1989:1), yet Gardner and Lewis’s assertion that it was the 1990s which marked an entry into the age of postmodernism can be justified with regards to the rise of postmodern thought in development theorising (1996:20). The deconstruction of discourses and grand narratives associated with

³³ Lehman’s assertions are supported by Grillo’s (1997:1) recognition of anthropology’s absorption with post-modernism and reflexivity at the time.

postmodernism (ala Foucault) in the hands, most notably, of Sachs, Escobar and Esteva (1999, 1995, and 1992 respectively), has effectively shattered the western hegemonic theory of development, and the insights gained have been reflected in some of the theoretical arguments forwarded by this work.

Postmodern theories of development attack the discursive strategies which define the worldview and hegemonic (and hence universal) aspirations of development. They are thus concerned with deconstructing and illuminating the fallacy of western ideological concepts and constructs of development (Agrawal, 1996:465). Yet there are fundamental deficiencies in any emancipatory claims of the post-modern approach. While Agrawal (1996), Lehman (1997) and others identify the rhetorical nature of the text employed as a weakness of the post-modernist's arguments, the use of such a strategy is undoubtedly due in part to an exasperation and powerlessness in the face of the existing state of affairs (see below). Given the hegemonic power underlying present ideological constructs of development³⁴, the post-modernists have felt the need to adopt a much more confrontational rhetoric than would normally be apparent in critiques of the status quo previously consumed (and thus ineffectual)³⁵.

Perhaps the most pertinent criticism of postmodern conceptualisations of development though, is that despite the successful total deconstruction/destruction of development as an ideological concept, the unit of replacement has not yet been found. Agrawal's contention that "post-structuralists face difficulty in moving beyond critique and pointing out productive avenues of change" (1996:465) is a standard one which remains justified. However, Agrawal's contention that the failure of postmodernists to present an alternative course of action signifies an

³⁴ As Ziai (2007:8) notes; "These two central post-development hypotheses – that the 'traditional' concept of development is Eurocentric and has authoritarian and technocratic implications – are hardly even contested by the sharpest critics." Crush (1995:9) is more succinct: "...the basic trope – that Europe shows the rest of the world the image of its own future..."

³⁵ For example Escobar (2000:13) speaks of "slaying the development monster"; Sachs (1992:1) states that development "...appears a blunder of planetary proportions" and Esteva (1995:45) claims that "You must be either very dumb or very rich if you fail to notice that development stinks".

inherent weakness in their approach does not address the fundamental issues raised by the postmodern critique.

Nevertheless it is problematic that while the stance has uncovered and exposed the reigning ideological assumptions and inheritances of the development construct, it is not attempting to reconstruct these or illuminate other cultural representations. In effect then, it mirrors the colonialism of old and the development imperialism of new in that it seeks to critique by being “adrift in a world whose culture and politics it doesn’t begin to understand” (to paraphrase Macnab, 2003:8). The present impasse is thus the result of a failure to generate a theoretical construct which is not bound by contradictions to the ideology of the past, yet more ‘theoretically sophisticated and empirically accurate’ than the present legacy of development theory (Gardner and Lewis, 2000:16). Although we may not have entered the post-development stage to date, as Gardner and Lewis attest we have certainly arrived at a post-discourse era. While post-modernism in its process of deconstruction has illuminated the ideological constructs and historical conditions of the modern era, it is nonetheless limited by its incongruous assertion of the emancipatory project of the enlightenment (Gray, 1995:viii).

Yet the critiques of post-modern/ post-structuralist approaches (such as Agrawal, Lehman, etc) appear to be missing the crucial point. Agrawal (1996:470) argues that the failures of development “to improve poor people’s lives... change power relationships... to ameliorate exploitation... and to reverse the ecological impacts of globalization” have been used by earlier scholars “to draw the lesson that new strategies are necessary”. However it is because these new strategies either have not been drawn or have failed to illustrate from within the corrupted framework of development that explains the call for a post-development. Agrawal admits as much when he states “currently, we are witnessing a process of economic globalization that is likely to marginalise the powerless even further” (1996:470). While he is correct in noting “the absorptive capacities of the development discourse”, he crucially fails to grasp that it is these very same absorptive qualities of the ideologically driven development discourse that have prevented

transformation of the inherited development construct with its history of gross failure. Agrawal's (1996:472) assertions that:

development discourse ...demonstrates a remarkable flexibility by incorporating the need to consider the interests of indigenous and marginalized communities as well as issues related to resistance, empowerment, and ecological stress.

conveniently disregards the hegemonic power structures that dictate how such discourse is wielded. Similarly his misplaced assertion that there has been a "triumph of the philosophy of the market" that has lent weight to the hegemonic belief in "'getting the prices right' and in the privatization of resources" (1996:472) is once again illuminating in its ignorance of the voices of the NGO's and indeed much of the majority world³⁶ (see next section), and just as fundamentally, in its complete unappreciation of any historical view.

The fundamental weakness of the postmodern epistemological stance according to Agrawal and Lehman is that "in order not to contradict their critique and epistemological stance...post-structuralists are forced to repeat as conclusions the assumptions of their critique" (Agrawal, 1996:465). Yet this can be viewed as merely tautological inconvenience: in itself it does not disprove the assumptions or conclusions which underlie the critique. The most potent criticisms of post-modern development theory are those relating to its inheritances and its inability to practically displace earlier approaches.

Hence development theory finds itself in the early twenty-first century at a stage which some (perhaps wishfully), label 'post-development' (Rahnema, 1997:377), with no reconstructed notions (let alone any free of the contaminants of the past era). Others, perhaps more accurately, label the situation a theoretical 'impasse' (Karagiannis, 2004). It would seem that Dasgupta's call twenty-two years ago for a 'post-development' has yet to be addressed (Dasgupta, 1985).

³⁶ See the explanation given for the terms 'minority world' and 'majority world' in Section 1.3.6.

This section has explored the ways in which post-modern approaches have uncovered and exposed the reigning ideological assumptions and inheritances of the development construct, without displacing (or disrupting) earlier approaches (Agrawal, 1996:464). While it is now more or less acknowledged amongst social scientists that development (in the sense of the teleological linear concept of western ideology) is a (flawed) social construct (Gardner, 1997:133), what is not agreed upon is what should be done about it. The next section examines the appropriation of concepts of environment by development initiatives which have occurred as a consequence of the institutionalisation at an international level of western conceptualisations of development. It argues that as these also have their basis in western ideologies and theorising, they are therefore also limited in their relevance to non-western contexts.

2.4 Positivistic Developments: Exploring Sciences

Appropriation of the Environment

If there are no trees, there will be no water whenever one looks for it. The watering places will become dry. If forests are cut down, there will be avalanches, there will be great accidents. Accidents also destroy fields. Without forests, the householder's work can not be accomplished. Therefore, he who cuts down the forest near a watering place will be fined five rupees

Fourteenth Edict of King Ram Shah (1606-1636) (in Bista, 1999).

In the eyes of Western “civilizers”, our mode of life, which until their invasion was quite self-reliant and closely interwoven with nature and its cyclical rhythm, rather than trying to subjugate nature, was not just different; it was inferior. According to them, development was measured in terms of the domination (termination?) of nature, that is, how far people had distanced themselves from nature by exploiting it. The greater the distance between the two, the higher the level of development. The distance between the two has definitely increased – literally as exemplified by poor Nepalese village women who are having to walk farther and farther every year in search of the firewood and fodder for their animals – but development has not. –

Shrestha (1993: 15).

This section explores the appropriation of conceptualisations of environment by western positivistic science and as a consequence (given the findings of the previous sections), western and international institutions. An understanding of this appropriation is considered vital as it has important ramifications for development ideology (and by implication practice) in western defined ‘undeveloped / underdeveloped’ countries. As later chapters demonstrate, these ramifications are particularly acute for nations such as Nepal (and the field research area), whereby there is considerably more immediacy in the relationship of the local populace to the natural environment (as illustrated in Shrestha’s quote above).

In the same epoch as development was achieving constructivist purpose³⁷ western society was losing the last vestiges of its intimacy with the natural environment.

³⁷ I.e. becoming an agent of change, rather than a process of it – see Cowen and Shenton, (1996:24-25).

Blake's yearning for England's green fields (1804:2) was a reflection of "The Deserted Village" of which Goldsmith wrote (1770), or perhaps more specifically the "Desertion of the Countryside" as Aldridge and Aldridge paraphrased him (1976). The externalising of the environment in western thought had occurred two centuries earlier with Descartes' proclamation of Judaeo-Christian cosmology's mastery over nature (in contrast to da Vinci's claim that "Nature is my only master" a century earlier again). However the urbanisation of the population associated with industrialisation and the parliamentary Enclosures Acts, (particularly that which occurred in the first half of the 19th century), was the dynamic which effectively "de-naturalised" the industrial population, i.e. removed it from immediate contact with the natural and farmed environment.

This disengagement of the population from its natural environment furthered the externalisation of the environment started by Descartes, and the scientific rationalisation of what had been the milieu. The consequence of the soul 'being drained of religion' and its role as part of the natural environment was the 19th century rise in sentimentality towards nature, and its endowment of nature with its own holiness through the romanticist movement (Porter, 2001:66-68). As De Botton (2002:171) notes;

It is no coincidence that the Western attraction to sublime landscapes developed at precisely the moment when traditional beliefs in God began to wane. It is as if these landscapes allowed travellers to experience transcendent feelings that they no longer felt in cities and cultivated countryside. The landscapes offered them an emotional connection to a greater power, even as they freed them of the need to subscribe to the more specific and now less plausible claims of biblical texts and organized religions

While the relationship between occidental civilisation and the natural environment gave rise to sentimental feelings expressed through culture, the sciences avoided analysis of the relationship. The rise of social theory as a result of the industrial revolution resulted in a new social science which was not concerned with the environment (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998). On the contrary, in order to be accepted as a rational and logical 'science' and gain more academic credibility, it

employed the strategy of modelling itself on biology and arguing for a specific and autonomous realm of facts based upon society (ibid). This supposition further solidified the externalising of the self from the environment, and gave an academic credence to such a separation. It meant that ‘the environment’ came to be studied by the ‘earth sciences’ of biology, geology, etc, and the individual and society were studied by the social or medical sciences.

Perceptions of the natural environment as an entity separate from human society and culture³⁸, and as quantifiable and ‘scientifically researchable’ underpin the international discourse on environment today. This view, dubbed ‘environmental realism’ by Macnaghten and Urry (1998:1), declares that environmental issues can be researched, and the answers to these will be prescribed by rational scientific methods. However such an edict ignores the socially constructed nature of the natural environment, and the variation in values attributed to it by different societies and cultures (Barry, 1999). It ignores the fact that

...statements on the natural environment differ dramatically from region to region, not only by the ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ context in which they are expressed, but also in terms of their technique, audience and aim. There is no exclusive ‘nature’ that justifies the unreflected transferring of a nature-related discourse and ideology across cultural borders, let alone across civilisations. If statements of this kind are transferred, they appear as purely abstract thought patterns - that demand to be recontextualised to become meaningful.

(Bruun and Kalland, 1995:21).

Yet the complexities and problematic nature of the term ‘environment’ are not reflected in the ease and regularity with which it is used in multiple contexts (Soper, 1995:1-2) in the international discourse. Whilst Bruun and Kalland wish there to be no exclusive nature, the reality is that the international discourse “harbours deep philosophical underpinnings, about the nature of our world, our experience, our *western* selves. Their implications... affect not only environment from an aesthetic standpoint but ethical, social, and political theories, policies and practices” (Berleant, 1992:2 - italics added). The complexity of meanings and the

³⁸ See Holden, 2003, for an expansion on theories of human-nature relationships.

sometimes ‘contradictory symbolic load’ of the term that Soper (1995:1-2) notes are reflected in the considerable influence the term can possess, especially when it is used to justify and validate a variety of social, cultural, political and ideological agendas.

The irony in the occidental world’s hegemonic decree of the international discourse on nature and the natural environment is that this same western society is simultaneously the most removed and disengaged from it. Shrestha’s (1993: 15) introductory quote to this section illustrates this, as does Berleant:

...most people’s lives are far removed from any kind of natural setting, yet everyone is involved with the environment. Indeed such a setting is even difficult to identify, since nature, in the sense of a landscape unaffected by human agency, has long since disappeared in nearly every region of the industrialised world

(1992:2-3).

The occidental world’s scientific rationalisation of nature has enabled the human mind to break complex organic structures into quantifiably simplistic structures and symbols and hence understand them. However this understanding is merely physical – it loses sight of the way the original organism works and the complexities of its interactions, both physical and metaphysical, with its surroundings. Williams observes that “if we talk only of singular Man and singular Nature, we can compose a general history, but at the cost of excluding the real and altering social relations” (1980:84).

The hegemonic use of the term ‘environment’ by international agencies is thus aided by its ambiguities. The use of the term in both a descriptive and normative sense serves to shroud the fact/value distinction. ‘Environment’ like its associated term ‘nature’ (and indeed the term ‘sustainable’) can be used in a descriptive or fact-based sense to describe a physical space. However, the term is also used in a

normative, or value based sense³⁹ to describe the environment as it should be, or how the subject wants it to be. Although, as Foster (1997:10) notes, the term represents “...something upon which very many frames of reference converge” there is, however, “no frame of reference which is as it were ‘naturally given’, and which does not have to be contended for in environmental debate”. To attempt to frame one as such discounts the impact and effect that multiple societies and multiple social and cultural constructions of the concept of environment would have on conceptualisations of the term.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy represented in the scientific rationalisation of environment lies not in the consequences of foregoing human beings as both biologically embodied and ecologically embedded, but in the removal of the environmental ethic (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998).. The substitution of the metaphysical and spiritual/religious dimensions of environment, with the alternations of either romanticist induced directives of “conservation of the environment” or the economic directives of the natural environment as a source of raw market materials signifies a loss of moral principle towards our surroundings (Holden, 2003; Barry, 1999)⁴⁰.

The following section illustrates how these concerns are directly applicable to conceptualisations of environment through the western (hence international) discourse of ‘sustainable development’. By ignoring the “... matrix of relations between society and environment” (Barry, 1999:7) in favour of a dominant economic paradigm, international and local agencies are overlooking the origins of conceptualisations of “environment” within the local community. In the process of the imposition of western conceptualisations, such agencies are denying the locale-specific nature of ‘environment’. As such they are choosing to ignore their own subjectivity, and simultaneously denying the validity of

³⁹ To “...express, justify or establish particular values or judgements, courses of action and reaction, policy prescriptions and ways of thinking” (Barry, 1999:12).

⁴⁰ Referring to the tourism industry and its stakeholders, Holden (2003:106) suggests a “conceptual leap” is needed away from these presently anthropocentric rationales of environmental to one which properly “recognises the rights of nature”; although he acknowledges this is unlikely as it would challenge vested interests.

alternative ‘environments’ and the ‘embeddedness’ of local communities within them.

2.5 Discourses of Sustainable Development

This section examines the key conceptualisation of development by international agencies and institutions in the present era – that of ‘sustainable development’. The failures of past development efforts and their equation with underdevelopment, and rising concerns regarding the overuse of natural resources and related environmental impacts, gave rise to the “new strategy” that Agrawal noted was necessary (1996:470). This new strategy of sustainable development has arisen simultaneously with the post modern critique of development, and has been accepted and implemented by governments, NGOs and industry at all levels (e.g. the Nepali government, ACAP and WTTC). Yet as this section argues, perhaps “appropriated” may be a more suitable term than “accepted”, in that “sustainable development” may present as a new strategy, but in reality it is representative of old ideologies.

The concept of sustainable development originated from a rejection of the conflicting ideologies of past developmental practices and the resulting recognition by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987 of the need to incorporate and synthesise social elements with economic and environmental ones. This recognition was reinforced in September 2002 by the President of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg when he noted in his draft political declaration: “We (the representatives of the peoples of the world) assume a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social development and

environmental protection – at local, national, regional and global levels” (United Nations, 2002:1).

However these ‘pillars of sustainable development’, which were traditionally the focus of separate development ideologies, are not easily reconciled. As Holden (2000a:172) notes, “political tension over sustainable development underlines much of the debate over its interpretation”. This was clear in the bitter debates that took place at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development of 1992 in Rio (Mowforth and Munt, 1998) and was once again in evidence at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (Peta, 2002). The narrow western conceptualisation of the term espoused by the developed nations, namely a sustainable development which addressed those concerns which have direct consequences for the developed world (i.e. climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation) was once again rejected by the less developed nations.

While these issues and their effects on the global commons were recognised by the majority world, many of these less developed nations have poverty eradication⁴¹ and associated social development as their principal concern. Although positive commitments were made at the summit, such as the targets to halve the proportion of people without access to sanitation and water by 2015, these commitments were perceived by the world’s less developed nations to have fallen short of promoting sustainable development.

Furthermore, the ability and/or resolve of the West to meet the commitments that it did make has recently been called into question, with Hardstaff (2005) claiming “a reappraisal of development policy and a change of approach” is necessary (cited in Madeley, 2005:37). Meanwhile, however, the WSSD’s final action plan “...promised little for the world’s poor except improved sanitation” (Hindustan Times, 2002:4). The failure of the summit to address issues such as renewable

⁴¹ Three billion people, or half of the worlds population, exist on less than two dollars per day (Khosla, 2002:9).

energy pointed to a failure to promote or address sustainable development in the developed nations also.

These failures and the disagreements and disparities over the concept of sustainable development at the summits can to some degree be attributed to the multi-dimensional and value laden nature of the concept. The nebulous nature of its two terms has meant it is highly contested by a range of 'sometimes conflicting ideologies' (Moffat, 1996:182). The non-specificity of the concept of sustainable development has allowed it to be appropriated by various different interests. However the dominant hegemony behind the globalisation and discourse of it is that of western society (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Palmer, 1992). That sustainable development in its present form in the global discourse exists as a largely ethnocentric concept can be seen in its conception of the natural environment as a 'set of issues identified through modern scientific enquiry' (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998:217).

This Cartesian understanding of nature views the natural environment as an entity separate from social practices and culture, with the resulting false assumption that the superficiality and largely extraneous nature of society and culture have little relevance in any analysis of problems or issues concerning the natural environment (Barry, 1999; Macnaghten and Urry, 1998; Cooper, 1992). An externalisation of the environment from human society is manifested both in global political agencies such as the World Bank and the World Resources Institute implementing largely technocratic and scientific means to 'measure' and 'fix' environment concerns (Shiva, 1992), and in global environmental agencies advocating the implementation of exclusionary interventionist policies⁴². However neither of these cases recognises the indivisible nature of the relationship between society, culture and the natural environment.

The failure to fully address issues of poverty and social development in the less developed nations suggests not just an unwillingness to address certain aspects of

⁴² See Dulani (2001) and McIvor (1995), cited in Mowforth and Munt (1998:179).

sustainable development on the part of the West, but also a continuing fundamental lack of realisation of the interconnectedness / interrelationships of the core elements of sustainable development which the WCED identified in 1987. The President of the Johannesburg summit also noted the mutually reinforcing and interdependent nature of these elements within sustainable development; however these interrelationships were not directly addressed within either of the summits. Instead delegations, perceiving their interests to be vested primarily within certain elements of development or sustainability, entered negotiations with the intention of restricting or concentrating outcomes to/on these elements, with the result that doubt was cast “on the political will of the summit’s participants to make even small sacrifices for the sake of the welfare of all” (The Independent, 2002:16).

Thus it remains evident after the WSSD that as long as the West’s present sustainable development ideologies remain dominant globally (as evidenced above), the emphasis in the global agency / structural discourse will be on firstly sustaining economic growth, and secondly ecological preservation, particularly where it affects the global commons. Despite the protests of the less developed countries that sustainable development should also be about “meeting peoples needs, today and in the future” (Reid, 1995:230), western conceptualisations of sustainable development remain dominant.

In summary, the concept of ‘sustainable development’ as popularised by the World Commission on Environment and Development Report of 1987 has dominated the literature on development in recent times (Auty and Brown, 1997). However this section has revealed how the theory, policies and implementation of sustainable development must recognise the political nature of the concept, in particular the dominant western ideologies behind current conceptualisations of the term. Finally, it is vital they recognise and appreciate the interdependency that exists between sustainable development’s various (i.e. social, cultural, economic, ecological, and political) elements.

2.6 Summary

The term ‘development’, as noted in Section 1.3, is a contentious one. The meaning of the term, the theory behind it, and the most suitable methods to implement and operationalise it are much contested. This chapter has argued that the prevailing hegemonic conceptualisations and ideologies of development are deeply flawed and a product of a specific European historical context. This genealogy has resulted in contemporary conceptualisations of a development which is teleological, positivistic and Eurocentric. It views development as based on doctrines of modernisation achieved through economic growth and industrial and technological capacity.

Section 2.1 explored the concept of underdevelopment and the economic prerogative. It argued that conceptualisations of development based around the economic construct are unsound in that they fail to adequately cater for processes of structure and agency⁴³. The stigmatisation of ‘underdevelopment’ and ‘undeveloped’ nations⁴⁴ which occurred at the time effectively reduced /consigned the varied societies and cultures of underdeveloped nations to a modern history of cultural and social subjugation. While the address by Truman now appears provocative and emotive in more enlightened times, the constructs it created have lived on.

Section 2.2 contended that in centring their approach upon the same occidental economic matrix, other development theorists (including for example dependency theorists and those advocating sustainable development) demonstrate a continuing lack of acknowledgment of the processes involved, and their theories inherit the

⁴³ As also recognised by a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report of 2000, which stated: in relation to policies which focused on economic liberalisation and structural adjustment “...the policies currently recommended have serious design shortcomings in the context of LDC-type economies. These go beyond the past insufficient attention to social issues” (UNCTAD:viii). It also noted the potential for these LDCs which have endured the Structural Adjustment Programmes to become caught in a situation where economic regress, social stress and political instability interact in a vicious circle” (UNCTAD:i).

⁴⁴ As reflected in the Truman quote preceeding this chapter.

fundamental flaws of the existing construct. This was also highlighted in the examination in Section 2.3 of the ramifications of the ‘postmodern turn’ for conceptualisations of development. It was argued that despite the deconstruction of the term by authors such as Sachs (1999), Escobar (1995), and Esteva (1992), no reconstituted notion of the concept free of its past ideological flaws has been tendered.

Section 2.4 examined the positivistic rationalisations of environment which serve to undermine the organic nature of the relationship between varied environments and the players involved into simplistic quantifiable components (for example ‘negative’ or ‘positive’ impacts on the natural environment). This was considered of particular importance and relevance to the study as the fieldwork takes place within a setting in which the local community, like many in the ‘less developed’ world, have a more immediate relationship with the natural environment than most communities from developed nations. In addition it was considered essential for examination as the relationship of the other actors (including the trekkers and their possible romanticist views) to the natural environment could also be presupposed to be more immediate than that of the majority of the populace in the developed world.

Section 2.5 built upon the arguments developed in the preceding sections of this chapter in its examination of the concept of sustainable development. It argued that there are stark differences between western conceptualisations of the term and those conceived by other nations deemed as ‘undeveloped’ or ‘underdeveloped’. Given the emphasis placed on notions of sustainable development by international and consequently national development agencies and institutions, these differences are central to the problematic of this study.

Chapter 2 has thus attempted to demonstrate the deep conceptual flaws inherent in the currently dominant vision of development and its adherent paradigms. In doing so it has provided a basis for the theoretical examination of tourism’s relationship to conceptualisations of development, and in particular its role as a

vehicle for ‘development’ in Chapter 3. It has also provided a justification for the theoretical approach of the methodology of this study, as is further detailed in Chapter 4. Finally, it has examined the theoretical structure within which practical attempts at achieving development and sustainable development through tourism in Nepal are examined in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

CHAPTER THREE

TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the relationships between tourism and development. The scholarship (and reality) of tourism, like development, is a mass of contradictions. Mowforth and Munt note this and observe that;

...at one extreme there is the association of the Third World with fundamentalist terrorism, a risk to the security of the West, or overpopulation, poverty and disease. At the other there are also more subtle manipulations by the tourism industry of friendly Third World peoples, natural and pristine environments and ecological and cultural diversity

(2003:1).

Swarbrooke et al (2003:4-5) note Roberts and Hall's (2001) observations of the 'paradox and irony' inherent in much of the analysis of the industry, "incorporating apparently binary opposites such as continuity and change, sustainability and unsustainability, and even good and bad". There is also an obvious ethical dissonance in a relationship whereby tourists who have so much time and money that they are visiting a location for leisure, are amongst (but usually buffered from) poverty, disease and hardship. Despite these inherent problems, as McCabe (2005:para.4) notes, in an increasingly transitive world undeveloped nations have very little choice but to "ride the bus" and develop tourism so as to potentially gain positively from one of the world's largest industries.

Section 3.1 of this chapter explores the emergence of tourism as a tool for promoting western conceptualisations of (principally economic) development. It examines the challenges facing the use of tourism for development by investigating the historical basis for such an approach and the structural and agency level constraints. Section 3.1 argues that the use of tourism in undeveloped countries although ostensibly viewed as a development tool, has come to represent a form of neo-colonialism.⁴⁵ It contends that this is principally due to the interactions between the various actors and agencies and structural power founded on historical relationships. It is argued that this is compounded by the role and biases of tourism scholarship in analysing tourism and its relationship to development.

Section 3.2 examines the dominant theoretical frameworks of structural agencies attempting to achieve sustainable development through tourism. It contends that the various alternative forms or approaches to achieving sustainable development through tourism are limited by the same constraints as those facing development in general. Hence despite descriptors such as ‘eco’, ‘responsible’ or ‘sustainable’, such alternatives are limited by their conceptualisations of an external environment which needs to be preserved, and a vision of development which is based predominantly on economic growth. These conceptualisations do not recognise the structural constraints upon the empowerment and access of communities involved, including for example their access to forms of capital. Consequently these alternative forms of tourism have been largely unsuccessful in empowering local communities and engendering human-centred development.

Structural endorsements of particular approaches towards sustainable development and tourism are explored in Section 3.3. This section highlights the need for a more ethical approach to tourism and development, and notes that this need has been recognised by key structural agencies. However it also noted that the ability (and in some instances it could be argued desire) of these agencies to effect change given the present frameworks of power tourism operates within is

⁴⁵ As further evidenced in Nash (1989) and the edited work of Hall and Tucker (2004).

limited. This is often despite the considerable variation in ideological approaches of such agencies. As a result the claims of such agencies to be working towards, or effecting change, especially any large scale change, ring hollow.

Section 3.4 highlights the need for a new paradigmatic approach to the study of the relationship between tourism and development which is better equipped to comprehend and embrace the complexities of this relationship and in particular the interrelationships between the environmental contexts involved⁴⁶. This refers to the physical (urban and/or natural) environments, which in the context of this research and issues of sustainable development take on added significance. Again however, it also denotes the other environmental contexts – namely the social, economic, and political environments. Each of these takes on added significance and ‘immediacy’ also, due to the nature of the research and context. The final section summarises the key arguments made in Chapter 3.

3.1 Tourism as Development Tool: Challenges.

Tourism clearly counts as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the last century. It undoubtedly will keep this position for the century to come. Every year a bigger portion of the world population takes part in tourism activity and for the majority of countries tourism has developed as one of the most dynamic and fastest growing sectors of the economy

(World Tourism Organisation, 2000:1).

Even in developed countries tourism development has not been understood as the complex social and political phenomenon it truly is. Economic considerations, - short term ones at that - have dominated policy making

(Richter, 1989:181).

This section examines the challenges facing the use of tourism as a tool for promoting development within the less developed world. This includes an

⁴⁶ As Burns (1999:345) notes “for example, discussing environmental impacts without referring to culture is untenable”.

examination of the structural constraints, as well as weaknesses in the scholarly analyses of the relationship between tourism and development, despite its perceived importance.

The use of tourism as a means to develop majority world nations began gathering momentum in the decades following the Second World War. The increasing improvements in transport links (e.g. the introduction of passenger jet aircraft) and communications with the less developed world, along with increasing affluence and additional leisure time in the West, resulted in the growth of tourism to further-a-field ‘exotic’ destinations, and drew the attention of development agencies and economists (de Kadt, 1979a; Dann, 2002). In 1969, Peters talked about ‘transforming rural life in Asian, African, and Latin American countries’ using the foreign exchange generated by international tourism (Peters, 1969:10).

In the ten years to follow, the World Bank provided the finance for 24 tourism-related development projects in 18 different countries (Lanfant and Graburn, 1992). In 1980 the World Tourism Organisation advocated the use of tourism to contribute to the elimination of the ‘widening economic gap between developed and developing countries, and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social development and progress, in particular in developing countries’ (Bianchi, 1999).

These conceptualisations of tourism as a potentially valuable tool for development were based upon perceptions of the industry as economically potent, but relatively benign across other environmental contexts (referred to as the “Advocacy Platform” by Jafari, 1989:20-21; see also Krippendorf, 1989:46). It encouraged nations, along with international agencies and non-governmental organisations (e.g. aid and conservation agencies) to promote and encourage tourism over the more traditional resource extraction industries. Evidence that tourism was accepted by the international institutions as relatively benign was perhaps most apparent in the failure of the WCED report to address tourism, despite the fact that tourism was recognised as one of the world’s larger industries (Wall, 1997a).

Yet the increased awareness in the West of the degradation of the natural environment that led to the emergence of the concept of sustainable development, along with the renewed focus on tourism as a potential vehicle for development, also led to a closer examination of tourism's impacts on the natural environment of its destinations. Research⁴⁷ highlighted the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment, and further evidence of the potential costs of tourism⁴⁸ was produced which outlined negative effects of tourism on destination societies and cultures.

The economic contribution of tourism to destination areas was also re-examined, and alongside the positive economic impacts, attention was drawn to the inflation, high leakages, 'reverse multiplier-effect',⁴⁹ seasonality, inequitable distribution of income, and the low status of employment associated with the industry (Briedenham and Wickens, 2004:71; Wall, 2000:297). These writings, which Jafari (1989:21-23) labelled the 'cautionary platform', along with the work of non-governmental organisations and popular opinion, resulted in the industry, academia, and government agencies embracing alternative forms of tourism development and management under various guises which is further explored in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

Despite the adoption of platforms (or perhaps in some cases more accurately labels) claiming to ensure a more sustainable development and practice of tourism, in reality the industry and its stakeholders (such as local communities, academics, governmental and non-governmental agencies and the tourists themselves) have encountered the same challenges as those facing conceptualisations of development and sustainable development in general (as detailed in the preceding chapter). Such problems affect tourism at both a structural level and at a level of individual or community agency (see Hughes,

⁴⁷ Such as that of Kuss et al (1990); Hall (1995); Cole (1993); Figgis (1993); Ceballos-Lascaurain (1996); Wang and Miko (1997) for example.

⁴⁸ Such as that of Allen et al (1988); Ap (1990); Altman and Finlayson (1993); and Lindberg and McKercher (1997) for example.

⁴⁹ I.e. tourism's role in causing inflation of goods and services for local communities.

1995 and Burns, 2004) as well as in the nexus between these two, which can be referred to as the “glocal” (after Friedman, 1999:236-239).

For as Burns and Novelli note, “the local interactions of tourism with politics and democracy are increasingly being framed by global realities (2007:2). Mowforth and Munt (2003:45) observe that tourism operates within structural frameworks determined by issues of power. They conceptualise this in the form of a “Power Jigsaw” (see Appendix 6) whereby the integral pieces are ideology, hegemony, and discourse (a reflection of the analysis of development in the previous chapter). To this we might add “history”, as there is no doubt the seeds for the present ideological, discursive and hegemonic perspectives of the tourism industry were sown in the past, outside the current touristic form of each of these (The present economic, political, social, cultural and arguably ecological structural conditions for tourism are a result of historical influences, legacies and conditions)⁵⁰.

Thus any role ascribed to tourism as a tool for sustainable development (or variations upon the theme as noted in Section 3.2) operates within these structural constrictions/boundaries. The influence of power, through ideology, discourse, hegemony and historical legacies, produces the construct in which tourism in this era takes place (and is analysed – see Hall, 2005a), and configures the relationships, processes and outcomes at a structural level and (as this thesis will argue) at a local agency level for the players/actors involved. Such dependent relationships and outcomes dictated either directly (as in the case of air transport or package tours) or indirectly (for example distorted reporting on tourism potential or lack of guarantees for accessing finance) by structural hegemonic power processes are evidenced in the key problems facing the development of tourism in the Least Developed Countries. These are listed on the following page, as noted by representatives of these countries:

⁵⁰ Further support for such an argument can be found in Hall and Tucker (2004).

- Air Transport – few flights, indirect routes, high prices;
- Insufficient and inadequate accommodation in some cases;
- Lack of tourism training facilities;
- Weak infrastructure services;
- Water scarcity and lack of purification and storage facilities;
- Inadequate energy supply;
- Limited waste disposal facilities;
- Image problems in the tourism market (was particularly emphasised);
- Distorted reporting on tourism potential;
- Lack of guarantees for accessing finance;
- Often package tours (airfare, hotel, and ground transport) leave nothing but park fees;
- Open policies have resulted in abuse of dominant position by tourist operators;
- Openness to investment has not had multiplicative effects;
- Weak legal and policy framework on tourism development.

(WTO and UNCTAD, 2001:22)

These centre-periphery relationships (as identified by Frank, 1978⁵¹) exist both at an international and local/regional level. They form the basis of tourism's interactions between minority world tourism generating nations and the majority world nations which are providing the touristic 'raw materials'. They have their roots in the ideology of European colonial exploitation and as McCabe notes, they can in fact lead to a "reification of (these) colonial power structures" (2005:para.4).

Yet the appropriation and exploitation of ideology, discourse, hegemony and historical legacies by those blocs with structural power is also transparent in tourism processes at an international level. Britton (1989) stresses the subjugation of majority world countries through tourism economically in his application of the dependency theory to Fiji; McIvor (1995:35 in Mowforth and Munt, 1998:179) stresses the subjugation of these same countries environmentally for recreational purposes, and finally Hollinshead (2000:420) stresses the subjugation of such nations sociologically through tourism's 'othering' processes, aimed, as Meethan (2001:65) suggests, at satisfying specific "consumer niches". All these subjugatory actions invoke imperialistic attitudes of empire extension⁵² as much as the concept of an individual occidental tourist visiting an environment of

⁵¹ See Conway, and Heyen (2002); Chew and Denmark (1996)

⁵² See Nash (1989:37-52), MacCannell (2001:385) and Holden (2005:99)

poverty for leisure and extending the ‘empire of his/her mind’ evokes a further illustration of colonisation and dependency.

Whilst sustainable development and variations upon the ‘sustainable tourism’ theme (see next section) have highlighted natural environment considerations and concerns, the principal focus of tourism development at a structural level is upon the economic environment. As Britton (1989) notes, the role of the European colonial governments has been adopted by multinational companies in tourism as a result of neo-liberal economic theories. The ‘peripheries’ are further removed from control of the local markets by ongoing vertical and horizontal integration and the trend towards virtual communication and business. Multinationals cooperate/collaborate with local elites, and their control of the local tourism product further disenfranchises the local (usually rural and financially poor) indigenous community.

Such nations are further captive to structural tourism processes through their own economic and political volatility, e.g. through their vulnerability to changing tourism trends, terrorism and internal or regional conflict, energy prices and inability to recover rapidly from natural disasters for instance. These factors are themselves a result of their dependency and economic exploitation as noted in Chapter 2, and also in themselves are open to political exploitation⁵³.

Hall (2000b:42) notes the possible advantages to be gained from economic exploitation of tourism for a small developing country as “...raising incomes, diversifying employment opportunities, stabilising population movement, sustaining local and regional cultures and craft skills, redistributing roles within rural households”. However such potential is compromised by the fact that the ownership and management (and thus higher income levels) are usually in control of foreigners (reflecting historical colonialist powerbases), and thus profits (and bank interest payments where applicable) are expatriated; the diversification of

⁵³ For example the inconsistent travel advice proffered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom after the events of September 11th, 2001, which Tourism Concern noted “appear(ed) political in nature” (Tourism Concern, 2003).

employment opportunities can in reality turn into a loss of agricultural skills and an over reliance upon tourism; internal migration to tourism ‘honeypot’ areas may take place thus destabilising other areas; local and regional crafts and skills may become appropriated and/or subsumed by those of other regions, and rural households may be split by the requirements of the industry.

Furthermore inflation of basic goods and land prices may prove problematic for local actors who are not members of the elite as mentioned above. As Hall (2005a) observes, the requirement for a critique of the dominant neo-liberal programme (within which such tourism relationships are bounded) is one of the most important issues facing tourism today.

Tourism’s role as a conduit for the wider ideologies and hegemony of development (and their inherent flaws/problems as detailed in Chapter 2) can also be observed in the academic analysis of the sector. The parochial insularity of the western academia (noted by Seers 1981, in Chapter 2) is reflected in the ostensibly ‘objective’ (but inherently western) academic discourse on tourism, with its orthodox conceptualisations of development and the effects of the sector upon its environmental contexts. Farrell (2005:para.2) claims the present structure of tourism scholarship “results in making us abysmally parochial and prevents us from making the contribution to tourism and scholarship we should be making”.

Apart from some notable exceptions⁵⁴, much of tourism academia is guilty of removing analysis from its field contexts or concentrating upon the wider structural processes (rather than their relationships with the actors involved). In the process, this research serves only to abstract its knowledge from the realities of tourism stakeholders, and in the process becomes impotent and largely inert.

⁵⁴ Including, for example, Hashimoto (2002); Wickens (2002); Mowforth and Munt (1998); Wall (1997b); Burns and Holden (1995) and Smith (1989).

Hall (2005b) takes these criticisms further in his assumptions that tourism scholarship and research in the area is frequently afraid to engage in debate and critique, and is positioned to reap citations and journal rankings (as evidenced in the UK Research Assessment Exercise ‘industry’) rather than attain actual relevance and participate in knowledge transfer. He also notes the need for tourism scholarship to remember that ultimately it deals with people; as Farrell echoes with his note that there is “much room for work on the social aspects of sustainable development”. Both constitute observations that western structural policy and planning agencies appear to have disregarded to some extent also (as evidenced in the generic tourism ‘masterplans’ written for less developed nations by western accountancy firms - see Burns, 1998, 2004), and as argued further in the next two sections.

Given the obstacles and challenges confronting the use of tourism as a development tool (and the scholarship of it) as detailed above, Tosun and Jenkins (1998:111) call for undeveloped nations to “approach tourism development planning by considering their own socio-cultural and political conditions, economic and human resources” appears to have foundation. As they note, comprehensive and integrated approaches to tourism planning developed in western socio-cultural and political climes have limited applicability in majority world countries. Tosun and Jenkins cite de Kadt’s (1979b) observation that “adapting the techniques and approaches developed by others does not meet developing countries’ needs” (1998:111).

However, as Chapter 4 further details, proposals of training and developing indigenous expertise in tourism planning through “the introduction of tourism planning courses in selected institutions” are not always realistic in undeveloped nations, and overlook the fact that such courses are often based upon western structural teachings, and taught to a local elite who are frequently as far removed from ‘the people’ as those who created the western planning ideals they aspire to.

As this section has uncovered, and as Sections 3.2 and 3.3 demonstrate, the use of

tourism as a development tool works within wider power structures of hegemony and discourse, and any examination of tourism and development of (or for) ‘the people’ must acknowledge these structural constrictions.

3.2 Development and Tourism Alternatives

This section analyses the application of alternative forms of tourism to achieving conceptualisations of sustainable development through tourism. Seventeen years ago Hollick (1990:20) maintained “..... ‘sustainability’ seems to mean all things to all people” and Butler (1990:40) claimed sustainable tourism meant “almost anything to anyone”. Godfrey (2005:para.2) more recently speaks of the concept of sustainable tourism development having “bottomed out”.

This ambiguity, the subjective nature of the term and a corresponding lack of agreement over a definition have resulted in predictable difficulties in its implementation. Fennell observes a ‘pressing need to move beyond the rhetoric; beyond the table and into practice’ (1999:28). Roy (1992, in Sadler, 1993:ix) put it more bluntly: “Sustainable tourism is an extension of the new emphasis on sustainable development. Both remain concepts”. Despite calls for attention to be focused on practical implementation rather than principle defining (Garrod and Fyall, 1998), Pigram’s (1990:8) observation of the quandary facing sustainable tourism remains pertinent:

Sustainable tourism has the potential to become a tangible expression of sustainable development. Yet, it runs the risk of remaining irrelevant and inert as a feasible policy option for the real world of tourism development, without the development of effective means of translating the ideal into action

In the meantime, Wheeler's (1994a:9) observation that the literature merely "reinforce[s] the obvious disparity between what *should be* and what actually *is*, while side-stepping how the dilemma can be effectively resolved" remains pertinent. As a consequence, in the vacuum that exists without a definition which is practical and workable, interests at opposite ends of the tourism sustainability spectrum, from total exploitation of the resource to total preservation of the resource, have attempted to justify obviously conflicting interpretations of the term. Godfrey (1993) observes how this vacuum has enabled the industry, the state, and conservationists to justify and legitimatise their political approach.

A simple, yet clear illustration of the flawed nature of this typology is found in Mowforth and Munt's (1998:179) citing of McIvor (1995), who quotes a Zimbabwean environmentalist:

It is impossible to talk of wildlife preservation to a farmer whose fields have been raided by elephant and buffalo... When Western environmentalists talk to us about the aesthetic and recreational appeal of our landscape, and the need to preserve our wild animals in their natural habitat, we wonder if they would continue to have such ideas if they shared our poverty. For most Africans the land is not an arena for leisure pursuits but a means of livelihood and survival

Wilhusen et al (2002:17-40) critique the resurgence of such a 'Protection Paradigm' in international conservation and claim that such a platform fails "to comprehensively account for the dense web of (associated) social and political processes" (ibid:35). Dulani (2001:9) offers another illustration of the flawed nature of defining environment in narrow terms as a bio-physical entity external to influence on or by society. She cites an example given by a local in Malawi who states that several decades ago:

"...foreign environmentalists came and suggested we protect our trees and wildlife in national parks and move the people out of the parks. Obviously their reaction was, 'Who are you to tell us what to do with our land?' and now many live in poverty on the outskirts of the parks while tourists are free to go in".

Evidence that these perceptions still exist on a large scale can be found in the vulnerability of humans living in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, newly created for tourists to “come in their thousands”. Despite a lack of food, a hunting ban has been implemented on land on which generations of villagers have lived, and eight villages have been resettled. Villagers have complained that “animal rights have taken precedence over human rights” (Siegfried, 2005:19).

Such examples serve to illustrate the power of western ideologies of sustainable development and sustainable tourism (as detailed in Section 2.6) and their focus upon conceptualisations of the natural and economic environment to the detriment of local cultural and societal environments. In such examples sustainable development is perceived as either constituting the preservation of an external environment, or sustainable growth⁵⁵.

Further evidence of such conceptualisations can be found in the report of the tourism industry to the WSSD. Despite acknowledging that “the concept of sustainable development not only refers to the environment but also includes economic, social and cultural issues”, the report goes on to promote tourism’s role of “encouraging governments to reduce their barriers to growth” and of “*preserving* a community’s natural or cultural heritage” and to “*preserve* indigenous cultures” (WTTC et al, 2002:9-16 - italicises added). Such claims show a transparent lack of acknowledgement of finite limits to growth; in addition it displays misplaced conceptualisations of static indigenous cultures⁵⁶ and static or revisionist (i.e. *preserved*) relationships of communities with their natural and cultural environments. This is clearly very much different from the conceptualisations of a sustained transformation in qualitative state for the better of all environmental contexts which the WSSD President envisaged (see Section 2.6).

⁵⁵ I.e. a sustained upward change in quantitative growth and size (Scottish National Heritage 1993:9, in Holden, 2000a:162).

⁵⁶ See Sofield (2000b:45-57) or McKean (1989:119-138) for a fuller discussion on the deficiencies of such an approach.

Hence proponents of sustainability in tourism must be wary of minority world ideologies behind the concept legitimising interventionist policies, in a form of latter day colonialism. In such instances, like the proportion of environmental concerns on the world stage, “problems are defined and solutions formulated not within the societies in question but by outside experts who are accorded extensive power and prestige” (Daltaubuit and Pi-Sunyer, 1990, in Mowforth and Munt, 1998:184). The resultant policies may lack currency and credibility in the area, with the result that local communities have no sense of ownership of such policies and thus no sense of commitment to them.

The quotes above clearly justify Holden’s (2000a:173) summation of Butler (1998), that, like sustainable development, “it is not possible to separate sustainable tourism from the values systems of those involved and the societies in which they exist”. This is a consequence of the present global hegemony as mentioned previously, and is reflected in industry’s (including the tourism industry’s) tendency to interpret sustainability as a combination of the need to preserve both its business viability and its resource base, which is often a natural one (Nikolova and Hens, 1999). In the tourism industry and at a structural political level, it is evident in the various permutations of sustainable tourism, including perhaps the most prominent in the political discourse in the west: ‘ecotourism’.

As Cater (2002:1) points out, “It is difficult to take issue with the broader philosophy behind ecotourism... It can be argued that ecotourism is frequently misinterpreted, misappropriated and misdirected, furnishing its detractors with ample ammunition for its condemnation.” Nevertheless, the hegemonic control of the term (and hence, given the UN designation outlined in the following section, the broader international control of sustainable development through tourism policies), remains transparent. Although the multitude of values-based, mostly prescriptive / normative definitions of ecotourism do contain social and cultural elements, through its nature-based element this form of tourism represents a

continuance of the romanticised western Cartesian view of the ‘external’ natural environment.

This is demonstrated in the various forms of environmental certification and ‘eco-labelling’ (e.g. Green Globe etc), and in the industry discourse in general. Dann (1996:247-259) labels this discourse “Greenspeak” and notes: “...it has been seen that much of this promotional hype simply reinforces the old myths of paradise and unspoiled (*external*) nature” (1996:257 - ‘external’ added). Johnston (1990:2) also claims this as an example of the tourism industry taking advantage of ‘the media fix on the earth crisis’, an argument further supported by Stewart and Sekartjakrarini (1994:840-841) who advocated “the separation of a conservation framework from various marketing strategies”. Butcher adds to the criticisms by noting the inherent ethical problems involved in the moralising attitudes of wealthy, western, and white ‘ecotourists’, whom he subsequently labels “New Moral Tourists” (2003:3).

Other ‘alternative’ tourisms or tourism alternatives are constrained by the same basic problematic: their inability to engender or promote genuine empowerment across environmental contexts in undeveloped nations due to the existing environmental processes operating at a wider framing level. Structural attempts (whether through industry or government agency) are frequently characterised by their initial promotion and promise, camouflaged by their generality and ultimately suffer from a lack of efficacy, after which they are supplanted or joined by a new concept and the process is repeated – a “tourism righteous-term cycle of evolution” to paraphrase Butler (1980:5).

Thus there has been no further progress (and in fact probably a regression) in achieving the notions of “Responsible Tourism” mooted in 1990 by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) for example.⁵⁷ The WTO is now promoting the latest virtuous concept through its Sustainable Tourism Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) programme, which will “promote socially, economically and ecologically

⁵⁷ As recognised by Godfrey (2005).

sustainable tourism, aimed at alleviating poverty and bringing jobs to people in developing countries” according to the 7th Secretary General of the United Nations (World Tourism Organisation, 2004a: “ST-EP” para.1). Yet the reality is that the programme’s ability to “raise living standards through this dynamic export sector that all developing countries have access to” (ibid) conveniently ignores the fact that access to this sector is not equal, and is in fact controlled by the same hegemonic interests which are underwriting the programme.

Holden (2005:132) notes, “One of the major problems faced by many poor people in the world who may wish to participate in tourism is that they are denied access to tourists”. The ability of these poor to access tourists is dependent upon voluntary measures undertaken by the present controlling interests in the industry. Yet past evidence suggests they have been unwilling to undertake these measures and respond to the requirements of sustainable tourism (see the following section). Furthermore the Committee of the WTO’s ST-EP programme serves as a reminder of the vested elites involved (politically, economically and academically). In addition the focus of the programme on facilitating “research and identification of best practice methods” (Sofield et al, 2004:para.4) conveniently absolves the industry from responsibility which would interrupt current hegemonic interests whilst illustrating the role of the elites involved. In reality, the efficacy of such “Responsible Tourism” initiatives, as McCabe (2005:para.4) notes, “...appears to have dissolved at a time when the velocity and force of modernisation, business practices and competition is reaching white-heat”.

Although such a programme is undoubtedly based upon good intentions, Hall’s (2005a:point.2) claim that Pro-Poor tourism (PPT) “...unfortunately constitutes yet another means for the rich nations to screw the poor”, though harsh, can be seen to have justification. Yet it is not only at a wider structural level that such alternatives are failing. So called bottom-up/community empowerment/and or participation programmes, although sometimes achieving some success, albeit on a small scale (e.g. the United Kingdom’s Department for International

Development – DFID - through its PPT project), are constrained by their lack of capital in an industry that depends upon it. This is whether it be economic capital, knowledge capital or social capital.

As the next chapter demonstrates, empowerment from within cannot be engendered without such capital, yet this is often difficult if not impossible for such communities to gain within current social and economic paradigms. McCabe (2005) observes that there are critical barriers to community-determined and community-based tourism, including the variation which exists between social, political and economic contexts. Alternatively, top-down attempts at empowerment frequently result in dependency, and in fact can perhaps best be described as ‘outside-in’. As such, community participation rather than genuine community empowerment may occur, but even in these circumstances it is “little more than window dressing, often deepening the process of homogenisation and furthering a (*externally induced*) hegemonic ideology” (Giampiccoli, 2007:188 – italicised words added).

This section has examined the structural constraints preventing the use of alternative forms of tourism from being utilised to achieve human-centred development. Such concerns expressed in relation to the concept of sustainable development, to ecotourism, to sustainable tourism and to variations of these concepts are realised by the apparent failure of tourism to date to suggest or promote any widely accepted practices of sustainable development⁵⁸. Sharpley (2002), writing 14 years after the popularisation of sustainable development by the World Commission of Environment and Development, expands on Butler (1998) and claims that no examples of successful sustainable development of tourism have been ascertained. Wall (1997a) went further when he claimed that ‘sustainable tourism’ may in fact lead to unsustainable development. In light of the concerns expressed above with reference to the contested nature of the term, its hegemonic control and politicised nature, and the lack of an acknowledgement

⁵⁸ And to the viability of the ST-EP/PPT programmes in the less developed countries

of tourism's various environmental contexts, processes and influences, this is perhaps unsurprising.

3.3 Structural Endorsements.

When a Third World country uses tourism as a development strategy, it becomes enmeshed in a global system over which it has little control. The international tourism industry is a product of metropolitan capitalist enterprise. The superior entrepreneurial skills, resources and commercial power of metropolitan companies enable them to dominate many Third World tourist destinations

(Britton, 1982:331, as also quoted by Timothy: 2002:150)

The need for a more effective and ethical approach towards development in less developed nations is widely acknowledged within the tourism sector and by its various actors. This is perhaps most obvious in the NGO sector; for example in the work of 'Tourism Concern' which claims to "ensure tourism always benefits local communities" (as asserted by its mission statement) and to "fight exploitation in tourism". (Tourism Concern, 2007: "About Us" para.1-2). This need for an increased focus upon the ethical and moral dimensions of the industry is increasingly evident in academic scholarship in the field⁵⁹. Governmental and industry sectors at an international level also recognise this need for change. The mission of the World Tourism Organisation (an affiliate organisation of the United Nations) states its role "in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism" in which it will pay "particular attention to the interests of developing countries in the field of tourism" (WTO, 2007:para.2).

The World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) which represents many private sector trans-national corporations (TNCs) in global tourism matters, released its

⁵⁹ See Holden, (2003); also Hughes (1995) and McCabe (2005).

own “Blueprint for New Tourism” in 2003 which it claimed provided “a strategic framework for ensuring that travel and tourism works for everyone in the future” (WTTC, 2003:2). The WTTC believed travel and tourism could be “an important force for sustainability... promoting preservation of the natural and human environment” (2002:3). It claimed “a new movement is underway... WTTC and its members stand ready to do their part” (WTTC 2002:1).

The “Manilla Declaration on World Tourism” claimed that tourism could help “to establish a new economic order” through “playing a positive role in furthering equilibrium”, where “the satisfaction of tourism requirements must not be prejudicial to the social and economic interests of the population in tourist areas, to the environment or ...to natural resources”. Whilst these claims to some extent echo the statements made by the organisations above, the difference is that they were made over a quarter of a century ago in the World Tourism Conference convened by the World Tourism Organisation (1980, in Singh, Theuns, and Go, 1989:349-353). Likewise Krippendorf’s observation that “what we have failed to do is to develop forms of travel that are psychologically, sociologically, economically and ecologically compatible” was made over 16 years ago (1989:ix).

As the previous section intimated, the ability of these sector interests to change the basic relationships of power within which tourism transactions (and analysis) currently take place is limited. The fact that, as in the case of the WTO and the WTTC, these same agencies acquiesce to, or at worst underwrite such relationships suggests the desire is not present to change them, and in fact any concerted effort to do so would be repelled. Such an effort would indeed be inherently problematic for such agencies, as they would be struggling against wider structural factors (as outlined in Chapter 2) of which they themselves exist as a component.

That these groups serve to underwrite current power imbalances in tourism relationships and maintain the hegemonic structures to do so can be evidenced in

the “monopolistic controls exerted by transnational corporations (TNCs) over the ownership and organisational structures of most countries’ mass tourism sectors...” (Brohman, 1996:54). It can also be evidenced in the characteristics of these corporations which tend to favour “the development of large-scale, integrated and multinational enterprises” (Brohman, 1996:54; also see Nash, 1989; and Britton, 1982).

The WTTC’s role as a self-proclaimed “environmental and social champion for the industry” (2003b:19) would appear to be challengeable at the least when its executive members are accused of “bulldozing and dredging priceless and fragile habitats” (Tourism Concern, 2005), and destroying the livelihoods and food sources of locals (Pikitch, 2005) in complete contrast to their own personally stated “responsible business values” (Hilton Group, 2005). Furthermore, the industry’s own admission that there has been as yet limited adoption of global voluntary initiatives at responding to requirements of sustainable tourism development is a cause for further concern (WTTC et al, 2002:18). Hall’s contention that there is a need for examination of the role the WTO and WTTC in further strengthening the hand of TNCs in international and domestic tourism would appear justified (2005a).

Further evidence of the endorsement of certain discourses and forms of tourism by these agencies at a structural level is found in the western concept of ‘ecotourism’, as noted in the previous section. Despite its relatively small scale (WTO, 2002) the sector appeared to be the tourism development tool of choice for international agencies at the time of the WSSD in Johannesburg . This was despite concerns that other more mainstream forms of sustainable tourism or alternatives of sustainable tourism were not receiving attention (Marsh and Haynes, 2002) and that people in the west were being misled by the emphasis of international agencies on this form of tourism (Rao, 2002).

Despite this, and the obvious incongruities in the term⁶⁰, ecotourism was readily adopted by occidental industry, academia, and by various governmental and non-governmental organisations as the principal vehicle to achieve sustainable development through tourism. This was manifest in the number of development projects utilising ecotourism, the number of operators claiming to represent ecotourism, and the number of government tourism plans that embraced it. Perhaps the clearest example of the wholesale acceptance and promotion of ecotourism as a vehicle for sustainable development was the United Nations designation of 2002 as the 'International Year of Ecotourism'⁶¹.

Yet these endorsements were occurring at the same time as the UNEP Tourism Programme Coordinator was admitting that "even ecotourism often displaces indigenous and local communities and erodes cultural traditions" (Hillel, 2002:5). Research was further discrediting ecotourism's role as a non-consumptive use of natural resources; stating the need for improved benefits from and local involvement in ecotourism, while highlighting the sector's "potential to lead to undesirable social, cultural and economic consequences" (Stem et al, 2003:388).

As Bianchi (2002) notes, the values basis which underpin such interpretations and the assumptions presumed involve a tacit acceptance of the present structural frameworks governing the industry of tourism – in this case a political-economic framework which is based on capitalist free-market logic and not open to self-analysis or self-criticism. The resultant inability to recognise the structural root causes for the failures of tourism planning and policy within the last 25 years "to establish a new economic order" or to "play a positive role in furthering equilibrium" (ibid:268), are thus not surprising. The ability of such planning and policy making to achieve success is limited by their focus on remedial measures

⁶⁰ See McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie (1995:370).

⁶¹ This designation involved the inaugural 'World Ecotourism Summit' in Quebec, (WTO, 2002) which was jointly sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Tourism Organisation, and resulted in a declaration, drafted by the UNEP with assistance from the WTTC and the WTO, and taken to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

and activities within the same frameworks which are creating the need for these same remedies.

An example of the incapacity of such measures to effect anything other than cosmetic change is evident in their approach to issues of sustainable development; for example in the submission of the World Tourism Organisation to the Johannesburg Summit as identified above. Additional evidence is identified in Bianchi's identification of further inherent (and arguably systematic) problems in proposed structural solutions to issues of unsustainability surrounding tourism and its development. Bianchi notes that such solutions, when "based on, for example, low volume/high spending (quality) tourists, may reproduce the systemic inequalities which characterised previous forms of tourism development whilst doing little to alleviate pressure on the environment" (Bianchi 2002:268).

Such solutions also raise some serious, but otherwise concealed ethical issues, such as access to resources, and the ability of undeveloped nations to provide so called 'quality' products while retaining (financial, cultural and social) ownership and/or control of them. However perhaps the most damning evidence illustrating the folly/non-viability of such an approach can be gained by a glance at any recent tourism statistics. For example, world tourist arrivals in 1990 were 451 million; yet in 2003 they were 691 million, constituting a rise of 35%, despite the influences of SARS, the Iraq war, and a persistently weak global economy all coinciding at the same time (WTO, 2004b). These figures clearly illustrate the arrival of what Wheeler referred to over ten years ago as "megamass" tourism:

I am, however, amazed by their assertion, that [...] the concept of mass tourism [...] has no relevance for growth in the next decade. To me it has every relevance as we move towards, not away from, megamass tourism

(1994:652b in Lück, 2002:371)

Wheeller was ostensibly referring to the assertions of an academic analysis of discourse on the sector (albeit notably with a commercial sponsorship). However his criticisms could equally be targeted at the political-economic agencies which are also behind the dissemination and implementation of such unrealistic approaches (as identified above) and are constrained by the same ideologies. In any event, as Harrison notes, conceptualisations of sustainability presently exist as a ‘theoretical backdrop’ to a tourism industry which is “inexorably increasing, feeding on increased globalisation and, in turn, contributing to it” (2001:18).

The irony, as noted, is that present structural forces (whether they be based in academic, industry, governmental or non-governmental cliques) are calling for change whilst simultaneously in effect rallying (admittedly sometimes unconsciously) against it. The quandary exists in the insistence or presumption of these structural forces that such change should be based within present corruptive and unsound frameworks. The limitations of the present political-economic structure within which they are working means that such accusations can be levied at parties at opposite ends of tourism’s dualist sustainability spectrum. Bianchi quotes Cox: “...it [production] has no historical precedence; indeed, the principal structures of production have been, if not actually created by the state, at least encouraged and sustained by the state” (Cox, 1987:5), and goes on to note that it is disingenuous of the state to claim it has no part to play – to leave it to the free market – which it has created, and which is not free at all (2002:268).

Likewise the basis for the “cultivated Olympian impartiality” (Seaton, 1994:720) of the majority of contemporary tourism research is a self-formed but blinkered occidental values system. Thus, the scholar who is driven anthropologically “by a tacit romantic conservatism, seeking to preserve the primitive/natural from the commercial/industrial - while enjoying the benefits of both” (ibid) - has as much chance of engendering this preservation working within present structural frameworks as governmental indicators of sustainability driven by purely

positivistic notions of knowledge⁶² have of effecting the previously cited “responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible tourism” in the developing countries (WTO 2007:para.2). Or for that matter industry “Blueprint(s) for New Tourism ” with membership comprising “The Presidents, chairs,and CEOs of 100 of the world’s foremost travel and tourism companies” whose “call to action” includes the extension and diversification of their product offerings, and to “...help spread best practice through corporate social responsibility” (WTTC, 2003:1; see previous Hilton Group example).

All three approaches, although dialectically antithetical, share the same ideological constrictions. They all overlook present core-periphery power networks in academic and political-economic discourse, and in particular the lack of empowerment (or means to empower) ‘peripheral’ areas in this discourse and its processes.

Following on from the previous sections and as a result of the findings of Section 2.5, the next section explores a facet of tourism which this thesis argues is crucial to any understanding of the efficacy of tourism as a vehicle for sustainable development. However it is argued this crucial aspect is not served by present investigations and analyses or policy frameworks. It involves the relationships between tourism’s various environmental contexts and the actors involved, and the way these work “on and through tourism” (Mowforth and Munt, 1998:2), and the ways in which tourism in turn works on and through them.

⁶² “The World Tourism Organisation has been promoting the use of sustainable tourism indicators since the early 1990s as essential instruments for policy-making, planning and management processes at destinations” (WTO, 2004c) See Section 3.4 for a fuller criticism of such techniques.

3.4 Contested Environments: Tourism and its Environmental Contexts

If we talk only of singular Man and singular Nature, we can compose a general history, but at the cost of excluding the real and altering social relations. Capitalism, of course, has relied on the terms of the domination and exploitation; imperialism, in conquest, has similarly seen both men and physical products as raw material. But it is a measure of how far we have to go that socialists also talk of the conquest of nature, which in any real terms will also include the conquest, the domination or the exploitation of some men by others. If we alienate the living processes of which we are a part, we end, through inequality, by alienating ourselves

(Williams 1980:84).

Tourism and its academic study involve a mass of contradictions and complexities. Mowforth and Munt (1998:1) highlight some of the contradictions in the opening pages of their seminal text; Hall's (2005c:5) "Disciplinary Spaces of Tourism" and Jafari's (1990:) "Centre of Tourism Studies" 'wheel', in highlighting the academic areas of study of the discipline, consequentially hint at the complexities involved in its research. Yet this section argues that these complexities and the interrelationships involved are seldom explored, much less considered in depth, across dimensions in tourism research.

William's (1980) observations listed above can be interpreted as a plea for a reconsideration of the Enlightenment ethic towards a "nature" which is viewed as measurable and objective, existing separately from the sentient human being. This view is of an environment in which a human is being (*human being*) rather than the perception of an earth *being* of which a human is part (evident in the origins of *environment* as detailed in Chapter 2). The romanticism which was evident in Rousseau's ideals of education and those of the Physiocrats which led to conceptions of a political economy, was ironically grounded in a regret over the separation of human and environment encouraged by industrialisation, urbanisation and land enclosures of eighteenth and nineteenth century western Europe (Panayiotopoulos and Capps, 2001:220). However it led to further

separation and a deification of the “external nature” construct (as illustrated often dramatically by the work of artists such as Friederich, Constable and Cole).

In sanctifying nature in this respect, the romanticists were simultaneously establishing the grounds for the tourists to visit natural areas in the following centuries⁶³ whilst cementing the externality of that ‘environment’ from its enveloping role as social, cultural and physical milieu. As Hughes, (1995:52) notes, the “(*primary*) physical environment was being turned into (*external*) scenery by the cultural context in which that environment was embedded” (italicised information added).

This conceptualisation of a natural environment devoid of social or cultural values, as an external entity which can be rationalised in a positivist sense and measured in an economic one, is also prevalent in contemporary tourism planning, policy making and research. This is despite calls from the world’s least developed nations for an “...approach to tourism development that takes into account the social, cultural and ecological dimension”, whereby the tourism plan is “locally devised and/or adapted to the local needs and interests” (WTO and UNCTAD, 2001:22). It is also regardless of the complexities and contradictions of tourism mentioned above, and the inherent values bias and its various deficiencies noted in Chapter 2. Such an approach is also evident in the tourism discourse; Ryan (2005:662), editor of the journal “Tourism Management”, observes that “...it has been relatively easy for researchers to gain publications of technically skilled quantitative based pieces... which actually offer little in terms of new conceptualisations or are able to articulate any significant difference to the literature”.

Evidence that such a limited and constricted approach also exists within the international tourism agency and industry discourse can be observed by the support of the World Tourism Organisation and United Nations for positivistic indicators of sustainable development (WTO, 2004c). Yet such an approach is

⁶³ As evidenced in the establishment of Yosemite National Park for example – see Demars (1991:53-54) and Catlin’s proposal of “a nation’s park” in 1832

constrained by its inability to recognise its values biases (in Western dualist thinking – as identified by Quine, 1969, for example); its inability to unearth the values-based perceptions and interpretations of sustainable development through tourism that stakeholders possess, and finally its inability to account for the subtle and complex ways “...socio-cultural, economic and political processes operate *on* and *through* (the industry of) tourism” (Mowforth and Munt, 1998:2) and in turn how tourism operates *on* and *through* them as mentioned previously.

The use of positivistic ‘indicators’ of sustainable development and/or of sustainability in tourism is based upon a presumption of a highly artificial isolation of the natural environment, society, culture and tourism (and the impacts upon them), as isolated variables. The positivistic nature of this approach and its externalisation of the *wider* environmental processes (e.g. the social, cultural economic, political, and ecological processes) is evidenced in much of western scholarship on tourism. It is seen in the discourse on specific impacts, or singular environmental constructs and/or approaches removed from their specific contexts. In this respect it fails to engage with Habermas’s identification of the value-laden nature of science and its attempts at mastery through technical control over nature, nor does it engage with the western centricity and/or capital underpinning this science (Hughes, 1995; Habermas, 1972).

Such an externalisation might remove the natural environment and its processes, but with present perceptions of sustainability (as noted in Chapter 2) commonly involves the removal of cultural and/or social contexts (e.g. in the example of Newsome, Moore and Dowling, 2002). This externalisation and its positivistic nature are apparent in literature on sustainability and development presented and discussed within supposedly objective technical rational or scientific parameters (Hughes, 1995) and is clearly evidenced in the following claim from Buckley:

In conclusion, much of the information needed to improve sustainability in tourism could be provided by straightforward technical research in environmental science, engineering and management. The most significant information shortages are: (a) in quantifying impacts on the natural environment, in relation to the type of ecosystem and the types and intensity of tourism activities, and (b) in designing equipment, facilities and management tools to minimise such impacts in the most cost efficient way

(Buckley, 1996:928).

Such writings are seemingly oblivious to recent conceptual understandings of knowledge and truth, and reflect a “classical view of science as a rational, value-neutral and objective pursuit of knowledge (which) has been widely criticised” (Hughes, 1995:50). Yet Buckley’s narrow conceptualisations are symptomatic of a discipline which too often is “dominated by a positivist and rather narrow approach that seeks to quantify behaviour .. and measure market forces (Lisle, 2007:341).

As Hashimoto (2002:215) notes however, the social and cultural changes brought about by tourism are “beyond these measurements and are far more qualitative and subjective in nature, which makes numerical measurements almost impossible. This, in turn, questions the validity and reliability of using existing traditional socioeconomic development indices”. The reality is, as Hashimoto (2002) and Cooper et al (1998) imply, that conceptualisations of such complexities (of which Hashimoto’s example is but one constituent element), and those of the other wider environmental processes and relationships involved are seriously deficient. This is evidenced in work which seeks to isolate environments from their cultural reference points (as noted below).

Studies which attempt to quantify societal interrelationships and produce positivistic measurements which isolate variables such as society or ecology (such as that of Patterson et al, 2004) cannot comprehend or interpret the deep subjective knowledge and ‘realities’ of local community members or indeed the variation within communities and within groupings of tourists (see Holden 2000a:177). Thus they are inadequately equipped to deal with core local player issues and impacts; for example the fact that men, (as identified in Chapter 7) or

women as Hashimoto (2002:228) notes, “...who leave home to partake in tourism-related jobs can cause radical changes in traditional social structures and family values”.

Current approaches give rise to all the flaws associated with the triumph of science over nature listed in Chapter 2 and are particularly unsuited to examining or interpreting the relationships of the various environmental contexts to tourism in a majority world context. They presume an inherently egotistical level of control over a nature, culture and society which can only be studied and quantified in units; (whether they be socio-economic, socio-cultural etc). In doing this, such approaches simplify the relationships and complexities involved into dualist machinist assumptions of good and bad impacts and the features involved to quantification (as per indicators). Ethical and moral issues and the social and cultural processes involved in the relationships between the various environmental contexts are either subsumed or ignored.

This chapter has previously contended that due to the nature of the industry, tourism and the communities involved are subject to wider structural issues⁶⁴. However this thesis will argue that it is also vital to incorporate the reality of the intertwining between the various ‘base’ elements or contexts at ground level to fully comprehend the relationship between tourism, development (sustainable or otherwise), and specific communities. It is thus also necessary to reject conceptualisations of “good” or “bad” impacts, as such Manichean logic (i.e. of a dualism between good and bad) is but a triumph of logic over realities.

McKean (1989:119-138) for example illustrates the deficiencies in such an approach by highlighting the flawed nature of dualistic conceptualisations of economic and socio-cultural change in the case of Bali. He demonstrates the simplicity and ultimately inadequacy of such approaches in dealing with the reality of tourism-induced change in such a destination. Dualistic constructions,

⁶⁴ Part of what Tisdell (2001) labels the global economic system – debt, trade, exchange rates, inflation, and macro-economic policy, security, regional issues, and government/MNC agency issues for example.

such as those critiqued by McKean, betray the actual simplicity of human thought and conceptualisation., They do not, and cannot, appreciate that externally proscribed theories of sustainable development will not provide solutions “without reference to the deep subjective experiences” of the local community members, nor appreciate “why a person does not behave rationally in accordance with the strictures laid down by political discourse, why his history, fears, ambitions and illusions will always override” (to paraphrase Grant, 2004:2) the discourse imposed by external but more pointedly “foreign” (in every sense of the word) agencies.

Macfarlane (2003:189) provides an illustrative example and a useful metaphor of the difference between deep subjective knowledge and realities and those of externally-based, rationalising agencies when he observes:

To the Tibetans and Nepalis it was (and still is) unfathomable why a mountain as magnificent as Chomolungma (the Tibetan name for Everest, meaning Mother Goddess of the World) of Sagarmatha (the Nepali name for Everest, meaning Forehead of the Ocean, or Goddess of the Sky) should be named after a human being.

It is important to note that such external pronouncements and discourse (e.g. those relating to sustainable development), are not actively repelled however; rather they are subsumed within the vernacular of the elites.

The predominance of such externally constructed approaches and their attendant discourse, whether it be via policy and planning frameworks or academic analysis, has meant that “relatively little attention has been paid to the inherent processes, influences, objectives and outcomes of tourism related development” (Sharpley and Telfer 2002:1). Such a criticism is not new. Pearce, writing in 1989, spoke of the need for tourism research to refrain from “divorcing tourism impacts from the processes which have created them”, and suggested that such impacts need to be “set in the broader context of development, however defined” (1989:15). There has been a failure to account for impacts generated by not only the size and

importance of the tourism industry, but in particular the vast multi-dimensional nature of it. Wall (1993:46) identifies “intersectoral linkages and top-down, bottom-up relationships” as two areas “particularly difficult to resolve regardless of cultural context or level of development”. He goes on to observe:

Single sector planning is doomed to failure and means must be sought to provide mechanisms which cut across and mediate between sectors and provide opportunities for participation in decision making for all those who are likely to be interested or affected. It is especially clear in a small island context that the forces of tourism are so pervasive that sustainable tourism and sustainable development are inseparably intertwined. It is less clear at this point whether, and in what form tourism might contribute to sustainable development

(1993:46).

Bramwell (1996:734) identifies the need for more complete research by academia, which can provide “...a more comprehensive survey of sustainable tourism which gives prominence to political, sociocultural, and environmental issues and which examines a wide range of instruments which may help achieve sustainable tourism development.” Twining-Ward (1999:187-188) emphasises the increased focus on the ecological to the detriment of social and cultural aspects of tourism development and sustainability as a major stumbling block in progress ‘from principles to practice’. She cites the need for the tourism researcher to “look beyond the immediate disciplinary boundaries”. MacLellan et al (2000) point out that the literature cites the need for – amongst other things – an improvement in the provision and dissemination of tourism data on local community views. At the same time, however, Brohman notes the failure of researchers undertaking studies of tourism’s impacts to adequately locate their research within the wider context of development (1996).

Yet the methodology for such a research agenda remains unclear. Milne (1998:35) argues for a more responsive framework which accounts for the “different forms that sustainability takes at various levels” of analysis which he labels the “global-local nexus”. Such a framework would be in contrast to the dominant models of tourism development such as the tourism area life cycle and

dependency theory which focus on structure while omitting agency (Milne, 1998), but also in contrast to the particularist studies examining tourism's impacts on host cultures which emphasise agency while omitting structure. Apart from these fundamental omissions, these two models of tourism development contain other deficiencies which will not be elaborated on here due to space constraints; suffice to say MacLellan et al (2000) note that the sample instance chosen for this research (Nepal) does not readily conform to dependency theory, and Nash (1996) notes the lack of analysis as opposed to description inherent in the studies of tourism's impacts in underdeveloped countries.

This section has examined the need for research into the relationships between tourism and development which considers the environmental contexts involved. It has noted that such research needs to have the capacity to investigate the interrelationships, processes and procedures involved at an individual agency level through subjective experience, but also acknowledge the structural forces operating on the relationship from an external, or outside-in locality (both physically and theoretically). The next section summarises the findings of this chapter.

3.5 Summary

Gartner (1996:511) observes that:

“There is not now, nor is there likely to be any universally-agreed-to definition of sustainable development and its related forms. Rather there needs to be a case-by-case discussion as to what it means in a particular context, and... planning frameworks incorporating the concepts various meanings are needed before irreversible development takes place”.

The problems encountered in the application of tourism as a tool for achieving sustainable development are reflected in an increasing acknowledgement within the literature of the interrelationships and interdependencies between tourism and its various environmental contexts and multiple players⁶⁵. They are also reflected in calls for more informed and multi-disciplined research and theory on tourism development (Nepal 2000b; Dann, 1999). Chapter 3 has identified weaknesses in previous theorising on the relationships between tourism and development which are a reflection of the fact that there have been “surprisingly few links between tourism and the development literature” (Wall, 1997a:33). As a consequence, theory on tourism’s relationship to sustainability and development is presently limited, and often constrained by its focus on the physical environment, while omitting other environmental contexts (e.g. Hunter, 1996; and Coccossis and Parpairis, 1996; as noted in Holden, 2000a).

Such constraints are reflected in the predominantly quantitative, positivistic (Riley and Love, 2000) tradition of tourism research which has historically concentrated on tourism’s quantifiably measurable impacts, whether positive or negative, and ignored other variables and its own values basis. This in turn overlooks the fact that “...it is not possible to separate sustainable tourism from the values systems of those involved and the societies in which they exist (Butler 1998; in Holden, 2000:173) be they host or guest societies. Evidence that such a limited and constricted approach neglecting the various values bases (and biases) exists within the international agency and industry discourse can be observed by the support of the World Tourism Organisation and United Nations for indicators of sustainable development (WTO, 2004c). The prevalence of such methods has resulted in a lack of focus on the non-quantitative processes and interrelationships of tourism and development (Sharpley and Telfer, 2002:1) and a failure of past analyses to fully account for the scope of the industry.

This chapter has identified the challenges inherent in the use of tourism as a tool for development – be it sustainable or otherwise. It has explored the alternatives

⁶⁵ (e.g. Bramwell and Lane, 2000; Holden, 2000b; MacLellan et al, 2000; Simmons and Koirala, 2000).

to current paradigms suggested by structural agencies and academic discourses in the west and also the contemporary approaches endorsed by these agencies. It has found these approaches to be flawed in that they are based within the same hegemonic power structures, i.e. an economic context of rational, positivistic science which cannot reflect the realities of communities within the majority world.

Finally the chapter has identified a key area which it is suggested has been insufficiently examined in past analyses of the relationship between tourism and development in majority world communities, but which is supported by the observations of scholars in the field. This research contends that an in-depth acknowledgement of the various environmental contexts, the way they work on and through tourism and in turn are subjected to tourism processes themselves, must be examined to fully comprehend tourism and development in such a community.

PART THREE

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

4.0 Introduction

Chapter Four explores the research design of the thesis. It is divided into three principal parts.

Section 4.1 outlines the methodological perspective adopted by this study and its approach to method. This includes justification of the research methodological philosophies and the research method. Figure 4-1 (on the following page) presents an outline of the research approach for this study based upon a Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003:83) conceptualisation. Reference is made within this figure to the individual sections where particular aspects of the approach are detailed:

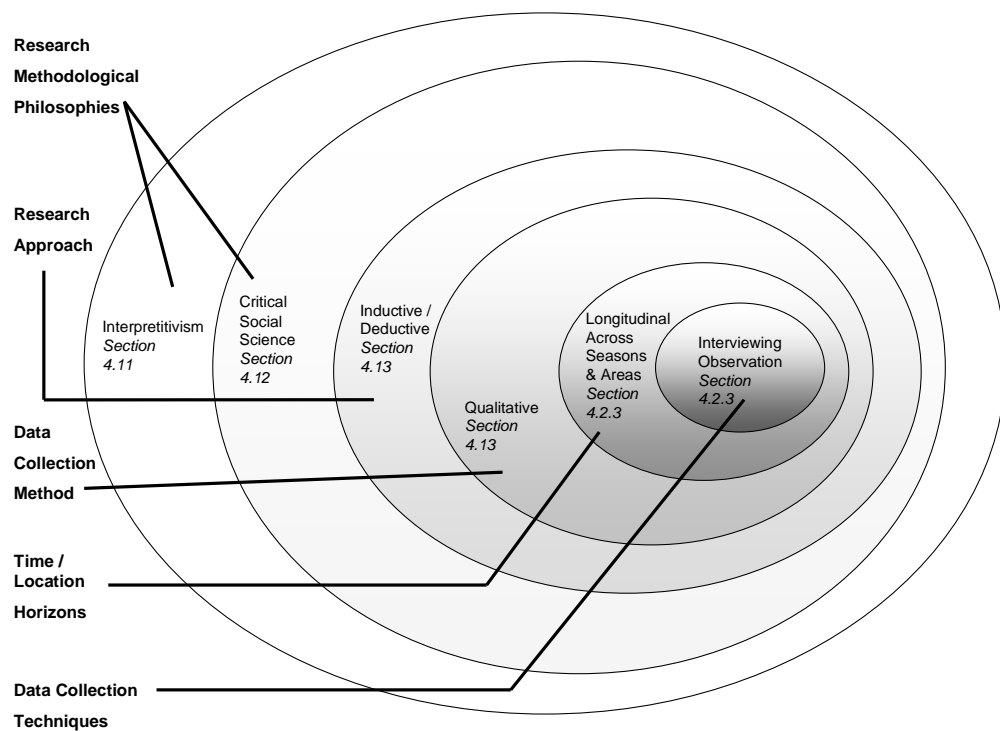


FIGURE 4-1: Research Processes of the Study

(Source: Adapted from Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill's (2003:83) "Research Process 'Onion'").

Section 4.2 examines the specific research techniques undertaken by the study. It outlines the key findings of the pilot phase and the ramifications these had for the research. Next the principal actors are profiled in order to assist the reader in comprehension of the findings of the study. The fieldwork collection methods are explored in Section 4.2.2, followed by the analysis techniques in Section 4.2.3. The final section (4.3) summarises the contents of Chapter 4.

4.1 Justification of the Methodological Approach

The paradigm selected for this research was primarily an interpretive one, with elements of critical theory incorporated (as evidenced in Chapters 2 and 3). Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 justify this paradigm and its inherent ontological and epistemological views, noting the strengths and complementary nature of both. In

particular they note the ability of this approach to access key elements of the analysis (including the tourism processes identified in the previous chapter as important but frequently overlooked in the literature), yet still remain self-reflective.

Section 4.1.3 defends the choice of research method. Although, the term ‘qualitative’ is often utilised in a paradigmatic or methodological sense, this research views it as a description of an approach to method. As such it is viewed as subservient to the theoretical underpinning of the study mentioned above (see Guba and Lincoln, 1998).

4.1.1 The Interpretivist Paradigm

“What Comte saw as the inevitable achievement of man, positive reason,
Weber saw as an iron cage”

Rabinow and Sullivan (1987:2)

A central premise of this research is the understanding that current policies and practices of sustainable development and tourism, with their basis in western Cartesian and positivist histories, ‘bear little relationship to the meanings, interpretations, and experiences of the communities and environments in undeveloped nations they are intended to serve’ (to paraphrase Denzin, 2001:2). It argues that a consequence of this is that despite western agencies proclaiming the success of such programmes, they often fail to take into account the perspectives, realities and attitudes of the communities and their respective environments.

This may initially seem a bold claim, but closer inspection demonstrates much empirical evidence - that provided in Chapter 3 for example, or Dyer, Aberdeen and Schuler (2003) and, in the specific context of this research, Banskota and Sharma (1995). The latter two provide examples in which a western agency/authority has received international awards due to the supposed facilitation

of development in local communities. Yet both cases also provide evidence of a critical lack of development and subsequently considerable disquiet within the local community.

As such, there is a need for research which ‘grasps, understands and interprets correctly the perspectives and experiences of those persons who are served by these policies and practices if the creation of solid and effective programs, policies, and practices is to occur’ (again to paraphrase Denzin 2001:3). The goal of the interpretive approach undertaken in this study is understanding, (or ‘Verstehen’), rather than an insular concentration on method and simplistic explanation provided by ‘brute’ data (Schwandt, 1998:221-227). This research is concerned with analysing the ‘actualities’ (see Section 1.1.1) of stakeholders involved with the use of tourism as a tool for sustainable development in the area of Ghorepani and Tatopani, Annapurna, Nepal, and the structural conditions and interrelationships underlying these actualities.

An interpretivist paradigm with elements of critical social science was selected because (as is further detailed below), interpretive research has as its focus “those life experiences that radically alter and shape the meanings persons give to themselves and their experiences” (Denzin, 2001:1). In the instance of this research, the context is particularly significant because as Hiley, Bohman, and Shusterman note, interpretation is bound by context, in that “...the contextuality is formative; the specific situation is what determines the very form and direction interpretation will take” (1991:12; see also Schwandt, 1998).

An interpretivist paradigm constituted the overall framework as this research contends that the actualities of the stakeholders are value-based, but also that they are multiple, sometimes conflicting (Robottom and Hart, 1993) and highly contextual. As Resnik (1991:1) notes, “...the assumption that what we know is a direct reflection of what we can perceive in the physical world has largely disappeared. In its place is a view that most knowledge is an interpretation of experience”. The issues involved in the relationship between tourism and

sustainable development in the field area are construed in various ways amongst stakeholders. Different stakeholders and stakeholder groups (including the researcher) comprehend these issues through the application of different filters of past experiences, existing knowledges and beliefs and values. These filters are themselves determined by the various environmental contexts the individual stakeholders are subject to (and operate on), and importantly in the case of any exploration of tourism and sustainable development, the relationships within and between these contexts.

It is not the contention of this research that an approach based within the interpretive paradigm is one without weakness however. Section 5.1 addresses these weaknesses in the interpretive paradigm and details the compensatory actions undertaken by this research. Nevertheless it is useful to summarise a number of the paradigm's potential strengths to evaluative research, and these are presented in Appendix 7.

This research contends that amongst the stakeholders in tourism in the area there are differing actualities of, and attitudes to, tourism as a form of development (Mason and Cheyne, 2000). As Geertz describes, "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (1993:5). This emphasis on tourism and sustainable development as being conceptualised by the experiences of those in the area meant that these concepts were best examined from the point of view of the stakeholders themselves (Denzin, 2001:2). The stakeholders' experiences of these concepts were very much situation-specific, and hence any examination of them was best undertaken with reference to "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those living it" (Schwandt, 1998:221).

It was contended that the best way to study these actualities and to gain an insight into the specific understandings and perceptions of sustainable development through tourism in the area was by way of an emic, interpretivist approach which was sensitive to context and appreciative of "the behavioural, institutional, and processual context of a society, as seen from the actor's point of view"

(Hollinshead, 1991:654). To this end, the insights gained from the research were the outcome of an inductive, emic approach which resulted from the researcher's development of rapport and empathy with the stakeholders in tourism in the area, in what Geertz (1983:57-58) labels an 'experience near' approach (after Kohut, 1959).

This approach placed '...emphasis 'on the world of experience as it (was) lived, felt, (and) undergone' by the stakeholders in tourism in the area (Schwandt, 1998:236) in an attempt to prevent misrepresentations, or the 'othered storylines' or 'out-terpretations' referred to by Hollinshead (1999a:88). Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2003:89) identify the emphasis of such an inductive process on

- Gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events
- A close understanding of the research context
- The collection of qualitative data
- A more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses
- A realisation that the researcher is part of the research process
- Less concern with the need to generalise.

All of the above points can be determined as strengths of an approach which endeavoured to access the perceptions, actualities and experiences of the stakeholders. This was undertaken in order to examine the use of tourism as a tool for sustainable development as "a socially constructed enterprise that contains continual contradictions: These are the noble dreams and hopes of creating a better society while at the same time social differentiation maintains unequal power relations and subtle forms of social regulation" (to paraphrase Popkewitz, 1990:46).

The interpretive process is best described with reference to Denzin's "Steps to Interpretation" (see Table 4-1 on the following page) with which it corresponded. It provides a broad illustration of the practical steps in implementing such an interpretive approach.

TABLE 4-1: Denzin's "Steps to Interpretation"

Source: Denzin, 2001:70)

There are six phases or steps in the interpretive process. These may be stated as follows:

1. Framing the research question
2. Deconstructing and analysing critically prior conceptualisations of the phenomenon
3. Capturing the phenomenon, including locating and situating it in the natural world and obtaining multiple instances of it
4. Bracketing the phenomenon, or reducing it to its essential elements and cutting it loose from the natural world so that its essential structures and features may be uncovered
5. Constructing the phenomenon, or putting the phenomenon back together, in terms of its essential parts, pieces, and structures
6. Contextualising the phenomenon, or relocating the phenomenon back in the natural social world

The following sections clarify the relationship of the interpretive and critical approaches to the qualitative practices employed by this research. Following this, Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 more explicitly 'map out' the relationship of the interpretation process to the collection and analysis of data, and the various stages involved.

As will be evidenced, it is believed the emic approach utilised proved valuable in its ability (through the observation of everyday social life in the fieldwork areas) to uncover patterns which highlighted more wide-ranging or universal doctrines (Morgan, 2002, see also Neuman, 2000, and Babbie, 1998), as Taylor suggests "...bring(ing) to light an underlying coherence or sense existing in the field" (1987:33).

4.1.2 Critical Social Science

"Local people have become the objects of development but not the subjects of it"
(Mitchell and Reid, 2001:114)

Although it was situated primarily within an interpretivist paradigm, this study contained elements of critical theory in its approach as the first part of this thesis demonstrated. This was evident in its aims to uncover inequalities, reveal hidden values, break down social illusions and, in general, be more active theoretically than passive interpretivist approaches (Neuman, 2000). The specific

understandings and actualities, the underlying environmental structures, the conditions of sustainable development through tourism in the area and the interrelationships between them had, until this research, not been considered. This research contends that the understandings of sustainable development and more specifically tourism's role as a vehicle for it, are conceptualised through "an authoritative mix of normalising discourse and universalising praxis which routinely privileges particular understandings of heritage, society and the world" (Tribe's 2004:55 paraphrasing of Hollinshead, 1999b).

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003:85) note: "the practical reality is that research rarely falls neatly into only one philosophical domain". The adoption of a critical social science approach within an interpretive paradigm has resulted in the study making a number of presumptions about what Habermas (1972) labelled "Knowledge-Constitutive Interests". Appendix 8 contains a summary table which contrasts a number of the various assumptions that are made across approaches. This section details the presumptions (whether they are detailed under 'Interpretive Methods' or 'Critical Theory' in Appendix 8) of this study and justifies the selection of the particular approach. It must be noted that the isolation of each approach and/or the association of certain elements with some approaches in the table in Appendix 8 is somewhat contrived; this table is by necessity a simplistic depiction of some complex paradigms. Perhaps of particular note is the equation (for purposes of brevity) of an interpretive method with a post-positivist paradigm – it is acknowledged that such a depiction is somewhat reductionalist and a generalisation.

Tribe (2001:445) identifies the 'special promise' that critical theory holds for investigation into tourism. According to Macey's conceptualisation of the Frankfurt School's (Institut für Sozialforschung) position, critical theory "seeks to give social agents a critical purchase on what is normally taken for granted and that promotes the development of a free and self-determining society by dispelling the illusions of ideology" (2000:75). By identifying the manner in which contextual environments, backgrounds and conditions (economic, social, ethnic,

gendered etc) shape beliefs, values, behaviours and experiences (Snape and Spencer, 2003) it is believed the adoption of a critical theory by this study allowed a more perceptive and illuminating analysis⁶⁶.

This study argues that a critical approach is unavoidable for other reasons; as the field of sustainable development and its relationship to tourism has often been noted as having acute conceptual inconsistencies. Tribe (2004:54-55) notes Hughes' (1995) observation that the discourse surrounding 'sustainable tourism' is predominantly rational, scientific and technical (see Buckley's 1996 quote in Section 3.4) and believes "that this has eclipsed the emergence of an ethical response to sustainability". Tribe's reflection that this is a result of the term 'sustainable tourism' being conceptualised through the ways used to analyse it can perhaps be supported by Adams's research in Nepal. In this instance, Adams identifies Foucault's (1979) concept of 'governmentality' as referring to:

... the distinctly modern phenomenon arising with government institutions devoted to providing technical interventions that are assumed to be politically neutral because they are based on objective and scientific truth. This assumption of neutrality places science in a category of truth that is thought to transcend politics. However this view belies a much more subtle truth - that scientific neutrality is the practice of contested politics, wherein debates over truth stand in for debates over power

(Ferguson, 1994 in Adams, 1996: 5-6).

Adams' subsequent argument that "...medical policy and development intervention can be instruments of governmentality, particularly when they treat something like social inequality as a technical problem with a technical solution, rather than a political problem with a political solution" is in accord with the arguments suggested in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, with the sole stipulation that the term 'medical' be replaced by 'tourism'.

⁶⁶ See Appendix 8 for an illustration of Critical Theory's constitutive interests when compared to other methodological paradigms

Nevertheless the critical approach taken by this research is not one which would portray local stakeholders in tourism as necessarily unaware of Macey's delusions of ideology (2000) and/or deluded by them. Nor is it one which would adopt an approach which Miles (2001:18) in his criticism of the Frankfurt School's theories of mass society referred to as "elitist and condescending" towards those in the field. Furthermore, if this study contends that such an awareness does exist at least subconsciously, it does not necessarily prescribe a Feuerbachian or Marxist irrationality to the inaction of those under ideological dominance/duress. If it is to ascertain reasons for why individuals might "participate in maintaining and reproducing the institutions under which they are oppressed or exploited" (Heath, 2004:63), it will be with the realisation that, as Heath notes, many social practices "are reproduced through very loosely constrained strategic action" (ibid, p80). Nonetheless this research does seek to highlight these ideologies, and highlight their inconsistencies and contradictions with the actualities of the field and the processes of tourism and development within it.

In an environment of contested discourse, where structural political agencies hold conceptual power, it is not merely sufficient to interpret subsequent findings – it would be remiss not to adopt a critical analysis of how they were arrived at. Morrow (1994:9) identifies critical theory as occupying a distinct position in its "...insistence on analyzing the objective structures that constrain the human imagination" which he subsequently identifies as a:

...specific focus on the substantive problematic of domination, a complex notion based on a concern with the ways social relations also mediate power relations to create various forms of alienation and inhibit the realisation of human possibilities.

(1994:10).

This research has, by its critical nature, tested existing power structures (Clarke and Lehaney, 2000); however it was not within the remit of this research to do so through emancipatory action as suggested by Geuss (1981). It rejects what Rasmussen (2004:3) labels as "the nascent optimism of the nineteenth century";

i.e. that a critical theory can necessarily bring about direct societal change, and does not attempt to do so.

Thus, this study has not only attempted to interpret the values-based, multiple actualities of tourism held by stakeholders in the area, it has also attempted to uncover the wider structural conditions which help to shape and determine these understandings and actualities, and whose interests they serve (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1998). It has attempted to uncover the structural conditions which exist in the area and related these to the policy, planning and implementation of sustainable development through tourism in the Annapurna, and the interests they serve.

Although the above argument has attempted to make a theoretical case for the adoption of a critical social science approach, Table 4-2 presents a more lucid overview of the practicalities of such an approach.

TABLE 4-2: Critical Social Science

Source: Critical Social Science Research Training Concentration
(2005: "What is Critical Social Science?" para.1)

- Critical social science aims to provide explanations of social phenomena, and interventions in social practice that are scientific, reflexive, critical and practical.
- Depending on the level of abstraction, these generalisable principles are more or less historically and spatially contingent – i.e. the scientific project here does not attempt a positive discovery of laws of the social.
- In scholarly work a reflexive approach interprets practice in the real world through a theoretical framework, and through critical reflection 'bends back' on that same framework in a process of theoretical reconstruction. New practices and phenomena are then reinterpreted through this reconstructed framework... and so the process continues.
- The critical scholar attempts to elaborate the conditions of existence in a particular domain or of a social group through the illumination of forms of power and oppressive social relations- in relation to a specified normative criteria.
- Practical refers to the commitment to making a real difference to social practice through influence on such areas as policy development, community action/development and individual competency.

To summarise, a critical approach was adopted within an interpretive paradigm by this study. This was in order to combine a declared practical philosophical position with a hermeneutical social science approach whilst "...sharing and radically reforming the intentions of both" (Schwandt, 2001:45). A critical approach enabled what Morrow (1994:11) refers to as a 'Critical Imagination', i.e.

an identification and critique of the dominance of certain sets of relations in the field and an appreciation that these were predicated by ideological assumptions and not “cast in stone by natural laws”. Despite this critique of ideology and the identification of its own ideological underpinnings, this study remains a research programme and not an ideological programme whereby political ideologies and commitments take precedence over identification and analysis of actualities. The analysis of stakeholders’ social actualities in the field was the driving agenda, and took precedence over (and sometimes disrupted – see Section 4.2.1) ideological beliefs/convictions (see Morrow, 1994:26-27).

Finally, the emancipatory element inherent in much of critical research was not fully realised in this study. Although this research did result in a “transformation in the way (the researcher) perceives and acts in the world” (Grundy, 1987 in Tribe, 2001:446), it did not anticipate such direct reaction in any stakeholders. The three stages of emancipation that Tribe (ibid) claims critical theory seeks were not fully realised; the emancipation from technical interest, and from ideology are contained in this text; the emancipation through appropriate action was beyond the capabilities of this study.

4.1.3 Qualitative Research

This research is using qualitative research methods, as they are the most suitable for the research given the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the study as outlined above. Riley and Love (2000:165) claim that much of the seminal work in tourism has been provided through qualitative research. The inherent relationship and connection between inductive approaches and qualitative methods is clear (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003:89), whereas there exists some degree of conflict between such approaches and quantitative techniques. A detailed analysis of this conflict, and the inherent problems associated with the use of quantitative methods to gather, interpret and analyse the actualities and their determinants necessary for studies such as this one is presented in Guba and

Lincoln (1998:197-202). An example is the tendency of quantitative methods to selectively focus on specific variables, and hence remove them from their context and thus potentially from their relevance.

In the case of this research a consideration of the specific understandings, perceptions and actualities that exist amongst stakeholders in the area, their environmental contexts and the interrelationships between them, is of central importance to this study. Hence the contextual information provided by qualitative research methods was necessary. As Simpson notes, qualitative methods have an ability to access the “ ‘fine’ grain of local experience”, and hence access the local voices that “are often hardly audible above... the clamour of methodological and theoretical discussions” of positivistic science (1993:pages 164 and 179 respectively, in Walle, 1997:534).

The focus of this study was on the specific but delimited nature of the field research context. Rather than attempting to proclaim universal laws for the relationship between sustainable development and tourism, this study appreciates that such a relationship is not merely technical and rational, but is bound in the interrelationships of the various environmental relationships (named earlier) and as such is specific to the field. It is for this reason that the research avoids proclaiming the grand narratives and applying these “universal laws” which were critiqued in Chapters 2 and 3.

The case for a rejection of positivist approaches has been made in some depth earlier in the study. However it was not merely a dismissal of the positivist approach that led to the use of qualitative methods. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:5-6) identify a number of inherent strengths in qualitative research in its guarded use of positivism. These include the method’s flexibility in acknowledgement of the issues raised by post-modernity, the increased ability of the approach to capture the individual human agency rather than merely the structural view, the capacity to identify and analyse the constraints within daily life (as identified by the

previous point), and its facility to gain emic knowledge through inductive techniques yielding rich/thick descriptions of the field context.

The inductive, hermeneutical approach required to gain the appropriate data necessitated the adoption of specific research methods. These methods had to be able to interpret the interrelationships of the field and result in understanding of the stakeholders' conceptualisations of the relationships between sustainable development and tourism, rather than merely explaining the linear causes and consequences of some isolated factors (Moring, 2001:346). The approach had to be able to recognise that, as Thompson (1983:302) notes, people (including researchers) are:

...usually very strongly committed to their view of how the world is, and this commitment is partly maintained by denying the validity of other ways of seeing the world ... though the world view to which they are committed depends on their social context, they are unaware of this dependence. As far as they are concerned, their world view is not some artificial construct, it is an accurate, factual account of how the world is.

In this respect, the use of qualitative methods, including Ryle's (1971) concept of "thick description" (as expanded upon by Geertz, 1993) ensures that the study is not prone to the weaknesses of a positivist method. For example, Tribe notes that in eliminating the analysis of topics that are not conducive to its techniques, the positivist method is often guilty of an oversimplification of actualities whereby the "rich complexity of the world as lived is often sidestepped" (2001:444).

In addition these methods had to have a certain flexibility; and comply with field conditions rather than the opposite way around. For example, the concept of 'participant observation' masks a number of variations of researcher role and positioning which directly impact on the type of data collected. In the case of this research the researcher's presumed natural participative community (i.e. the socially and culturally diverse trekkers) was transient; while the researcher was more participative in the more exotic (to him) but local community with its previously mentioned variation. Thus, strict definitions of particular research

method can in fact be counterproductive – the aim of this research method was primarily to gain the necessary data in order to address the research question rather than to operate within clearly demarcated definitions. As Schwandt (1998:222) suggests:

Although we may feel professionally compelled to use a special language for these procedures (e.g. participant observation, informant interviewing, archival research) at base, all interpretive inquirers watch, listen, ask, record and examine. How these activities can best be defined and employed depends on the inquirer's purpose for doing the inquiry.

In this way what may be defined as interviews in western contexts may not be sufficient for gathering rich, in-depth knowledge in other cultural contexts where there is not cultural experience or appreciation of the interviewing processes. In such instances, the process of 'interviewing' may constitute the very same falsity and artificiality as the so called 'objectivity' of positivist approaches. In such occasions, in the words of Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton (2001:323), "through judicious use of self-disclosure, interviews become conversations and richer data are possible".

Thus, the selected methodology was applied through multiple qualitative research methods in the field in a manner which utilised the various strengths whilst recognising and making allowances for the acknowledged weaknesses of the interpretivist paradigm and critical approach (see Section 4.3.2). The site of the field area allowed the researcher continuous prolonged access to a range and variety of constructions from all stakeholders in the natural research setting (Hollinshead, 1993).

Total immersion in all of the host cultures was obviously impossible. Nonetheless the rapport, empathy and respect which the researcher built up over time with those in which he initially inhabited a clear 'outsider status' (for example indigenous local actors) enabled access to the 'world of experience' of these stakeholders (Schwandt, 1998:236) albeit not within their permanent life frames.

In sharing the daily experiences of the local players (including for example eating, working and socialising with them), the researcher became embedded in the field area, and explicitly engaged with it.

The selection of the appropriate qualitative methods (in this case field research techniques, including but not limited to; direct and indirect participant observation, unstructured and informal interviews and discussions, analysis, reflection and other forms of interpretation - see Schwandt, 2001) became clearer after the initial pilot study and are detailed in depth in Section 4.2.3. They took place during a sustained period of continuous interaction with a number of stakeholders with varying levels of involvement in tourism in the district. This enabled the researcher to get close to the individual actor's perspective, while also gaining first hand knowledge (sometimes through experience) of the environmental contexts these perspectives were being formed in (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:5). 'Knowledge' (in this case the research findings) was generated as the research proceeded, through interactions between the researcher and the researched (Guba and Lincoln, 1998:200-209). This allowed the researcher and the participants to share and edit beliefs in order to "achieve socially shared beliefs of validity" (Campbell, 1988:440).

During the course of the fieldwork, the researcher was able to experience moments of both insider and outsider status in positions which were 'relative to the cultural norms and values' of both the stakeholders and the researcher, and in keeping with 'contemporary perspectives' on insider /outsider status (Merriam et al., 2001) The Ghorepani and Tatopani areas presented access to the main players and non-players in tourism and sustainable development in the area. The choice of field area allowed the researcher to draw out the multiple actualities as they emerged directly from and within their contexts.

This section has justified the use of qualitative techniques in implementing the methodological approach and thus ultimately addressing the central research aim. The following part outlines the specific data collection strategies of the researcher

in the field, including the role and positioning adopted by the researcher in order to facilitate this gathering of data. The next section outlines the specific circumstances of the field context, and explores the initial learnings and/or findings from the pilot phase.

4.2 Research Techniques

The previous part of this chapter explored the theoretical background to the methodology of this study. This part examines and justifies the specific research techniques and understandings of the research programme.

The first section provides an overview of the pilot study phase of the research, and notes the key findings. It outlines the impact these findings had on the research, and the measures adopted as a result of insights gained during this period.

Section 4.2.2 outlines the specific techniques employed in the field for accessing, gathering and recording the fieldwork ‘knowledges’ and ‘actualities’. Section 4.2.3 - the final section in this part of the chapter, specifies the methods used to analyse these knowledges and actualities, both within and subsequent to their collection in the field.

4.2.1 Pilot Study Indications

The initial phase of the fieldwork of this research consisted of pilot work carried out in the first instance for two weeks in the Khumbu region of Nepal (the second most popular trekking destination in the country after the ACA) in December 2001 and subsequently in the research area itself for one week in January 2002.

This pilot work proved invaluable in aiding the researcher to become immersed and experienced in the context and practicalities of the field. It enabled the researcher to gain further insight into cultural nuances and issues, ethical issues, and communication techniques.

In the colloquial words of McIntyre (2005:213), these preliminary investigations carried out enabled the researcher to “case the joint” so to speak. They facilitated initial contacts with actors including some key players in particular (such as ACAP personnel and local government officials). They were also of fundamental importance in determining suitable data collection methods and for practicing and refining the various research techniques that were used. Hence, some key insights (amongst others) gathered from the pilot study included:

- Logistics of the research (including access to the area, transport, accommodation, food, technical communication, etc).
- Selection of specific research field area, and specific time frames for the research fieldwork.
- Practising, refining and selecting of various data collection and analysis methods, and determining related problems, issues and access. For example, various interviewing problems were identified during the pilot study. One of particular note was the cultural preference of several ethnicities to avoid negative answers to questions – which they deemed as possibly causing offence. Specific issues relating to the interviewing of porters and guides were also identified, as were issues related to interviewing some young unmarried, non-westernised women. The pilot study enabled counteractive actions to be trialled (e.g. the substitution of informal conversations based in lodge kitchens for more formalised discussions elsewhere).
- Insights into the various stakeholder groups present in the research area⁶⁷.

⁶⁷ See Appendix 5.

- Determining and experiencing the many cultures of the stakeholders' 'communities', and enabling the researcher to experience and investigate a variety of issues (e.g. affiliation, authority, key gatekeepers etc) both within and between these communities prior to the research proper.
- Insights into the power structures which existed within the research area. Including for example those which existed along stakeholder lines, but also within stakeholder groups, between stakeholder groups and between areas etc.

The pilot study has not been investigated in depth here due to space constraints. However some of the various findings uncovered during the pilot study stage trialling of the research are noted where relevant within the following sections of the report.

4.2.2 Fieldwork Study

There is widespread acknowledgement that we live in an increasingly fragmented and distorting world that poses fundamental threats to the maintenance of a coherent self... despite radically differing diagnoses, there seems general agreement that the philosophical concept of the individual, born with a ready-coded personality which develops like a plant from a seed, is no longer tenable. The individual is constituted within the social world in which he or she is embedded

(Hughes, 1995:57).

The 'world' in which contemporary international conceptualisations of sustainable development and tourism have been constructed has been found by Chapters 2 and 3 to be inherently western.

This section illustrates the methods used by this study to examine the influences upon, and contexts within which concepts of sustainable development and tourism took place within the 'social worlds' of the wards of Ghorepani and Tatopani. In

doing so it required a field-based approach which would enable a critical study of the specific understandings, perceptions, and actualities associated with the use of tourism to achieve sustainable development, as expressed through the accounts and experiences of the local key players.

This research utilised multiple qualitative data collection methods which were employed over a longer time period than similar studies. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2003:476) note that cross-sectional research is useful for providing a 'snapshot' of a context. However the nature of this study (including the pilot from mid-December 2001 until the end of April 2002), whilst not strictly longitudinal, nevertheless not only allowed the researcher to identify and experience levels of 'change and development' such as Saunders et al (2003:96) note, but also to experience the three key tourism seasons within the area as detailed in Section 4.2.3 (i.e. the off season, the shoulder season and the peak season).

The first phase of this research consisted of an initial pilot study, (conducted in December 2001 and January 2002 and outlined in Section 4.2.1) to further specify research techniques, and provide information on field conditions, context and nuances etc. The specific methods appropriate for the research became clearer after insights provided by the initial pilot study as detailed in Section 4.2.1. For example, the use of tape-recording equipment was discounted during this phase, as it was discovered the majority of indigenous respondents were not as comfortable or as open under this type of recording condition. The pilot phase was followed by the research fieldwork proper. The researcher re-entered the field and began the collection of data (from mid January to late April 2002) before returning to the United Kingdom and continuing the data analysis/interpretation.

The field research techniques included varieties of constant participant observation⁶⁸, involving techniques such as direct and incidental observation, 'systematic lurking' (Dann et al, 1988:25), and semi-structured, unstructured and

⁶⁸ The particular variety chosen was dependent upon the actors involved.

informal interviews and discussions (Schwandt, 2001). These techniques took place during a sustained period of continuous interaction with stakeholders who had varying levels of involvement in tourism in the district, and enabled the research to get closer to the individual stakeholder's perspective while also gaining first hand knowledge (often through direct experience) of the environmental contexts these perspectives were being formed in (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:5).

The use of multiple data collection methods was coupled with the custom of the researcher to continuously revisit and recollect the data from within its context. This enabled the researcher to examine the external behaviour and internal cogitations of the stakeholders, and the tourism process through and on these actors, while simultaneously providing checks on these processes. As Patton (2002:306) notes, such a combination of data sources "...increases validity as the strength of one approach can compensate for the weaknesses of another approach". Whilst this process of cross referencing data for accuracy and/or validity may be labelled 'triangulation', this research does not share the customary presumptions of triangulation that "...data from different sources or methods must necessarily converge or be aggregated to reveal the truth" (Schwandt, 2001:257). Rather it supposes that this convergence of data from different sources, methods, and time arenas will often necessarily not be smooth, and this in itself can provide valuable inferences⁶⁹. Further arguments in this vein can be found in Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:199-200).

One form of stakeholders group data collection involved 120 interviews with trekkers⁷⁰, 30 interviews with lodge owners or managers (representing the total population of these actors in the research fieldwork are at the time), 20 interviews with guides, 5 interviews with ACAP and Forestry Officials, 5 interviews with porters, 5 interviews with shop owners and lodge workers, and 5 interviews with other people living and working on the trail. Interviews with additional

⁶⁹For example the existence of cognitive dissonances.

⁷⁰ Of a total of 1633 trekkers registered as entering the area in January, 2870 in February, and 4738 in March – April's figures are unknown, estimated to be approximate to those of March.

stakeholders in tourism in the area involved 5 interviews with people living and working off the trail, and 5 interviews with local officials (e.g. Village Development Committee Chairs, etc), both groups of whom had no involvement in the tourism industry. Space constraints prohibit a thorough explanation of the variation in number of interviews per stakeholder group, which was due to a number of factors - suffice to say the number of units chosen provided a representation of the stakeholder group in the fieldwork area, and the access of the researcher to that group (see Section 1.1.2). The total population of lodge owners /or managers and local authority officials resident in the two wards at the time of the research were all interviewed, whilst the trekkers group, due to its transient nature, consisted of a considerably larger population than other stakeholder groups.

The sample areas for the research (as alluded to in Section 1.1.2) were chosen using focused sampling, in that the areas were actively selected because of their ability to provide ‘especially illuminating examples’ of variation between indicators of sustainability in tourism destinations (Hakim, 2000:170). This was also the case with the actors selected above, although the use of convenience sampling was often applied when interviewing guides and trekkers. The in-depth nature of the research (see the research objectives in Section 1.1.1) being carried out in the fieldwork area and the interviewing techniques employed (as detailed below), combined both with the variation between areas selected and the limits that time, funding, and a sole researcher place upon the study were often more conducive to this type of sampling. Where necessary (e.g. in the interviews with some Village Development Chairs) interviews were conducted in Nepali with the aid of an interpreter. As such, the researcher believes representative samples were obtained.

The type of interview utilised (e.g. unstructured, semi-structured etc) was very much context specific. Following insights gained from the pilot study, the interviews were predominantly unstructured or semi-structured with probes used which reflected the fact that individuals perceive their surroundings in different

ways (Berg, 2004). The interviewing style used was very much dependant on the stakeholder/s being interviewed and any stakeholders present. Using Kvale's (1996:3-5) metaphors of interviewing approaches as either 'mining', or 'travelling', the approach taken by this research can perhaps best be summarised as a 'travelling' approach. Unstructured interviews and casual conversations, with sometimes an occasional 'soft' probe yielded considerable data, especially with stakeholders indigenous to the area. A slightly more structured (i.e. a semi – structured) approach was often taken with trekkers, with more probes used, especially in the initial stages of such interviews/conversations.

Much of the valuable data collected for this study was collected through informal, casual conversations (echoing the success of such an approach documented in Cole, 2004). Jorgensen (1989:85) observes that asking questions in an interview context is essentially an artificial activity. He notes that "informal interviewing is an especially useful strategy for discerning different viewpoints held by insiders" (1989:88). It was quickly identified during the initial stages of the research that the asking of questions in a formal or even semi-structured manner, particularly of some indigenous stakeholders, could be counterproductive. Such techniques were liable to highlight and exacerbate the researcher's identity and construct a subjectiveness out of the 'ethnographic space', (i.e. the differences in "gender, age, ethnicity, class and race") that the researcher was situated in by the stakeholder respondents (Pink, 2001:20). This is a reflection of Rapley's contention that "interviews are inherently social encounters, dependent on the local interactional contingencies in which the speakers draw from, and co-construct, broader social norms" (2001:303).

The interviews and observations of stakeholders in tourism in the area were undertaken to provide the study with insight into the attitudes, values, and practices of these stakeholders, and any variations between them. These were examined in order to explore the possibility that the currently implemented policies in the region are a reflection of the appropriation of the key concepts of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainable tourism' by external interests and

authorities, and were sometimes in conflict with, or not reflected in, stakeholder's values. The sample of stakeholders selected were chosen using purposive sampling techniques, and were selected due to categorising detailed above, but also due to their ability to be typical, yet revelatory units for shedding light on the research issues (Schwandt, 2001).

The other data collection techniques (e.g. varieties of observational measures) were undertaken throughout the four month period also, having been trialled, like the various interviewing techniques, during the pilot study phase. Again, as in the case of the interview techniques, the particular type of observation selected for each circumstance / episode was dependant on a variety of factors (including context, stakeholders observed and stakeholders present, etc), but was usually selected in an effort to reduce researcher interference⁷¹ (however there were exceptions to this rule).

Due to the constant nature of the data collection, the researcher carried a small pad and pencil and at appropriate and convenient times made notes regarding observations etc. They were also used to record interviews and to record the researcher's personal impressions of the field and data collection processes⁷² (Jorgensen 1989:100). These records were revisited daily on an iterative basis (see Section 4.2.3).

Actual data collection techniques were context specific. For example, following experience during the pilot phase and the initial stages of the fieldwork proper, it was discovered the most suitable time to interview / converse with guides was at night or in the morning as the following recorded observation demonstrates:

⁷¹ Although it is acknowledged that "the researcher's voice is indelibly inscribed in the research process" (Roulston, 2001:279).

⁷² A personal finding which was recognised in the early stages of the research was that these journals must reflect the research occurrences. Thus, it was important for the journal and note recordings to avoid any self-absorption or narcissism on the behalf of the researcher, although it was equally important to reference any of the researcher's possible effects on the research.

OB (Observation): Guides in guest houses less open – because of proximity of guests and/or lodge owners. Best place and time to talk to guides is in the morning when trekkers in room getting ready or outside ... on steps at night.

The use of observation is underutilised as a research technique, despite its value in capturing variations of the tourism experience that traditional quantitative measures cannot acquire (Seaton, 1997). Observation techniques assisted the researcher in ‘occupying the frame of reference of the participant in action’ and hence achieving a greater ‘understanding’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:5). Schwandt (2001) cites the Dewey-inspired post-modern and post structural criticisms of researchers peripherally-involved in the scene he or she studies. Their argument centres upon the static nature of the information generated by the ‘observer’ and they consequently note that the observer cannot know or understand the experience of the subject of his or her observation, and can only produce a still-shot of it, or his or her own view of it. Although many of the observations that took place in this research were participant orientated, there were observations which were not, and thus such criticisms and concerns should be attended to. These concerns could be seen to have been addressed by the additional supporting data collecting techniques used (see below) but can also be countenanced by the repeat observations that were possible due to the extended time in the field.

The initial pilot study also illuminated the ways in which the researcher could develop rapport and empathy with the stakeholders in tourism in the area. The development and sustenance of good field relationships is crucial to the collection of trustworthy data (Jorgensen, 1989:69-81). In this respect, the researcher discovered some advantages in the initial ‘outsider’ role as a foreign national. Some lodge owners in the area spoke disparagingly of previous research carried out by indigenous nationals who were members of other castes and/or ethnic groupings/classes, highlighting the conflicts between these groups. This appeared to echo Black’s (1991:170) perception that in Nepal:

It is no accident that those development agents who have the will to live among the rural poor and who, for the most part are accepted by them are so often young foreigners. Foreigners, and particularly young ones, are able to cross the lines of class in a manner that ... would be far more difficult for nationals (or for the same young foreigners in their own countries). In this sense distance unites.

Whilst the researcher was not a development agent, nor could the actors in question, comparatively speaking, be deemed “the rural poor”, the approach of these actors towards the research and their openness (for example in their discussions about tourists or other actors which were traditionally kept private, or in their expectations that the researcher would dine with them in their kitchen, a traditionally off-limits area) reinforced this belief. Such openness increased over time in the field and was also dependant upon the actors concerned.

The interpersonal qualities the researcher attempted to bring to the fieldwork period mirrored those which Nepali officials repeatedly stress as important, for example “time to spend with people and openness and willingness to learn” (Loizos and Clayton, 1998, in Eyben, 2000:11). They were perceived as being successful; in that often the stakeholders appeared not to focus upon the researcher’s ethnicity, religion, gender or caste. Rather they appeared to overlook these and focus upon the researcher’s reinforcement of their own beliefs and shared daily personal experiences / knowledges as a criterion for experience. However it is acknowledged that the researcher’s ethnicity, religion, gender or caste did not necessarily “dissolve” and remained an omnipresent difference between the researcher and particular key actors.

In order to minimise the differences existing in the “ethnographic space” as detailed above, a variety of methods of gaining rapport were of assistance. The researcher used self-depreciation and positioned himself at a lower level to the more knowledgeable, usually older, local actors in a definite subjugation of traditional power roles⁷³ (e.g. in asking their advice). This can be viewed as echoing Dove’s (1988:7) suggestion that the “typical, highly educated and highly

⁷³ This is mentioned because it was not the norm in the relationship between European trekkers and most local actors as is further discussed in the following chapters.

paid development planner should consider treating the ‘typical, poorly educated, and poorly paid villager’ as a teacher rather than as a student”.

However these actions were not used in a methodical, planned or deceiving manner. The local actors were invariably older than the researcher, and obviously more knowledgeable about the subject matter than the researcher, who was attempting to gain access to this knowledge. As such the actions detailed above to gain rapport were genuine. The researcher placed emphasis on developing relationships with key actors on their own terms. This usually (primarily in the initial stages) centred upon letting the stakeholders direct conversations, with the researcher attempting to assimilate but also aware of his outsider⁷⁴ status. However this also meant that such relationships developed at different speeds with and among different stakeholder groups. In this respect observations played a key role.

An accurate picture of how rapport was built, in addition to the factors which directed the researcher’s questioning and soft-probes is not easy to detail. As Silverman (2001p:ix) observes, “...perhaps, how we make sense in conversations necessarily relies on everyday conversational skills that cannot be reduced to reliable techniques”. Emphasis was often placed upon sensitivity and responsiveness in conversations which Ingold (2000:25) claims is ‘intuition’. Ingold notes the ‘bad press’ that intuition has received in Western rationalistic science, yet also that:

Simply to exist as sentient beings, people must already be situated in a certain environment and committed to the relationships this entails. These relationships, and the sensibilities built up in the course of their unfolding, underwrite our capacities of judgment and skills of discrimination, and scientists - who are human too - depend on these capacities and skills as much as do the rest of us. That is why the sovereign perspective of abstract reason, upon which Western science lays its claim to authority, is practically unattainable: an intelligence that was completely detached from the conditions of life in the world could not think the thoughts it does.

(Ingold, 2000:25)

⁷⁴ Keeping in mind there were different levels of ‘outsider’ status

Jorgensen (1989:100) concurs with Ingold's theme and identifies the importance of 'feelings, hunches and impressions'. He notes the benefits of noting "guesses, hunches, suspicions, predictions, and areas of neglect as well as topics in need of subsequent inquiry" which was a feature of this research and its reflective periods. Jorgensen observes that such "notes about these matters tend to be extremely useful in judging the course of your inquiry, developing future courses of action in the field, and as part of making sense out of the preliminary materials you have been collecting".

Finally, there were issues pertaining to the researcher's effect upon the research. While such effects cannot be explored in depth here, it is believed the effect was minimised considerably due to the relationships (and context of these relationships) with the various actors involved. The relatively unobtrusive nature of the research, the number of actors involved (e.g. the number of trekkers spread over the number of lodges) further reduced researcher interference in the everyday life of those involved. Although there was undoubtedly some effect of the researcher upon the research (e.g. trekkers providing justifications for their use of bottled water when none were requested), these have been mentioned explicitly within the results.

4.2.3 Fieldwork Analysis

The psychology of the human condition is always the predicated set of assumptions on which all others rest. One says "I see things out there in such and such a way," neglecting to add what is even more fundamental: "I see them so because I have made such and such presumptions about what it means to see, to describe, to speak, to hear and so on and on

(Bugental, 1967:5).

As Bugental's quote above illustrates, "documenting data is not simply a neutral recording of, but is an essential step in the construction of reality in the qualitative research process" (Flick, 2002:12). As such, the analysis of data cannot, in Coffey (1999:40) "...simply be thought of as systematic and prescriptive, devoid of personal investment and emotional qualities". Consequently, this section begins with a short summary of the methods used to record the various data. This is followed by a description and justification of the techniques used to analyse the data generated using the methods outlined in Section 4.2.2.

The data were documented in a format which allowed for analysis during and at the conclusion of the fieldwork period. For observations this entailed the documenting of actions and interactions, which Flick (2002) identifies as the most important task. For interviews and conversations, this included the transcription of spoken words. The practicalities of the field meant that conversations and observations were often not transcribed at the moment they occurred. In such instances the researcher either made notes in his notebook soon afterwards or left that particular interaction point when appropriate and transcribed notes soon after.

If there was perceived to be key data generated the researcher would leave the point of interaction soon after this had occurred. In all circumstances attempts were made to document such notes as quickly as possible as recommended by Lofland and Lofland (1984 in Flick, 2002) yet this was considered as secondary to maintaining rapport and appropriateness of behaviour. These actions were not carried out in a manner which was as covert as it may sound; this data was often confirmed for accuracy with the actors involved after being transcribed. In addition the nature of the field situation, with the researcher fairly transient each day within the confines of each of the two wards, resulted in reasonably frequent and convenient opportunities to transcribe data.

The researcher employed fieldnote techniques which were similar to those utilised by Strauss et al (1964:28-29 in Flick, 2002:169) and Silverman (2001:228 adapted from Kirk and Miller, 1986:57) whereby discriminations were made between

levels of perceived confirmed accuracy of data using notations. Hence data which was considered factual and/or easily verified (e.g. the location of Khibang village for example) were listed unmistakably as such. Verbal data recorded within quotation marks signified exact recall of a direct quote (e.g. “Trekkers are like bees”). Verbal data was recorded with an asterisk when a lesser amount of certainty existed or paraphrasing was being used, and verbal material documented with none of the above markings indicated a sound level of recall but did not constitute a direct quotation. In addition to these notations, oversized question marks, notes in the margins and oversized paragraph spacings were used to signify material that warranted further investigation or confirmation. In this respect the nature of the fieldwork, i.e. involving continuous interactions with the key actors over a sustained period – was beneficial and allowed opportunities for confirmation of such data.

The analysis and interpretation of the data generated was a constant, largely iterative process throughout the fieldwork stage as well as following the completion of it. Data was continually reviewed, themes pursued and hypotheses generated during the research process. While the researcher entered the field with predetermined theories, this did not involve imposing predetermined categorisations or analytical reference markers on the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)⁷⁵. Rather it involved the researcher reflecting upon the data gathered, noting emerging themes and using them to inform further observations, probes, and fieldwork enquiries. This enabled themes and insights which were relevant to the research to be unearthed and to emerge from the data.

Thus the stages of data analysis commenced concurrently with the first phase of data gathering, and continued to inform the data gathering (and challenge the previously collected data) throughout the fieldwork period. Coffey and Atkinson (1996:140) perhaps best illustrate this process when they speak of the “interweaving of analysis with the use of ideas” during the research process.

⁷⁵ Chapter 5 details how some of the predetermined theories the researcher took into the field were challenged and renegotiated.

The procedures involved in the analysis of data were based upon the coding procedures outlined by Corbin and Strauss (1990) and the use of thematic networks as espoused by Attride-Stirling (2001). The procedures outlined by Corbin and Strauss constitute an element in an approach entitled “grounded theory”. Whilst this research does not adopt a grounded theory methodology, it has adopted some of its techniques. Pidgeon and Henwood (2004:625) note that these methods are not necessarily distinct to grounded theory, and in fact represent a “core, generic set of techniques for conducting, and gaining credibility for, qualitative inquiry and theory building from qualitative inquiry”. These procedures were employed by this research due to their value in offering a systematic, robust and rigorous approach (an “analytic scaffolding on which to build” in the words of Charmaz, 2005:517) and their ability to ground the emergent inductive categories to the data from which they have emerged (Berg, 2004:273). At the same time they also allowed the researcher to view his own assumptions as well as those of the research participants during the coding process (Charmaz, 2005:519).

The grounded theory approach has been criticised for its lack of acknowledgement of theories which are guiding the process in its early stages (Silverman, 2005). It was to compensate for this perceived weakness, and also to aid in the systemisation, presentation and disclosure (Attride-Stirling, 2001) of the analysis that the use of thematic networks were engaged. Attride-Stirling describes the intention of thematic networks “to explore the understanding of an issue or the signification of an idea” (2001:387) and notes their aim of structuring and depicting the themes unearthed by qualitative analysis.

Following the completion of the fieldwork stage, the steps of analysis of this research can be simplified into three principal stages which are detailed in brief here, and in further depth in the following paragraphs. The first stage involved a constant critiquing of the data. This step was largely reflective, and involved an ongoing post-fieldwork analysis, used to ‘get on top’ of the data, but also to keep it open (Patton, 2002). The second step involved a thematic analysis, which

entailed surveying the data, exploring the themes generated in the field, and grouping different aspects of the data. This was carried out using a combination of open coding, coding and memoing as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and Flick (2002). The third and final step involved coding the data, in which themes, propositions, and anything else useful in the data were grouped and coded (Bouma 1996). This step involved the constant comparison of the newly emerging categories with those already unearthed, in order that the most representative/inclusive categories were selected. It entailed further refining of the codes, and checking the data and codes for sub-categories or negative cases that did not fit existing coding criteria. The final emergent codes and categories and their themes were then explored, and these are detailed in Section 5.1.3.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has examined the methodology and procedures utilised by this study. The first part outlined the ontological and epistemological assumptions and foundations upon which this study was based, and the approach to method. It identified the strengths of the methodological approaches selected for this study, and their particular suitability for this research, especially given the weaknesses in alternative approaches and conceptualisations alluded to in Chapters 2 and 3.

The second part of this chapter considered the research techniques adopted by the study. It began by briefly exploring indications from the pilot study and noted a number of important findings from this phase of the research. The research methods utilised in the fieldwork phase were then explained, and their use defended as appropriate given the contextual environment and the data required for the study. The techniques that were used to analyse the fieldwork data were then outlined and justified.

The next chapter examines the field conceptual elements. The first section (Section 5.1) reflects on the research process as determined in this chapter and examines its implementation within the field. Section 5.2, the second section of the next chapter, illustrates the manner in which the understandings and framing concepts emerged, and the manner in which these emergent understandings ultimately shaped the subsequent form of the study and determined its outcomes.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD CONCEPTUAL ELEMENTS

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter has outlined the ontological and epistemological assumptions/foundations upon which this study was based and detailed the research procedures used. However it did not illustrate the manner in which the understandings and framing concepts emerged, nor the manner in which these emergent understandings ultimately shaped the subsequent form of the study and determined its outcomes. This is now addressed.

The first section (5.1) reflects on the research process. It provides a critical reflection of the research design and processes and their implementation, in accordance with the ideological and methodological approach adopted. It examines ethical issues that arose and the procedures undertaken to ensure an ethical approach was adopted, the actors were treated in a principled manner, and the University's ethical guidelines were adhered to. Section 5.1.2 acknowledges the weaknesses and subsequent compensatory actions taken by this research. It is the contention of this study that every such research investigation has weaknesses in approach; however these weaknesses are often ignored or not recognised. Section 5.1.2 openly identifies such weaknesses inherent in, and criticisms of, the

approach undertaken by this study. By stating the processes utilised to overcome such weaknesses it is believed this study addresses the attendant criticisms.

The second section (5.2) details the emergent understandings of the study and the methods of analysing them. Section 5.2.1 details the complexities of the case which emerged as central to the subsequent analysis and findings. The following section (5.2.2) explicitly details the steps involved in the analysis. Section 5.2.3 explores the emergence of tones for the stakeholder groups (see also Appendix 9 which illustrates some of the procedures detailed in Section 5.2.2).

5.1 Reflections on the Research Process

Section 5.1.1 explores the ethical concerns of this study. Ethical considerations are important in any research and approval was gained from the relevant ethical committees at the relevant stages of this study. In addition the research was in compliance with the attended institution's own ethics policy document (Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, 2005). Nevertheless there remains a need to clarify the ethical matters relevant to this study, and the approach of this study in addressing these concerns.

Section 5.1.2 provides further evidence of the reflective nature of this research by examining in detail the weaknesses of the approach in relation to the field area, and the measures used to offset these weaknesses. This examination of the weaknesses of this study is both an example of the transparency of the approach and an answer to criticisms of qualitative methods.

5.1.1 Research Ethics

In the case of social research, ethics are concerned with the rights of the individuals involved, in particular their rights to reciprocity, protection from physical harm and/or exploitation and violations of their confidentiality and privacy as well as the accuracy and integrity of the research (Baez, 2002; Robson and Robson, 2002; Jorgensen, 1989). The in-depth, situated, and emic perspective of qualitative research in unstructured settings mean that “ethical considerations have a particular resonance in qualitative research studies” (Lewis, 2003:66). A relationship is entered into with participants which has the potential to change the “lived, told, relived and retold stories” of all of the parties involved (Clandinin and Connelly, 1998:169).

Although this research operated under the above considerations and those of the recognised guidelines and standards appropriate for this research, the implementation of these varied depending upon the particular context and situation. As Jorgensen (1989:29) notes, decisions related to ethical considerations may be easy to reach in a textbook environment, removed from everyday life. Dev Makkar (2002:75) observes that researchers in overseas environments may however, be “...placed in situations so specific, and sometimes so unforeseen that it is often our judgement that becomes the most ready tool at such moments”. As a result, many of the judgements of the researcher became based upon the “situational ethics” of which Fontana and Frey (1998:71) speak. The nature of this research, in particular the researcher’s participation, interaction and development of relationships with a variety of stakeholders over a continuous period of time, resulted in ethical concerns constituting a daily consideration of the researcher (Jorgensen, 1989:39).

Upon arrival in the research areas and where necessary upon first meetings, the researcher informed stakeholders residing in the two wards of the research. This involved informing these stakeholders of the purpose of the study, the areas it covered, how it was anticipated the data would be used, relevant personal details

of the researcher, how the subjects' help would be solicited, and so forth (Lewis, 2003). It was emphasised that participation in and/or contribution to the research was voluntary. Some initial reservations were expressed by two lodge owners in Ghorepani, however these were centred around a misunderstanding on the part of these lodge owners that they would have to contribute financially towards the research through provision of lodgings and subsistence to the researcher. Once clarified (i.e. that no such contributions were being solicited), these lodge owners and families were also pleased to contribute.

Likewise the researcher initially notified transient stakeholders (e.g. trekkers and guides/porters) of the research and the details pertaining to it as outlined above. However it was discovered quite early in the fieldwork period that this notification was unnecessary, and in addition was perhaps having a detrimental effect on the research. Evidence of the effects of such notifications in the initial stages of the research resulting in behavioural change and/or self-consciousness on the part of the stakeholders (in particular the trekkers) is presented in Section 5.2.1. The argument that this notification in respect of transient stakeholders was unnecessary can perhaps best be supported by Jorgensen (1989). He argues:

...the people with whom the participant observer interacts are not at all like the other subjects of an experiment or even the respondents of survey research. The participant observer interacts with people under the ordinary conditions of their daily lives much like any other participant... Consequently, the participant observer has no more or no less of an ethical obligation to the people encountered in the course of research than she or he would have under other everyday life circumstances. While this may not free the researcher from responsibility for his or her actions as they might affect other human beings, the researcher is not necessarily obligated to inform people of research intentions...

(1989:28)

Consequently, following an initial trial period, informed consent was not sought for casual 'everyday' participant observations and communications with transient stakeholders. Likewise the researcher's role was not initially discussed in communications with transient stakeholders (however it was not denied, and frequently emerged later in conversations with these stakeholders). Although it is

acknowledged that the merits of such a position may sometimes be open to debate⁷⁶, in the context of this research it is considered that they are defensible. None of the guidelines or standards mentioned above were contravened. When the researcher did venture into “private places” it was only with stakeholders aware of his role or where his membership was not misrepresented (see Adler and Adler, 1998:101). In addition the participatory nature of the research and the temporal, transient nature of these stakeholders meant that notifications of the research agenda were frequently impossible, or at the least impractical. Furthermore revealing the details of the research was considered unnecessary due to the unobtrusive approach (see Adler and Adler, 1998:100-101) and the confidential nature of the study (i.e. the fact that comments overhead or actions witnessed were not directly attributed to individuals).

It became evident in the early stages of the research that some stakeholders were very happy to contribute to the research but did not wish to be identified. This preference for confidentiality was due to a number of circumstances; including the highly-charged political situation (see Section 1.1.2) or the fact that the stakeholder’s personal contributions may be in direct conflict with his/her public (or personal) role or relationships. This request was conceded to, and as such individual identifiers have been removed from the material presented. This has been done with considerable diligence given the intentions of the researcher to present the findings of this study at a later date to stakeholders in the two communities.

However stakeholders were informed that the substance of their communications and the researcher’s observations would be attributed to someone in their stakeholders’ group. As such they consented that some of their contributions would be attributable indirectly to their wider stakeholder group, but none would be attributable directly to them as an individual. This same consent was renegotiated throughout the research if the researcher perceived the material to be particularly sensitive or if the stakeholder raised any concerns. These

⁷⁶ As Lewis 2003:69 states: “... there are different political and theoretical positions on the relationship between researcher and participant”.

undertakings on the part of the researcher have resulted in some compromise in the provision of contextual detail in the reporting of specific comments in the Results section. In some instances minor details have been omitted, or points made in a more general way in order to disguise identity (Lewis, 2003).

In summary, throughout the entire period of fieldwork, including the initial pilot study period, the researcher was mindful of, and gave due consideration to, ethical considerations. No person was coerced into taking part in this study. The researcher declared the purpose of the research where necessary and no fraudulent claims were made.

5.1.2 Weaknesses of the Approach and Compensatory Actions

This section examines the inherent weaknesses in the methodological approach adopted and the methods utilised by this study. The selected methodology was applied in the field in a manner which intended to utilise the various strengths whilst recognising and making allowances for the acknowledged weaknesses of the interpretivist and critical research paradigms.

The Ghorepani and Tatopani areas and the fieldwork time period presented access to the main players in tourism and sustainable development in the area. These emerging realities were continuously weighted and analysed using an iterative process whereby the researcher attempted to use multiple forms of data collected (e.g. visual observations, casual conversations, etc) using multiple data collection methods (see Section 4.2.3) and continuously revisited the data collected (by way of daily revision of the audit trail).

It was the intention that by repeatedly revisiting and challenging previously collected data and notations the researcher would be able to utilise a process which Mannheim (1952, in Hacking, 1998:59) referred to as ‘unmasking’ - where the various perceptions were not negated or refuted, but rather were continuously

(e.g. daily) broken down and bracketed and then re-constructed. This allowed for the analysis of the background to these perceptions - their origins, their reasons for existence and the function they served, rather than any ultimate predictive function. The vital importance of accuracy in the depiction of the various actors' perceptions was acknowledged, and this was addressed by way of the continuous audit trail mentioned above. The researcher acknowledges that there are highly problematic issues involved in using the researcher's abilities to determine the world views being gathered. However it is also recognised that in fact they are highly problematic issues in all forms of research (as Herder, 1778; in Berlin, 2000:168 observes, "we live in a world we ourselves create"), the difference being they are seldom addressed by other methodologies⁷⁷.

Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf (1988:467), in a notable study, identified a number of disadvantages with the methodological approach adopted by this research. However each of these can now be addressed in turn, in light of the field conditions and compensatory measures taken by the research practice. The disadvantages identified by Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf consist of: the longer time periods required for data collection; the importance of having a team of researchers; the time consuming nature of data analysis with no traditional reference points; the heightened need for attention to ethical issues; and the lack of academic reference points in what is a relatively young and emerging methodology.

Whilst in traditional anthropological terms this research was conducted over a relatively short period of time, the four and a half months the researcher spent in the field enabled him unconstrained access to the majority of stakeholders (see Section 4.2.1) over a sustained period of time. The initial pilot study period afforded the researcher time to determine, practice and refine the various research techniques that were used. Extensive study of the various cultural and ethical issues and contexts, as well as contact with gatekeepers (both official and

⁷⁷ Denzin with respect to ethnographic fieldwork, notes that "The writer can no longer presume to be able to present an objective, non-contested account of the other's experiences. Those we study have their own understandings of how they want to be represented" (1997:p.xiii).

unofficial) and decisions on time spent in each field area also took place during this period.

Following this the researcher was present in the field for the three distinct tourist seasons, namely the off-peak, shoulder, and peak trekking seasons, and the political conditions at the time resulted in manageable and in-depth access to the key stakeholders and their (sometimes changing) perceptions through all three of these trekking seasons (See Section 1.1.2). In addition the field settings (centred upon the villages) were also positive contributory factors towards continued prolonged access to the stakeholders. Lastly the ‘itinerant’ nature of many of the stakeholder groups (particularly trekkers, but also lodge owners, porters, guides etc) meant that further time in the field may not necessarily have yielded further data from these sources and degrees of saturation were achieved⁷⁸. As a consequence of these factors, it is believed sufficient time was spent in the field to enable the researcher generous access to the various stakeholders, and to enable the collection of sufficient data and data of significant quality.

It is the researcher’s contention that a team of researchers as advocated by Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf would in fact have proven counterproductive in the context of this research. The disruption to ‘the world of experience as it is lived, felt, (and) undergone’ (Schwandt, 1998:236) of the stakeholders in tourism in the area, and the alterations necessary to ‘normal’ patterns of behaviour, would present an unacceptable level of ‘falsity’ to the researchers. Further, it is the researcher’s contention that such a team would not be as readily accepted, especially over a continuous period, by the stakeholders and would encounter numerous obstacles in attempting to build rapport and empathy to a level which encouraged continued access to the multiple values held by the stakeholders. These contentions are made with reference to, and experience of, the cultural factors (including the underlying ‘culture’ of the area), and the size of the communities / villages in question.

⁷⁸ The levels of flux across environmental contexts (e.g. politically – due to the insurgency) must be acknowledged however (and will emerge later in the thesis).

Similarly, there was considerable variation between the researcher's cultural background and that of some stakeholders, and this resulted in the adoption of specific measures (as noted in Section 4.2.3). However there was also considerable variation between the cultural backgrounds of the stakeholders themselves. For this reason the ability of an ethnographic approach to meet the objectives of this study (with a researcher attempting to immerse himself into one culture) would have been limited, and would perhaps have resulted in difficulties accessing the views of other stakeholders in the area (see Appendix 5, also Black's (1991:170) quote in Section 4.2.3). The researcher's role as an outsider could additionally be perceived as a strength due to the flexibility allowed to foreigners, for example in distinctions of caste.

As Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf (1988) suggest the continual data analysis and revisiting in the field was time consuming, however again the field conditions were conducive. In the field the stakeholders were usually in bed reasonably early each night (generally by 2100 hours as a result of curfews due to the unstable political situation), allowing the researcher considerable time each night to write up (from note form), revisit and audit data. However data analysis post fieldwork did indeed prove time-consuming, and the absence of the traditional reference points Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf refer to was a contributory factor. However, by using multiple methods, (as outlined below) sources and types of data, and by revisiting the data sources (stakeholders) continuously in a variety of contexts (e.g. that of trekker, long term resident, etc), the researcher believes processes of confirmability were able to be employed.

This study took into account Dann, Nash, and Pearce's (1988:10) contention that research which replaces analytical comprehension with ideological belief does not demonstrate high levels of theoretical awareness⁷⁹. With the critical approach undertaken, there existed a danger that analysis would come secondary to ideological interpretation. However this risk was identified and the researcher's ideological position underwent considerable change due to early scrutiny in the

⁷⁹ As reflected in Sections 4.2.4 and 5.1.2.

field, and as a result of its secondary role to analytical comprehension (see Section 5.1). Furthermore, the ideological beliefs underpinning this research have been purposively transparent in the preceding chapters. Inherent in these chapters (and the following ones) is an appreciation that most scholarly accounts of sustainable development and tourism, and their relationship to underdeveloped nations have been produced by westerners, as this thesis has been⁸⁰. Indeed it is contended that this thesis has demonstrated an awareness of the ramifications of the fact that:

The psychology of the human condition is always the predicated set of assumptions on which all others rest. One says "I see things out there in such and such a way," neglecting to add what is even more fundamental: "I see them so because I have made such and such presumptions about what it means to see, to describe, to speak, to hear and so on and on".

(Bugental, 1967:5).

Finally, it was acknowledged that there were a number of ethical issues inherent in this research which may not exist in other research approaches (and/or not be acknowledged in them – see above). However it is believed these have been addressed in Section 4.3.1.

This section has thus outlined possible weaknesses of the methodological approach and methods adopted by this study and outlined actions taken where necessary to compensate for these weaknesses. The next section summarises this chapter.

⁸⁰ To paraphrase Mowforth and Munt (1998:18).

5.2 Emergent Understandings

5.2.1 Case Complexities

This section examines the ways in which the analytical framework was designed as a result of the complexities of the case. It does so first by examining the particularities of the case and highlighting some of the case specific processes involved. The influence of the pilot study's initial findings upon the conceptualisation of a research framework is then noted. The contextual basis of the research determined to some extent the design of the framework, and this influence is explored. Next, the problems inherent in applying customarily traditional western forms of analysis to the context are noted. Finally this section summarises this justification of the analytical framework developed for the research.

The analytical process of this study, and the coding framework it utilised, needed to account for the multi-dimensional nature of tourism; the fact that tourism involves a unique but “critical interplay among economic, political, environmental, and social elements” as Lea (1988:2) noted. The framing codes needed to reflect the fact that this “critical interplay” is perhaps more critical in so called majority world/ less developed environments due to a number of contextual factors⁸¹. The relationships and immediacies within environmental contexts were thus more tangible than was accorded to such cases in western tourism and/or development literature and policy frameworks (as further evidenced below).

However it was not only the macro and micro conditions that differed from occidental contexts, furthermore the “agents of change” (Wall, 1997b:1) which

⁸¹ For instance the economic context – the failure of individual tourism economies - could necessitate a return to subsistence lifestyles for some local actors, in an economy without any formalised social security or welfare support - to name but one example.

impacted upon these conditions and the actors involved (and their perceptions of these conditions and agents) were fundamentally different from those in western environments. This variation between the local contexts and agents of change and those of a western case resulted in the adoption of codes which were broader and more general than would perhaps have been the case in a western situated study. It emerged as a necessity to embrace the various environmental contexts and agents and their critical interplay in the field, in order to incorporate variations between the field and the occidental context, as demonstrated by the following two examples of occurrences in the field;

5.1.1.A GHOREPANI OBSERVATION: V [guidebook author] said there had been a few lodges shut down since his last visit – named the O lodge for example. However this lodge wasn't shut – it was merely closed for 12 days for funeral observations following the ama's death. Because it was a bit out of the way (and already quiet) if he wrote in his guidebook it was closed it could spell the end for the lodge, at exactly the time they needed the income. V also said that the food in L had been terrible, but S the chef was away in his home village for his mother's funeral, and he was probably the best dal-baht chef in Ghorepani. How many times do these misrepresentations occur with such major impacts for those involved?

5.1.1.B POST FIELDWORK NOTES: In March 2002 the Ghar Khola ACAP checkpoint (between Tatopani and Ghorepani) was ordered to close by the Maoists. (see Section 1.1.2). In October 2002 the Ghandruk ACAP headquarters were blown up. After this, all the staff were ordered to vacate ACAP offices and checkpoints in the southern region of the ACA, including Ghorepani. In 2003 5 lodge owners in Ghandruk were abducted by the Maoists, 3 were released, 2 were tortured and killed, in response to the RNA's strafing of the area from a helicopter previously.

As Wall states (1997b:1), "...it is artificial to abstract tourism from this broader context". As such, it became apparent during the pilot and subsequent field research period that by ignoring the connections between these forces and agents, stakeholder's perceptions of these, and the various complexities inherent in these interrelationships, the study would be fundamentally flawed.

Hence the development of coding categories was determined primarily by context as opposed to western theory or policy. Despite a rejection of reductionist occidental frameworks of the interrelationships between tourism, development and environment, this research remains a western conceptualisation of these

issues, and as such is rooted in, and a product of, western theory and practice.

Given the difficulties surrounding the concept of ‘community’ representation⁸² for example, together with the researcher’s background and the focus of this study, the embedding of it within a western worldview was unavoidable, and certainly less open to misrepresentation. The coding frames developed still acknowledge that current theory, policy and planning in tourism and development is operating within overarching western hegemonic power structures, yet they also give voice to the understandings, interpretations and actualities of the field by their deliberate width of scope and emergence from field issues.

As is expanded upon in the next section, the initial codes were predominantly not direct distinctions provided by the stakeholders in the field. They nevertheless mostly arose out of the interviews, discussions, and observations etc, carried out in the field and have their roots in the stakeholders’ conceptualisations of it. The conceptual framework was developed with the intention of providing an interface between wider western understandings of the field and local interpretations of it.

In addition it is envisaged that the broader and less specific nature of the framework used is beneficial in that it is less ‘reductionist’ in nature and more able to deal with the complexities and overarching forces present. However, all such conceptualisations are by necessity reductionist, and as such there is considerable ‘fluidity’ between the framing concepts used.

5.2.2 Theorising Field Practices

The previous section justified the method of data reduction and analysis with reference to the complexities and particularities of the field situation, and the disparities between them and both the theory and policy of tourism and

⁸² As alluded to in Section 3.4, including access, but particularly regarding definitions, and continuity of the conceptual entity of ‘community’ in the local/global debate.

sustainable development, and traditional (i.e. quantitative and dualist) methods of data analysis critiqued in Chapter 4.

The analytical approach adopted by this study employed well-established and recognised techniques; the use of analytical coding over stages having been promoted by a number of authors⁸³. The first stage post-fieldwork involved a process referred to by Strauss and Corbin (1990:61) as “open coding”. This was applied to all documents and data sets including transcripts of interviews, observations and journal entries. It was concerned with “expressing data and phenomena in the form of (*initial*) concepts” (Flick, 2002:177). It involved the examination of the data set line by line and the attribution of categories/codes to them, or as Flick (2002:178) refers to them, “units of meaning”. This was in order that “each discrete incident, idea, or event” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:63) was given a clear signifier which could represent the occurrence.

After the identification of these initial provisional concepts, they were revisited and continually compared (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:62). Codes that suggested a connection to the same phenomena were grouped together, into what Maxwell, (2005:98) labels “etic categories”. It is important to note that these represented “general or abstract categories” (ibid) and avoided the use of any organisational categories⁸⁴ (see Maxwell, 2005:97) established prior to the data collection. Such organisational categories were employed initially to guide the data collection methods and enquiries only, and could perhaps be more accurately referred to as ‘topics’ (see McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, in Maxwell, 2005:97).

As such the categories which through the above process ‘emerged’ from the data were not descriptive of it; rather the abstract and general categories which emerged were developed to provide a means of developing an understanding of occurrences in the field. In this respect the tendency (and weakness) of some

⁸³ Including perhaps most prominently; Strauss and Corbin (1998), Guba and Lincoln (1998), and Flick (2002).

⁸⁴ For example “tourism”, “sustainable development”, “impacts” etc.

coding procedures to describe rather than elucidate was avoided (Schwandt, 2001:27).

The second stage involved a process similar to that referred to by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as 'axial coding'. The codes and categories generated in the first stage were compared and assessed against each other with the aim of identifying thematic connections and hence emergent themes. This process was not carried out in isolation to the first stage; while it is represented as a different procedure, in practice the researcher alternated between the two stages. Coffey and Atkinson's (1996:140) notion of the "interweaving" of analysis is again perhaps illuminative of the process that occurred, in that it involved a progression based on a reflection on conclusions generated from the two stages. In this respect the process was removed from the "straightforward, algorithmic process" which Schwandt, (2001:27) identifies as problematic of some coding approaches.

The third and final stage, was similar to that which Strauss and Corbin (1990) labelled 'selective coding'. The aim of this stage was to identify and detail the core categories around which the other 'sub' categories could be grouped, in the process removing those categories which were not of relevance to the study (Flick, 2002:182). The aim was thus to develop the particulars of the '*case*', rather than of the individual, the topic of conversation or the interview. Following these steps, the core category or concept and its sub-categories were compared amongst each other, and their connections to each other and the central research focus examined.

The patterns and links helped the researcher to suggest and speculate theoretical conceptualisations. These were assessed in light of further examinations of the data and the previous stages of data analysis (ibid). This ensured that the data was "moulding" the theory, rather than the opposite (Berg, 2004:272). Analysis and interpretation of the data ended when no new codes or categories relevant to the research were emerging, and what Flick (2002:183) labels "theoretical saturation" had been achieved.

Although the process as represented above appears linear and straightforward, this is to assist in clarity and brevity of its presentation in this thesis. In practice it was time consuming and challenging. The three stages were not as demarcated as they are presented, and in practice the process, while systematic, was more ‘organic’ than “mechanical”. The coding, categories and theorising remained fluid and open throughout the three stages, and were not fixed and permanent⁸⁵. This was complicated by the amount of text and the need to continually revisit it at various stages of the analysis.⁸⁶

The nature of the data collection and analysis enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings. The longitudinal nature of the data collection and the immersion of the researcher within the field enabled revisiting and verification of data collected. These factors, along with the methods of data collecting, helped reduce researcher interference (and also inference). In addition the multiple sources consulted (i.e. the number of key actors within each stakeholder group) and the two different primary methods for collection employed (interviews/conversations and observations) meant that the codes and categories generated were evaluated across different data sets and hence the credibility of the findings enhanced. This comparison and contrast allowed for triangulation as advocated by Webb et al (1966).

5.2.1 Emergent Themes

This section specifies the steps involved in the reduction and analysis of the data set, and the specific methods utilised. These are primarily based upon the work of Attride-Stirling (2001) on the use of thematic networks as an analytical instrument in qualitative research, which in turn is indebted to the earlier work of Toulmin

⁸⁵ Indeed it is recognised now that the codes and categories eventually determined for this study remain signifiers of dynamic processes and not “fixed” labels (Schwandt, 2001:27).

⁸⁶ Nevertheless, this ability to revisit or “re-enter” the text is identified by Flick (2002:183) as a strength of the approach, in the flexibility it provides

(1958), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Corbin and Strauss (1990), Ritchie and Spencer (1994) “and many others” (Attride-Stirling, 2001:387). An important consideration and differentiation is that as Attride-Stirling (2001:387) observes, “thematic networks aim to explore the understanding of an issue, or the signification of an idea, rather than to reconcile conflicting definitions of a problem”. The following is a summary of the steps in the analysis of the data set.

The first step in the coding process (Stage 1) involved the reduction of the data. As opposed to doing this from a traditional occidental perspective whereby the objective was to rationalise these concepts (frequently into dualist conceptualisations) in order to quantify them, this research aimed instead to situate the interrelationships between agents and environmental contexts within framing ‘settings’. The aim was thus to provide a framing approach which would more accurately and specifically reflect the wider contextual background within which these complexities took place, and more accurately qualify (as opposed to quantify) the spheres in which they had occurred.

A “*Coding Framework*” (see Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 9) and a total of 28 explicit codes were thus developed (Step 1) These were based primarily upon the initial emergence of broad issues arising from the field data, but also upon salient issues highlighted by the literature in Chapters 1-3 and relevant in the chosen field area (e.g. ‘hegemony’). As such the coding framework was primarily context specific and conceptual, and consequently any item (e.g. an observation, quotation, or notation) could be catalogued across codes. This approach of framing the understandings, interpretations and actualities of the field after they had emerged from the context of the fieldwork (see Glaser, 1978) was advantageous as it allowed the results of the research to be analysed/examined within the context of a framework cast from the understandings, interpretations and actualities of these interrelationships and complexities themselves, and hence best able to situate and depict them.

In other words, the framework arose/emerged out of the fieldwork, as opposed to

situating the fieldwork in ‘prefabricated’ codes or classifications, such as those traditionally favoured by occidental tourism studies (e.g. the impacts of tourism). It enabled the framework to represent more accurately the context within which the interrelationships and complexities of the field were taking place, the way that the contexts of tourism, development and the environment were working through and on each other and in turn being worked on and through, and the context in which the understandings, interpretations and actualities of the stakeholders were being accessed. Furthermore, this also enabled the researcher to remain sensitive to the context in which the research was occurring, retaining an open mind about the themes, whilst also grounding the data empirically (Miles and Huberman, 1994:58).

Following the development of a coding framework, these resultant codes were applied to the data. The data was dissected into manageable segments, including sentences, notations, or brief passages dependant upon attributable meaning. This process was relatively straightforward but time consuming and involved an analysis of the data from interview journals, notation journals, a daily diary, and scrap paper notations, with reference back to them to ensure accuracy and for contextual cues.

In Stage 2, the coded data set was revisited and the subsequent “*Preliminary Themes*” (Appendix 9) which emerged were abstracted. In this phase the revisiting of the coded text allowed a focus to be placed upon these codes, and the subsequent emergence of further patterns and relationships. Following this, the resultant themes identified were further refined to remove repetition, yet ensured that the concepts which had emerged were accounted for and encapsulated conceptually and contextually within the themes. Following the example of Attride-Stirling (2001) a notation was kept of the ‘*Issues Discussed*’ and textual record which contained that theme (be it an observation, a diary entry or a quotation for example). As Attride-Stirling (2001:395) notes, “thematic analyses are equally applicable in analyses with a focus on commonalities, differences and/or contradictions”. However the focus of this part of this research was on the

individual key actors, with reference to their perceptions of the processes, relationships and contexts related to tourism and sustainable development in their village. As such, although the initial coding process developed uniform codes, the issues discussed and the subsequent themes to emerge showed considerable variation (however these have not been included in this thesis due to space constraints). Again such a short précis of the process cannot account for the fact that this process was particularly time consuming. Yet it resulted in a group of major themes that offered a profile of the central concepts to emerge from the text.

Stage 3 involved a further key level of refinement of the analysis. First, the themes which emerged from the previous steps were arranged into groups with a shared thread. These were primarily on content, but also on occasion based on theoretical purposes. The number of themes in the resultant groups was based upon the issue; if there is no other theme focussed around the same issue then there is only one theme in that group. The identification of these '*Basic Themes*' enabled the distinguishing of '*Organising Themes*' (Attride-Stirling 2001:392) which were core shared issues underlying the groupings of these themes. These were identified and a descriptive label was attributed to them. Following this step, '*Global Themes*' were then deduced which encapsulated the principal claim of the earlier groupings of themes. Following the emergence of these global themes, the next step involved the diagrammatic representation of each of them in order to create a thematic network (An example of one of these resultant networks around a single global is presented for each actor in the following section). The final step in this stage involved the re-examination of the text segments with coding in their original context to ensure that the above stages reflected and were supported by the content of the data.

In Stage 4, the researcher revisited the text through the lens of each of the global themes (i.e. each of the thematic networks) individually. Each part of the network was referenced with examples (e.g. quotes, observation, notations) from the field which helped to 'flesh out' the network and provide a descriptive account to it, yet also simultaneously offered another level of analysis in providing a deeper

exploration of the text and an illustration of further underlying patterns which emerged.

Stage 5 involved the documenting of the key patterns which emerged as underpinning each network. This enabled a more focused, yet well-rounded conceptualisation of the key themes and issues (founded upon the examples of the previous stage) to emerge from the data. The final stage (Stage 6) involved the interpretation of patterns and central themes existing across all networks. It analysed these in light of their relationship to the current theory in the field. The subsequent findings were used to address the aims and objectives of the research, based upon the patterns, themes and issues which arose from the data.

This section has provided a brief synopsis of the stages involved in the research analysis, explaining the various steps involved in each. The outcome and consequences of the final three stages is best illustrated through the use of direct examples, and these are presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

5.3 Summary

The first part of Chapter 5 reflected on the research process. Section 5.1.1 summarised the ethical issues faced by the researcher in the field and the approach to these issues taken by the researcher. Section 5.1.2 then noted the potential weaknesses of the approach utilised by this study, and outlined the actions taken by the researcher to alleviate or compensate for these weaknesses. The contextual circumstances (e.g. the political situation at the time) were found to alleviate many of these weaknesses. In addition the self-reflective nature of the research was determined to be a strength of the approach.

Section 5.2 identified the emergent understandings of the study. In Section 5.2.1 these included the identification of specific case complexities, for example the multi-dimensional nature of tourism and the immediate and direct impacts of it on the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani, as the principal development option in an undeveloped nation. Section 5.2.2 detailed the procedures subsequently utilised to analyse the fieldwork data. These owe a principal debt to the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Corbin and Strauss (1990). Although the coding system utilised was based upon the authors cited above, Appendix 9 contains an example table and illustrates the use of terminology based on the work of Attride-Stirling (2001) for clarity.

CHAPTER SIX

FIELD OPERATIVE FORCES

6.0 Introduction

Key premises to emerge from the fieldwork included the contexts of time and change and the power of external forces and their influences. These external forces and their influences were perceived by the actors to be determining the form that tourism and its impacts took in the Ghorepani and Tatopani areas of the Annapurna Conservation Area.

Section 6.1 details the contexts of time and change and how they framed the stakeholders' conceptualisations of sustainable development and tourism in the area. As these frames were stakeholder-specific, they are examined with reference to the actors concerned. Section 6.2 examines the external forces determined by key actors in the area to be deciding outcomes within the area. The core theme of 'External Forces' which emerged has been examined by analysing its sub-themes and specifically stakeholders' perceptions of them. This best demonstrates the variations between these forces and the emphasis each key actor group placed upon them.

The final section (Section 6.3) summarises the scope of Chapter 6.

6.1. Time and Change

The perceptions, actions, and behaviours of the various actors in Ghorepani and Tatopani were all a product of, and situated within, a context of time and change. The relationship between these two issues and notions of sustainability is inherent in the conceptualisations of ‘sustaining’ an entity over time and change (see Section 1.3); however they emerged from the field usually independently of notions of sustainability as key determinants of the actors’ constructs.

Section 6.1 details the ways in which the determinants and perceptions of time and change were influencing actors, and in turn shaping their effects on the environmental contexts and issues of tourism and sustainable development in the area. However it does not detail the depth of experience, reasons for it or ramifications of it for the stakeholders, nor the principal issues it creates in the area. These are outlined further in the sections below.

6.1.1 Trekkers

Tourism within the ACA is highly transient in nature, and as a consequence there is a subsequent lack of depth to trekkers’ experiences and knowledges of the area. In the years since the inception of the ACA the area has seen significant increases in tourist numbers (see Section 1.2.2). These tourists spend a comparatively large number of average visitor nights in the ACA as a whole; however the very nature of trekking means that this category of actors is extremely transitory in nature. This is reflected in an estimated average of one visitor night (for trekkers) spent in the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani (based on informal observations during the field period but supported by the research of Banskota and Sharma, 1995; and Nepal et al, 2002) with an occasional second night spent in Tatopani due primarily to the hot springs and/or recovery from the Ghorepani to Tatopani trail.

There were key ramifications of this transience for trekkers. This section examines the nature of the trekkers' relationship to the area, their stake in it and their attachments to it, the context within which this occurred and the outcomes of it. These emerged as core elements in the study of the trekkers' relationship to the wider issues of sustainable development through tourism in the area, and were largely determined by temporal issues as outlined below.

Trekkers can perhaps best be comprehended as passing *over* the areas of Ghorepani and Tatopani, rather than *through* them. Rather than simply reflect an alternative semantic, this provides a more accurate depiction/representation of the highly ephemeral nature of the trekkers' individual visits.

The transitory nature of the trekkers' visit to the villages had significant impacts upon their attachments to the area. The fact that the trekkers were passing *over* the area prevented them from establishing a basis for realisation of the local 'actuality' (see Section 1.1.1) and/or experience. The trekkers' relationships to the area were subsequently marked by the superficiality of their impressions of the native lifestyle; and experiences which did not resemble or reflect the reality of experiences for local actors. Trekkers individually did not become part of, nor were they in a position to appreciate the fabric of community life in the area. They were not able to determine what local indigenous life experiences were routinely like and what they encompassed.

The physical, cultural, social and economic contexts of the area were in effect a backcloth for the trekkers' superficial experiences of local realities. Trekkers consequently gained impressions of the area that were unconstituted, but importantly, they were often not aware of the superficiality of these views. Despite the fact that these impressions were frequently inaccurate or misleading, the temporary nature of the trekkers experience of the area (and the lack of depth in interactions) meant that these impressions usually went unchallenged.

Field Notation 6.1.A clearly expresses a view commonly expressed amongst many trekkers of the romanticisation of local residents' lifestyles, with fresher food and less stress. However, such a view does not acknowledge the deficiencies in diet and the very real threats (and stress) lodge owners faced from competing sides with competing agendas in the political struggle and declining economic returns for example.

6.1.1.A TREKKER: He said he questioned which living standard was better, the Nepali one from the past historically, or the "First World" one. He said that he acknowledged the historical Nepali lifestyle was physically tougher and "they might only live to 40 or so" but he said their lifestyle while they had it was better - less stressful, more carefree with fresher food and more time in a better environment.

Such impressions were not confined to lifestyles however (see Section 7.2). It is recognised and acknowledged that trekkers' purpose in the area was not to gain an in-depth understanding of local experiences. However a key point was that trekkers were unaware of the superficiality of the understandings they did possess, and the depth and complexities of local life for which these understandings did not cater.

As a consequence of their transitory nature and the touristic experience, most trekkers were unable (or disinclined) to form enduring attachments to individuals, the community or its environments / environmental contexts. Hence the trekkers as individuals could not accurately be referred to as long-term 'stakeholders' in tourism and development in the area, nor could their relationship be construed as one in which they were a part of a permanent 'community'. Whilst the *industry* might have had a stake in the area over time, the individual tourist (and by extension tourists) did not. Nevertheless, while the trekkers' association with the area was very much short term, their natural environmental visions for the area were long term and preservatory in nature as Field Notation 6.1.1.B. records:

6.1.1.B OBSERVATION: Trekkers commonly talking of the need to 'preserve' the natural environment – meaning keep it in an unchanged natural state.

The tourists were by necessity (of the tourism experience) removed from and absolved of the present problems of poverty, disease and hardship present in the area. However they were also removed, or removed themselves, from the long term resource issues of the area and future conflict within the environmental contexts which their actions may have contributed to. The frequently indirect and cumulative nature of their impacts upon the environmental contexts (and tourism impacts generally) coupled with the trekkers' preoccupation with the present, immediacy and gratification of their current needs/wants (due to the temporary nature of their visit) increased this removal:

6.1.1.C OBSERVATION: Most trekkers arriving in Ghorepani at around 4pm – having a hot shower then a tea/coffee, and waiting for dinner – all of which are heated by firewood – Sometimes asking “Do you have hot water?” when they arrive at lodge before deciding on whether to stay... but can still [they feel] legitimately express concern about deforestation because they haven't cut down the trees themselves... or note absence of alternative fuels without questioning why...”.

Apart from a few isolated examples, trekkers had no commitments or stake in the longer term development or tourism of the villages, although the next chapter suggests that trekkers' requirements as a whole were increasing over time. Trekkers thus viewed their trek as it was; a single experience and the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani were perceived as a snapshot in their histories. Issues of tourism, development, continuation and change were assessed superficially using the trekkers' predetermined constructs, and these assessments and subsequent actions were not (and in the context of their tourist experience unable to be) subject to recourse or further investigation.

6.1.2 Lodge Owners

The lodge owners of Tatopani spent considerable time away from the area – frequently spending the monsoon/summer season and winter in other homes in either Pokhara or Kathmandu. The majority of the lodge owners in Ghorepani also had second homes, with those who had served in the British Gurkhas frequently owning homes in Pokhara, and other lodge owners owning homes in their original village of Khibang. Some Tatopani lodge owners also owned additional land in their respective home areas. As such, many of the lodge owners spent much of the year away from their lodge, with some returning for all of the spring or autumn (i.e. the peak trekking periods) and some for parts of these seasons.

Issues of time and change were interpreted by the lodge owners of Tatopani and Ghorepani through a perspective which was largely fatalistic in nature. There was a fatalistic attitude towards the external forces (explored in the following section) and their impacts that was remarked upon by a number of lodge owners, e.g.:

6.1.2.A LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “There is no predictability – it is like a yo-yo”.

The lack of perceived control over these forces, accompanied by the lack of stability or consistency of impact of these forces (especially those relating to political forces and structures in both villages, and natural forces in Tatopani) resulted in a sense of fatalism which impacted upon the lodge owners planning and intended future actions. Although the political conflict at the time of the research and its ramifications had undoubtedly exacerbated such an attitude, there was evidence that such a fatalistic attitude towards external forces had been prevalent in the area before the current crisis, and had its origins elsewhere.

The lodge owners were resigned to the changes that future events out of their control would bring to their lives. However they appeared to apply this attitude

more to processes within the ACA and local to the village (of either Ghorepani or Tatopani) than either to the larger towns or to their home village. Events within Ghorepani or Tatopani and related to tourism and associated forces appeared eminently more unpredictable. One example for the lodge owners of Tatopani was the road from Beni to Jomson being constructed, which would eventually pass through the ACA and Tatopani:

6.1.2.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “So the road from Jomson will mean the tourism industry is destroyed – so what do you do?”

The lodge owners’ tendency to return to these locations in the trekking off-season, particularly the lodge owners of Ghorepani (and frequently during the trekking season, whereby they would place family members/cooks/managers in charge of their lodges) would perhaps signify a lack of long-term direct attachment amongst many of the lodge owners of Ghorepani (and to a lesser extent Tatopani) to the village. Part of the reason for such a lack of attachment to the village amongst the lodge owners of Ghorepani, can perhaps be found in the fact that none of the lodge owners was born or raised in the village (see Section 1.2.2 and Appendix 5), with a similar situation existing amongst some lodge owners in Tatopani. This form of transhumance looks set to continue and perhaps become even more prevalent in the future. The young of both villages, though sometimes born in the village, spent considerable time outside the village in either Pokhara or Kathmandu, and thus many of their attachments are formed outside the area.

As Quote 6.1.2.C illustrates, the lodge owners viewed the tourism industry as a young industry, with many of them not viewing it as permanent or long-term.

6.1.2.C LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The future of tourism as we know it has a deadline – so long term planning doesn’t have a future...”.

However this appeared to be exacerbated by the political-economic climate, and the building of the road through Tatopani. Tourism was perceived as a less stable form of subsistence than traditional farming by lodge owners in Ghorepani, and some lodge owners in the village viewed the business as unsustainable economically in the short term (see Quote 6.1.2.D), over and above any concerns about its long term economic sustainability (this was related once more to concerns about the political-economic situation of the area).

6.1.2.D LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “It [tourism] has changed [encouraged] the villagers into false sense of security – money was – easier money than farming – people in village will starve that haven’t got a business to fall back on”.

Such views were based upon the situation at the time of the research, when some lodge owners claimed they were in actuality losing money whilst operating. It was also perhaps due to a romanticised attraction to or view of the past – the lodge owners of Ghorepani as previously mentioned had spent the majority of their working lives up to that point in the Gurkha regiments of the British and Indian armies or in similar security roles (e.g. the Singapore or Hong Kong police forces). The income from tourism constituted disposable income; whereas subsistence farming (which was the basis of farming in the area) implies a lack of such income.

Lodge owners in Tatopani did not share these concerns to the same degree, as they stated that they (like many other Thakali) had money stored. Despite perceiving this, lodge owners of the bigger, more successful lodges in both villages were usually considering future developments of their lodges, which they perceived as necessarily in an environment where tourists were increasingly demanding more facilities of a higher standard:

6.1.2.E LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Every year [it] is changing – [in the] last two years it has changed a lot. [It] changes according to tourist’s demands”.

This was occurring in a subsequent environment of increasing competition and decreasing cooperation amongst the lodge owners. Lodge owners who owned the smaller, less high-profile and / or older lodges were focusing more upon present capacities and the present political-economic situation, but expressed alarm and dismay at these increasing levels of competition and decreasing levels of cooperation (see Section 7.2). Although the lodge owners of Ghorepani frequently viewed the future economic conditions with some degree of pessimism, they generally viewed the outcome of the political situation with some optimism, although they usually could not forecast an outcome. The lodge owners of Tatopani were principally concerned with the construction of the road, and believed this would have more impact than the political situation at the time of the research.

6.1.2.F LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The nature of the business will change, for sure – the main issue is the road, and how to prepare yourself”.

Although the lodge owners of both villages did not perceive the tourism industry to be sustainable over the long term in its present form, they overwhelmingly felt the majority of changes tourism had brought to the villages were positive.

6.1.2.G LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Tourism is helping with development in this area – definitely with education and health. Because most of the people involved in tourism need to communicate [with] and understand the needs of the trekkers, language skill[s] [are] a must, which means –education – learning. Hygiene [and] sanitation come to be an important thing in the household – clean water, toilet, shower – good sources of water – in trying to meet these you improve yourself overall”.

Lodge owners considered the futures of their villages to be difficult to assess and predict, and as a consequence any conceptions of sustainability were problematic. Static indications or identifications of sustainability were perceived as problematic due to the very nature of the concept. As one lodge owner noted:

6.1.2.H LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Sustainability is a moving target”.

Individual and long-term planning and visions of the future frequently revolved around locations and enterprises external to the area, for example employment in foreign countries, and investment and construction of property in Pokhara or sometimes Kathmandu.

6.1.2.I LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “The only way to get ahead in Nepal is to get out of Nepal”.

6.1.3 Guides

Guides in the research area possessed an attachment to the area similar to that of trekkers, in that they too could be said to be passing *over* the area as opposed to *through* it. Like trekkers, the attachment of most guides to the area was temporary in nature (almost all guides were from locations and cultures outside the Annapurna Conservation Area). However there appeared more depth to the guides’ attachments to the area due to their deeper knowledge of and familiarity with the local environmental constructs and contexts borne through greater experience of them. It was sometimes engendered through repeated visits to the area; sometimes through shared experiences derived from their ethnic social and cultural backgrounds, and/or occasionally through increased interaction with the local populace⁸⁷.

There were recurring premises in the guides’ assessments of temporal issues and change and continuity in the area. Most guides believed tourism to be

⁸⁷ Although this was also often largely culturally dependant, as the relationships between guides and locals indigenous to the area were reliant on perceived similarity in culture, caste, and social and economic status (see Section 7.2 and Appendix 8).

engendering positive change economically in the area; however this was sometimes qualified with negative changes in the other environmental contexts.

There was a recurrent optimism amongst the guides about the long term sustainability of the area as a tourist enticement due to its aesthetic and cultural uniqueness. However there were some doubts expressed by guides about the influence tourism was perceived to be having on the local culture(s) in particular. These doubts were particularly prevalent amongst guides of the Magar ethnic group who were from villages outside the research area. The Magar ethnic group was also the numerically dominant ethnic group in the research area (Informal Sector Research and Study Centre, 2001).

The single greatest contextual influence upon the guides' discourse and behaviour with regard to time was the audience present when the guides expressed their perceptions. Guides who mentioned matters of change and sustainability in the presence of their clients or other tourists customarily viewed tourism in a very positive light as a beneficial force for longer term development in the area, and frequently did not identify any perceived negative or harmful impacts associated with the industry (see Section 7.1).

However some guides expressed opinions at odds with these reflections when their clients and other trekkers were not present. On these occasions guides sometimes stated that they believed tourism was changing the local societies and cultures in a manner which was deemed negative. Often cited examples included the introduction to the area of 'hippyisms' amongst the young of the villages (i.e. a lifestyle amongst the young of the villages reflecting those of western hippies of the 1960's and based upon leisure) and an excessive emphasis upon economic considerations by lodge owners (see Section 7.1):

6.1.3.A GUIDE GHOREPANI: The trekkers' greatest effect on the locals is to put down their culture, the locals quickly become more like foreigners than those indigenous to the area. The culture is slowly changing to one of "hippyisms".

6.1.3.B GUIDE GHOREPANI: “[The] Locals [are] more interested in making money than the environment”.

Most guides believed tourism within the Annapurna Conservation Area was sustainable in the long term principally due to the perpetuity of its mountains and associated scenery, but also to the perceived uniqueness of its culture (usually this was identified in the singular) when compared to that of the western societies in particular.

6.1.3.C GUIDE TATOPANI: “It’s a universal truth that the Annapurna area will be useful for tourism forever, because the mountains will [be]...”.

6.1.3.D GUIDE GHOREPANI: “The views, cultural attractions and other things mean the tourism in Nepal is sustainable – the political situation affects it, but it is the adventurous people who come anyway”.

Whereas most guides were optimistic about the long term sustainability of tourism in the area, many guides saw potential difficulties, particularly in the short term, surrounding the political crisis in the country.

6.1.3.E GUIDE TATOPANI: “Tourism can be digo [sustainable] because nobody can take that mountain and build it which are in Annapurna area. So that it has a future. But it depend[s] on political situation also”.

Experienced guides also identified problems of overpopulation - of locals but particularly of trekkers - in the area in peak seasons as potential threats to the sustainability of the area and its tourism.

6.1.4 Local Management Agencies

As the principal management authority for the Annapurna Conservation Area, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project can be viewed as a key agent of change in the area as further explored in Section 6.2. The level and depth of engagement with Ghorepani over time of the resident ACAP officials varied (see Appendix 5), as one of the ACAP officials was of Pun Magar descent, and was in fact related to most of the other villagers of Ghorepani. The other ACAP officials were from different ethnic groups from other parts of Nepal.

Perceptions of ACAP's efficacy in engendering sustainable development through tourism are further explored in the following sections. This section specifies how the dynamics of time and change were a core issue in examining ACAP's relationship to, and ability to stimulate sustainable development through tourism in the area.

Although ACAP was granted a ten year extension to its remit in 2002, the staff of ACAP in the Ghorepani and Tatopani region viewed the project in its present guise as having a limited lifespan. Staff members perceived three possible future outcomes for the organisation:

6.1.4.A ACAP GHOREPANI: "One - Government may terminate the project [ACAP] forever. Two – [the] Government may take [over the programme] itself. Three - Communities take it over. ACAP is working on the third".

The staff stated they were working on the communities eventually taking the project over, despite the fact that the successful completion of this outcome could in all probability result in the ACAP staff themselves being made redundant.

6.1.4.B ACAP GHOREPANI: "ACAP has a plan to hand over the projects to the local people – when ACAP leaves them they should take over – ACAP is giving them lots of training. ACAP are playing a facilitating role".

This should be considered in light of the points regarding the attractiveness of NGO employment positions made in Section 1.2.1; in light of the fact that the underemployment rate in Nepal in 2001 was 47% (United Nations Development Programme, 2004:140) with more than 80% of the workforce engaged in subsistence agriculture (Asian Development Bank, 2006:para.4). It should also be considered in light of the fact that the skills the ACAP staff had learnt were not always readily transferable, and in light of the fatalistic attitudes detailed below.

The local ACAP staff believed such an outcome would be dependent upon the communities reaching a state of development whereby they could assume the responsibilities of ACAP in the area. Although the staff perceived ACAP as having been working towards a scenario of community control since its inauguration 16 years ago, ACAP was not self-sufficient and was still reliant on funding from non-governmental organisations external to the area. This suggests any transfer of control from ACAP in its present form would be potentially problematic.

A change of focus in the project's management of the area in the last year was perhaps the most significant change in relation to this research that was identified by ACAP staff working in the research area. The staff noted changes in the project's focus from sustainable development of the entire area principally through tourism management to the economic uplifting of the areas off the tourist trail using methods other than tourism:

6.1.4.C ACAP GHOREPANI: "Ideas have changed from focusing on tourism management in last 10 years. [The] Benefits were only going to those on trail. [The] idea is focusing on agriculture and nature resource management. Problems of jealousy have [arisen] due to people missing out".

The fact that such a high profile example, an acclaimed case study of sustainable development through tourism (see Section 1.1.1.) has changed its focus due to the perceived failure of tourism to engender wider sustainable development is worthy

of note. Such a change of focus, or even a perceived change of focus, obviously has significant ramifications.

Other than this noteworthy change of focus, the staff did not perceive ACAP itself to have undergone significant change since its inception, but believed it had been responsible for significant change in the Annapurna Conservation Area and in the village of Ghorepani. They named a number of changes they claimed responsibility for in the past and detailed future possible changes related to tourism and sustainable development which were primarily technological in nature (see Section 7.2). However they believed the full extent of their past measures and implementations was not recognised or appreciated by the local community:

6.1.4.D ACAP GHOREPANI: “Money from tourism is obvious and transparent, but results from ACAP to the community are not always as obvious or as flashy – [e.g.] school, and better water sources [etc]”.

ACAP staff perceived a desire for purely economic benefits amongst many lodge owners and an accompanying intransigence amongst them to changes not associated with this inclination (see Section 7.1).

Associated with this there was a sense of frustration evident amongst the staff of ACAP in Ghorepani which although perhaps not as fatalistic in nature as the attitudes to future change of the lodge owners, was nevertheless potent. This was particularly attributed to the intransigence of lodge owners to the changes mentioned above, and to the lack of interest or initiative of sections of the community in relation to ACAP-derived strategies for the area:

6.1.4.E ACAP GHOREPANI: “Mothers Group just want to sit around and play cards all day”.

The ACAP staff foresaw future positive change as a result of their actions and implementations to be under threat in further ways. Possible political threats from outside the area were perceived to be indirect, yet capable of causing continual interference and disruptions to ACAP-inspired implementations in the area. Whilst ACAP staff voiced confidence at the time of the fieldwork of this research that the political situation did not represent a direct threat this was perceived as a hollow confidence, and later events proved this to be the case. The political situation, and in particular the Maoist rebellion, was to later become a distinct and direct threat to the ACAP office in Ghorepani and the staff themselves⁸⁸.

A further key threat identified to the implementation of their policies by ACAP staff was the potential threat of unmanaged tourism. Addressing this threat, specifically that of unmanaged tourism generating negative changes upon the area, was perceived by the ACAP staff members to be central to ACAP's mission (see below), despite their observations of a change in focus of their organisation.

A final significant aspect of the local ACAP staff's perceptions was their conceptualisations of the changes related to tourism and development, and their influences. The local ACAP staff voiced views of tourism as a potential destroying force as opposed to simply a force of change, similar to that of guides mentioned earlier.

6.1.4.F ACAP GHOREPANI: "ACAP wants to develop tourism, but if it destroys the society or culture then it is not a good thing".

⁸⁸ Approximately one year after the completion of the fieldwork for this research, the Ghorepani field office of ACAP was burnt down by Maoist forces, as was the administrative centre in Ghandruk.

6.2 External Forces

“The actions being taken are merely adapting to what is happening outside the area by the hotel owners and by locals... there can be no certain long term planning in such a situation.”
(Lodge owner, Tatopani).

It is important to firstly note that the relevance of academia, and past academic and scholastic research to tourism and development in the area was discounted by the lodge owners of both villages. They perceived much of the information to be contained in the offices of NGOs (such as ICIMOD) in Kathmandu, where they believed it was totally irrelevant. The following quotes typified these views:

6.2.0.A LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Indicators [of development] are very academic – [they are] not written in the village. Sustainability [is] a moving target...The formula [regarding impacts on the environment] changes daily. Local people know more than experts, indicators don’t take account of socio-political factors. The people who wrote the book (“Districts of Nepal – Indicators of Development” ICIMOG, 1997) would do better to visit the villages”.

6.2.0.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “ICMOD – they have all the data – they are a source that can be tapped – but the people who know are not out in the field helping – they sit in their chairs and are happy for people to come to them, but the poor farmer in the field cant get to them – and also if the person brought them the findings to the field they would be redundant – the person would achieve more if they spent several years in the actual field.....One hour of practical work is equivalent to one year on the computer – [they are] removed from reality”.

Scholars (and in fact NGO officers) were considered to be reluctant to visit the field because of the field conditions. The findings of their research were viewed as inaccessible and out of the reach of those who needed it (a common example cited was the farmer in the field) while it was held in the offices of these institutions. Neither the research areas / specialities nor findings of past researchers in the field could be recollected; however some vague descriptions of personalities (especially those of other nations) were recalled.

Nevertheless the key players in tourism and sustainable development in the area were unanimous in their perceptions that forces outside their sphere of influence were determining outcomes related to tourism and sustainable development within the field area. However they differed in what they perceived these influences to be, and the extent to which they perceived their influences. Section 6.2 details these perceptions, focusing upon the eight themes (International, National, Regional/Local, Martial, Globalisation / Modernisation / 'Indianisation' / Westernisation Tourism Industry, External Media, and Geographical) to emerge from the fieldwork which have been categorised within a wider view of 'External Forces'. These were all based upon perceptions of the various key actors which implied an outside, uncontrollable influence.

There is obviously considerable crossover between categories and links between contexts which cannot be presented in the format required by this thesis. Forces operating due to the martial situation for example, represent forces at a national and regional/local level. However the division of the sections below represents and is based upon the results of the emergence of themes as detailed in Section 5.2. Thus these divisions are a result of the analysis of this research, and have their basis within the field. However the order in which they are presented does not purport to represent their significance; this differed between groups of actors (and to some extent within them).

6.2.1 International

External forces at an international political level were perceived to be impacting directly upon tourism and development in the area by one group of actors.

Lodge owners of Tatopani perceived the decision making and planning powers of their village, their VDC, and in fact their government to be largely insignificant in the face of political pressure from India and China. In the case of the ACA, this pressure was believed to be centred upon the national government's efforts to

construct a road through the Kali Ghandaki valley. Although the government was directly responsible for the construction of the road (the Royal Nepali Army was building it under contract), lodge owners perceived political forces at a macro level to be having a considerable bearing upon its development.

6.2.1.A LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The road has been in the envelope for the last 30 years – it is a big political game between China and India – the power is not with the VDCs; it is more with what China and India want.. So that is the main reason there is no real planning [etc] by government”.

The lodge owners of Tatopani believed that at an international level the rationale behind the road was that it was a method for China to access the Nepali consumer market, but more importantly the larger Indian consumer market (the intended road head was Pokhara, which is again connected by road to India).

Accordingly, any planning or policy-making for tourism and/or sustainable development in the area by local, district, or government authorities was viewed as relatively inconsequential. However the lodge owners’ perceived that the recent acceleration of the road’s construction (after periods of inactivity) was related more to the current political crisis at state level in the country (see below).

6.2.2 National

Assessments of the national government by the local actors in both villages were usually negative. The state government was seen to be deficient in both knowledge about and action within the areas of Tatopani and Ghorepani. The government’s efforts to construct the road were viewed as potentially the most significant of external forces by the lodge owners of Tatopani.

6.2.2.A LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The biggest issue will be [the] same factor – the road. - The road from India to Pokhara destroyed the salt trade – [In] India –[salt became] 20% cheaper”.

Despite the fact that construction of the road had reached Galaswar (Galeshor) and work on it had recently been accelerated, there had been no consultation with lodge owners, the tourism industry, or in fact the villagers about the road, and no clear idea of whether it would go directly through the village or not. The lodge owners actually perceived the road as beneficial to the general development of the area, in that it would lessen the cost of living for the local population and improve access to medical facilities for locals. However it was believed that while it would potentially increase the more culturally responsible Nepali tourism, it would at the least bring about a massive decline in the more lucrative western tourism in the area.

6.2.2.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The road will affect the westerners, but the road is the development of the country [it] should not be opposed. The beauty and the attractions will remain – maybe 50% of the tourists will still come. Domestic tourism will maybe increase 75%”.

Lodge owners in Tatopani alternatively perceived the renewed national government interest in the road as based in attempts by the government to gain favour with the locals it had neglected and who were turning to the Maoists movement; in attempts by the army to gain better road access to Maoist controlled areas; or in a combination of the two. They claimed the government had not identified what impacts the road would have, how to help the people displaced by the road, how to develop an alternative trekking trail, and other planning priorities. The lodge owners of Tatopani believed that this was evidence of the fact the government did not work on planning or policy-making terms, and that its planning was mostly ad-hoc, despite the fact the road had reputedly been mooted for almost thirty years.

6.2.2.C LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “The government don’t work on planning terms – they don’t identify what impact the road will have, how to help the displace[d] people, how to develop an alternative trail – most of it is adhoc”.

The lodge owners and shopkeepers perceived the government to constitute a less powerful external force in other areas than its role demanded:

6.2.2.D LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Which[ever] party is in – its up to the policy of the government – nobody is looking after this area as far as the government goes. The village very much looks after itself”.

6.2.2.E SHOPKEEPER TATOPANI: He said he heard the government say on the radio that tourism should be taken into the hill regions where the people were poor – it would help them. However he didn’t think this was being done around the Annapurna, and he said that the government wasn’t pushing it enough.

The lodge owners of Ghorepani believed the government felt that the presence of ACAP absolved it of any responsibility to the area, and those of Tatopani felt that the government could not be relied upon to deliver any assistance. Lodge owners from both villages condemned/criticised the lack of long-term planning for the area, and claimed decision-making at the government and VDC level was ad hoc and frequently ill-informed.

6.2.2.F LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “[The] Tourism minister doesn’t know anything – [He] relies on ACAP for the area. [The] Government side [is] very loose”.

Other key actors also believed the national government was directly influencing the realities of sustainable development and tourism in the area, but in different forms. The ACAP officials working in the area perceived the national government, through its rules and regulations, to be creating the overall management structure under which they operated, as illustrated in Quote 6.2.2.G. Although it was ACAP which was the management authority of the area (under

the aegis of the KMTNC), the national government was perceived on occasions to act unilaterally/without consultation in its regulating for the area at large, and this was viewed as problematic.

6.2.2.G ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “It is the government that makes the rules and regulations – even though ACAP manages the area, - the government makes the regulations – the government says ‘you (tourists) can go to Manang/Mustang area’ – there are no lodges, no facilities, no management programme, no local knowledge of tourism – big problem”.

At the same time, there was perceived to be little co-ordination or collaboration between ACAP and government departments or NGOs, although this had previously occurred. ACAP officials noted the collaboration with government departments, (such as the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation or the Nepali Tourism Board) on the ‘Visit Nepal Year’ promotion of 1998, but noted there were no such instances in recent times. Similarly, the seven trusteeships of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) (namely the UK, Germany, Canada, France, Japan, Norway, and Netherlands) were perceived to have been very active in the initial stages of the ACAP project, investing money in large schemes such as micro-hydro projects, but the consensus was that they were no longer working directly with each other or with ACAP – they were now merely trustees. Other Non-Governmental Organisations (e.g. the WWF, the Smithsonian Institute, and the UNDP), were also perceived to have been more involved during previous stages of ACAP’s tenureship, with less involvement and interest shown during the current period.

Furthermore, officials stated that although the KMTNC invested its money in larger scale schemes such as micro-hydro projects, they no longer worked directly with ACAP, and were also fulfilling a ‘trusteeship’ role only as illustrated by the following quote:

6.2.2.H ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “[The] King Mahendra Trust - they were very active at first. They invest their money in large projects like micro-hydro – they are not working together [with ACAP] now - they don’t work directly with ACAP – they are the trusteeships with ACAP”.

Further evidence of the perceived power of the national government as a force over the activities of ACAP and tourism and development in the area was the apparent power the officials perceived the national government held to decide the present structures and the future existence of ACAP.

The local ACAP officials noted the renewal of the ACAP programme in 2001 (when it was given a further ten years after 2002) as evidence of the government’s influence over ACAP and its future. The local officials of Ghorepani believed that when ACAP was next up for renewal the national government retained the power to decide whether the project was terminated, whether the government itself took the project over, or whether the local communities took the project over.

Although the local ACAP officials believed that their organisation was working on devolvement to the local community (See Section 6.1), they suggested that the government ultimately had design on control over ACAP and believed that in those circumstances the project would lose its autonomy. Concern was voiced that control by government and a consequent loss of autonomy for the project would result in the project being liable to corrupt practices and subsequent loss of support from local communities. A speculation was that it may have been due to the current (perceived) high national and international profile of ACAP and its base within the KMTNC that none of the above options had been taken adopted by the national government at the last renewal stage in 2001.

The trekking guides passing through the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani believed the national government was impacting upon the villages and the area, but believed these impacts were indirect and that they were insufficient. The guides perceived the government to be impacting upon the area primarily through

its training and licensing of guides. Yet many guides who did not have a trekking license (guides' estimates, observations and personal communications put this figure at more than 50% of guides) perceived the agency (the Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal - TAAN) which received the funds from license fees as having been established solely to generate income for its leadership and associated parties.

6.2.2.I GUIDE GHOREPANI: "Guides and porters should be trained properly and cheaply – training at the moment includes breakfast lunch and dinner and costs 10,000 – [the] money goes to TAAN. [It was] set up to gain money - [it] is the licensing agency. On top of the 10,000 is another 3000 for First Aid".

The training course itself (called "Trekking Guide Training") was regarded by these guides to be deficient, particularly in the areas of environmental awareness⁸⁹. The government training course was believed to be too expensive, and the "Basic Tourist Guide Code of Conduct" (see Appendix 10) not detailed enough to be effective.

Trekking guides travelling through Ghorepani and Tatopani also believed the government was neglectful in its planning and policy making for the area and was focussed upon other areas. Quote 6.2.2.J illustrates this rather lucidly, although the quote itself represents the view of an experienced (non-typical) guide educated to postgraduate level.

6.2.2.J GUIDE GHOREPANI: "The Government should have a proper plan in place, and proper policy. This plan should have checks on the performance of the NTB [Nepal Tourism Board]. What is the long term plan for tourism in Nepal? The proper plan they should have [should] be done on a national, regional, and local level".

⁸⁹ This should be considered in light of the work of Gurung, Simmons, and Devlin (1996) as noted in Appendix 5.

6.2.3 Regional / Local - ACAP

The ACAP officials noted another significant external, but more local, political force inherent in their own organisation. Although policy development was believed by the officials to be a shared responsibility of the management structure (see Quote 6.2.3.A), the Conservation Area Management Committees (CAMCs) were perceived to hold influential power external to the village of Ghorepani, and to be the major decision making bodies regarding tourism and development within the region (Quote 6.2.3.B).

6.2.3.A ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “KMTNC, ACAP, CAMC - The three of them develop policy”.

6.2.3.B GUIDE GHOREPANI: “CAMC – “Conservation Area Management Committee. - All the decisions made by this – all the power there”.

However this contradicted the power structure explained at other times by the same ACAP officials. Namely that the CAMC (Conservation Area Management Committee), the Women’s Development Committee, (WDC) and the Tourism Management Sub-Committee, (TMSC) approach the LMC (Lodge Management Committee) with an idea – but the LMC takes the initiative.

As Ghorepani was under the jurisdiction of the Ghandruk sectorial programme, this CAMC (i.e. based in Ghandruk) was perceived to be where the dominant policy influence for tourism in the village of Ghorepani (and the general area) resided. The significance of this for the locals of Ghorepani and its associated villages (as noted by lodge owners but not the ACAP staff – see 7.1.) was that it added an ethnic dimension to such decisions. As well as being the oldest (it was in fact the original ACAP headquarters) and the largest field headquarters (between 40-50 staff at the time), the Ghandruk ACAP office had many staff of a Ghurung ethnic background, as opposed to the Magar background of Ghorepani and surrounding areas.

The ACAP organisation in general was viewed by actors in the area in a variety of different, sometimes contrasting lights, as detailed in depth in Section 7.1.2. The ACAP officials viewed their organisation as a vitally important force upon tourism and development in the area, with its success or failure considered to be critical in determining the area's future.

The project was viewed by the local ACAP officials as both externally and internally driven (Quote 6.2.3 C). However their reflections (see Section 7.1.) and actions (limited interactions on a day to day basis between the non-Magars and the lodge owners for example – see Quote 6.2.3.D) and the perceptions of the local ACAP official contradicted this. They reflected a belief that the ACAP officials viewed their organisation as primarily an external force.

6.2.3.C ACAP GHOREPANI: “How we manage tourism – [the] structure of tourism – [it's] not just [the] local people or us...”.

6.2.3.D OBSERVATION: Ghorepani ACAP staff not mingling with locals to a very great extent – like little community within community. Except AO1 who is mixing only with immediate family.

The time dynamic (see Section 6.1) allowed trekkers only a superficial view of external agencies and forces operating in the area, and hence the majority of trekkers had a limited conception of the work of external agencies in the region. There were further reasons why the trekkers were not aware of the dynamics, the work and the impacts of ACAP, and hence did not perceive it as a significant external or internal force. These are detailed in depth in Section 7.1.2, when the role of ACAP and interrelationships of ACAP are further explored.

The village of Ghorepani, unlike Tatopani, was within the jurisdiction of ACAP. Although ACAP was premised as a community action project, in reality the lodge owners (and wider community) of Ghorepani viewed ACAP as a key external

force impacting upon tourism and development in the area. The extent to which these impacts were viewed as beneficial varied between lodge owners, but particularly between lodge owners and ACAP staff. These disparities sometimes resulted in disagreement at the LMC meetings between ACAP and lodge owners - culminating on one occasion during the research period in an attempt to directly negate the influence of ACAP.

6.2.3.E OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Lodge managers deliberately hold a surprise LMC meeting while [name - ACAP representative] is out of town— she is in Ghandruk and hears about it so changes her plans and rushes back to attend.

While some lodge owners believed ACAP to be doing some good work in the area, there was also a widespread belief that ACAP was not impacting upon the Ghorepani area to the degree it should be. This belief was based upon what the lodge owners perceived as the importance of Ghorepani as a tourist attraction and consequent revenue stream for the area.

6.2.3.F LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “ACAP has many problems but [are] doing well in Ghorepani. [But their] main office [is] in Ghandrung – [They] open[ed] [a] branch office in Ghorepani then open[ed] other offices – [They have] spent many many money in other places. ACAP has given 4 lakh [to Ghorepani], [the] mothers group, 2 lakh. [The] other offices very nice, but here [in Ghorepani], nothing”.

6.2.3.G LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “We are always telling ACAP to do something [in] Ghorepani – Ghorepani is main place tourists come – they [ACAP] collect 2000 lakh...”.

6.2.3.H LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “[LO5] says to ACAP – why don’t you fix the trail, [people get] broken arms etc. Only this year they [ACAP] will use the money [to fix the trail]”.

Although ACAP was thought to be carrying out effective work protecting the forests in the area, amongst lodge owners in the village there was a widespread belief that the organisation was guilty of profligate spending on its internal

administration and bureaucracy, and a suspicion of inherent corruption at higher levels.

6.2.3.I LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “ACAP [is] 100% ok to protect the forest – but when they collect the money – more than half goes to the office people – only 20% goes to the village areas. If the money went the right way it would be very good”.

6.2.3.J LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “ACAP also has corruption at the top – because it is easy to do – because village people have no education – so [they] don’t know how to ask where money goes”.

There was a perception amongst lodge owners in Ghorepani that ACAP had been instrumental in introducing new technologies to the village but had provided no back-up when they failed. Past failures of ACAP projects had damaged ACAP’s reputation – including the introduction of solar panels which had cracked under the extreme temperatures and proved ineffective, and a reforestation project where trees had suffered from stunted growth.

6.2.3.K LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “ACAP must arrange a technician to repair [the] electricity”.

Furthermore, lodge owners mentioned the ethnicity of staff members and their outside origins as evidence that ACAP was an external force. Additional problems the lodge owners of Ghorepani believed were inherent in ACAP reinforced their view that the organisation existed as an external and separate force rather than an internally driven community one.

6.2.3.L LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “ACAP [staff members are] mostly Gurung. – [It] first looks [at/to] – Ghandruk. Facilities go to Ghandruk”.

Finally, the structure of ACAP could be seen to be based on a Western NGO model (see below). While this was undoubtedly more appealing to western funding (and more successful in this regard) and western trekkers' sensibilities, it served to emphasise ACAP as an external agency. The socialist /communist ideals of the agency were at odds with its development along corporate lines (e.g. comparatively higher salaries paid to staff, four wheel drive vehicles utilised by their urban offices as the ACA had no roads, etc).

However in this respect ACAP was comparable to other international NGOs in Nepal, which were usually regarded by locals not as charitable organisations, but rather as business concerns offering comparatively lucrative careers (See Section 1.2.1). As a result ACAP enjoyed considerable legitimacy and had respected credentials amongst the wider international community. However it suffered from a lack of respect and perceptions of mis-management and corruption at a local level.

6.2.3.M LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "ACAP staff – less work – too much high staff – compared to government staff. Educated person [earns] 4-5000 [Nepali rupees] ACAP staff – 8000 – 9000 [Nepali rupees]".

6.2.3.N LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "ACAP is fairly legitimate – but can't afford to pay their staff – ones doing the work are getting paid 100 rupees a day to plant trees."

Trekking guides passing through the village of Ghorepani and Tatopani also deemed ACAP as a major external force operating upon tourism and development in the area. There was considerable variation in the guides' opinions of ACAP's effects upon the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani and the surrounding areas, and the estimation in which these impacts were held (See Section 7.1). A principal impact of ACAP on the area was believed to be the trekking trail, although judgements on the outcomes of impacts in this field varied considerably, and was dependent upon the trail the guides had used, with the Ghorepani – Ghandruk trail particularly criticised.

6.2.3.O GUIDE GHOREPANI: “[Due to] ACAP – [the] trail is better – people have employment”.

6.2.3.P GUIDE GHOREPANI: “ACAP – [are] stupid! Take money off people for permits but can’t fix the tracks – [they] should pay the locals to fix the tracks – [they are] fixing the track in [the] wrong places”.

Guides frequently brought up the price for ACAP permits in the Annapurna area. They considered the prices of the permits and the associated actions (or lack of them) as representing significant impacts of ACAP in the villages and surrounding areas, although they felt this was also due partly to bureaucracy at a higher level. Whilst there were some allegations of corruption forwarded;

6.2.3.Q GUIDE GHOREPANI: “ACAP take 2000 rupee for permits but they did corruption and they did not use right way this amount...”

this was the exception rather than the rule. When returning guides (with whom sufficient rapport had been established, were probed about this, it was suggested any agency or organisation in Nepal was possibly corrupt to some level, and most guides would not be able to give an informed answer as to what level ACAP (potentially) was.

The guides placed emphasis upon ACAP’s relationship with the natural environment. Once again, however, the guides held mixed perceptions of the efficacy and benefits of ACAP’s impacts upon the natural environment in the area. Some guides thought ACAP was effective in its actions. The examples of helping reforestation in the area and ACAP’s “Minimum Impact Code” (See Appendix 10) were frequently cited, (although the last example was usually not cited by its title). However other guides felt ACAP could be doing more to ensure that impacts upon the natural environment in the area were managed / controlled.

6.2.3.R GUIDE GHOREPANI: “All the staff ACAP employ should be more active at the checkpoints on environmental matters. If ACAP want they can ban plastic bottles”.

ACAP was perceived by some guides (principally those of a similar cultural background to villagers) to be negatively impacting upon the culture of the villages and surrounding areas. It was deemed to be failing to promote the cultures of the areas it operated in, and failing to provide adequate cultural information to guides about the area, due in part to a perceived lack of knowledge of the culture of the area within ACAP.

6.2.3.S GUIDE GHOREPANI: “ACAP are not following their own Codes of Conduct – if they want to preserve our culture, they should be culturised (sic) before”.

Some guides believed the fact that all but one of the local ACAP staff were born and raised outside of the area, coupled with a lack of subsequent training, had resulted in a lack of knowledge amongst the staff of cultural factors associated with the area they were working in.

6.2.3.T GUIDE GHOREPANI: “They should have training about the local culture themselves, as many of them are not from that culture. ACAP staff don’t give any cultural information to guides, because they don’t know the information”.

6.2.4 Martial

A further external structural force operating on tourism and development in the area was the Maoist insurgency. The effects of the insurgency have been detailed in Section 1.1.2; however this section notes the role of the insurgency and its impacts as external forces operating on the area. The degree to which they were encountered and perceived as external forces on tourism and development in the area differed amongst stakeholders – these variations are also clarified below.

As noted in Section 1.1.2, other actors in the area were often directly affected by the insurgency. The impacts of tourism and development in relation to the insurgency for these actors were subtle yet still very real. Although such actors had to endure the adversities of those in other rural villages in Nepal, the presence of trekkers on the trail afforded a modicum of security. For example, local villagers travelling on the trail sometimes endeavoured to inconspicuously travel reasonably closely to trekkers in the belief that they might not be harangued (or worse) by either side whilst in the presence of trekkers. Trekkers travelling without a guide sometimes felt threatened by this behaviour; although the locals would keep a respectful distance, this sometimes added to the perceived threat. However this distance was usually maintained due to cultural reasons and the inability of the actor to converse in English.

The lodge owners of both Tatopani and Ghorepani villages felt the impacts of the insurgency keenly, and identified the associated ongoing political crisis as a key external impact on the area. Again they perceived it as a force outside their control. Lodge owners perceived the principal impact of the insurgency on the area to be in the decline of tourist numbers. Again the attitudes of all lodge owners of both villages could be labelled fatalistic; no lodge owner could envision a resolution or an end to the crisis in the short to medium term. The lodge owners all expressed uncertainty over what a long term outcome would entail. Lodge owners viewed both parties as external forces, and although criticisms of a particular side were occasionally made, these were seldom prolonged. In reality most of the lodge owners and shopowners, in addition to being wary of declaring any allegiances even amongst extended family members or staff, (especially important for the ex-Ghurka lodge owners of Ghorepani) viewed both parties negatively, as part of the problem, and not too dissimilarly from each other.

6.2.4.A LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: He said that he was not getting enough business, and that the political situation was very bad for tourism. When asked about the long term future of the area his thoughts were centred on the political crisis and the future of his business – he said he was hoping that there would be more tourists in the next two months, or else he would pack up and go back to Pokhara.

Lodge owners never publicly expressed allegiances for either side, and any sympathies privately expressed were not firm. In reality lodge owners usually viewed both forces as external and did not identify with either, partly due to them both being perceived negatively, but also in Ghorepani due to the lodge owners' positions as ex-Ghurkas. Yet all lodge owners of both villages and other shop owners were inextricably drawn into the conflict by the 'donations' which they were obliged to pay to the Maoist forces (compulsory bribes of approximately 1000 rupees paid monthly or thereabouts), and the money which was going to the government (or government forces) in the form of corruption.

6.2.4.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: "[The] Government taking something from you (corruption) is like someone in your family taking something from you – Maoists taking something is like someone else from outside else taking from you".

Lodge owners who owned shops and other shop owners were additionally drawn into the conflict when the Maoists called a bandh (literally "closed doors" – meaning a strike). During such periods the Maoists required shops in the villages and/or sometimes schools to shut – with the threat of violent action if their requests were ignored. However forces of the Royal Nepali Army were known to demand that these services remain open, and again there was the threat of arrest and the unspoken threat of possible violent action. Due to the relative isolation of both villages and the constantly changing troop deployments and/or raids of both parties in the area, shopkeepers (who as noted in Appendix 5 were the lodge owners in Ghorepani) often did not know which parties were active in the immediate vicinity at any given time. As a consequence they were troubled about which orders to follow. This was further complicated by the Maoists changing the dates of a bandh (due for example, to a clash with nationwide school exams),

especially close to the originally called date. Due to communication difficulties and variation in reports, this frequently caused confusion over the actual date of the strike and who was involved. The lodge and shop owners thus identified both sides of the conflict as impacting considerably upon development and tourism in the area.

6.2.4.C SHOPKEEPER TATOPANI: He said the big problem (and the one he really wanted to talk about – was the political situation. He said the strike called by the Maoists was very bad for him. He said if he shut the shop and the army came through they would say – Why have you shut the shop? Are you Maoist? And they could take him away or they could fine him heavily. But he said that if he opened the shop then the Maoists could come through and say why have you opened the shop? And do something nasty– he kept asking what he should do – (without expecting an answer).

Trekkers perceived the insurgency to be resulting in a decline in tourist numbers and transport disruptions due to the bandh. Whilst trekkers might be inconvenienced by transport disruption on their way to and from the ACA, once trekking they were largely removed from the insurgency or its negative ramifications. However other key actors (lodge owners particularly, but also guides) also occasionally actively misinformed trekkers in order to remove them (psychologically) from such forces. Although guides frequently had some knowledge of the local political situation (gained through similar experiences in their own villages or through discussions with other guides/lodge owners), neither the guides nor the lodge owners fully informed the trekkers of local political developments – and in fact the trekkers were often actively misinformed.

Guides and lodge owners stated this was to prevent the trekkers from unduly worrying, although observations suggest it was also to protect business interests, to prevent misunderstandings, and perhaps primarily due to cultural reasons of not wanting to convey negative information. The usual form it took was through the lodge owners informing the trekkers (after the event) that the gunfire which could be heard in surrounding valleys at nights was “just the army practicing” (or variations upon this story), when in reality it was from battles between the two forces in the surrounding areas (or further afield) at night.

Lodge owners usually found out about early to mid-morning through other villagers which village had been attacked / raided by the RNA (and less frequently the Maoists) the night before. Sometimes guides were informed, but often they were not (although they would sometimes find out on the trail). In addition, tourists were (infrequently in the immediate research area) occasionally asked for 'donations' for the Maoist cause. Conversely, many trekkers noted how the decline in trekking numbers had made their visit more enjoyable (usually after discussions with the guides) whilst sometimes expressing sympathy for the locals.

ACAP officials only occasionally referred to the insurgency, and seldom expressed an opinion on it. While ACAP staff once indirectly suggested that the organisation itself (despite being governed by King Mahendra) was paying bribes to the Maoists, generally the perceptions they voiced indicated they did not perceive the insurgency as an external force. Rather (in a move which could be viewed as self-preservation) it was verbally expressed as a part of the wider ongoing political problems in general faced by the country.

However the actions of ACAP staff (e.g. abandoning the nearby Ghar Khola checkpoint during the field study period, and later the Ghorepani offices) would suggest they had a different interpretation. This was one whereby the insurgency was viewed as a more direct and immediate if unpredictable external threat (as was to later prove the case – see Section 6.1).

6.2.5 Globalisation / Modernisation / Indianisation / Westernisation

There were considerable variations in perceptions of externally based cultural forces by actors in the area. Despite variations, these externally-derived cultural forces and influences were predominantly viewed as negative by actors.

The title of this section refers to the fact that some actors attributed an increasing influence from the outside world and its external cultures as a key influence on the area (i.e. Globalisation). Some actors viewed increasing changes occurring in the area as due to external forces of modernisation occurring in the fieldwork area which was viewed as not modern (Modernisation). Finally, some actors viewed perceived changes in the local culture (often related to business) as due to external forces centred in India (hence ‘Indianisation’). Because of the similarity between these forces and the overlap in the perception of them in the field, they have been combined into this section. They are further explored in the following paragraphs.

Lodge owners in both villages identified the “Indianisation” of Nepal as an increasing external impact upon the area. Although lodge owners in Tatopani viewed this as an ongoing process and viewed it more in terms of issues of power at a macro-political level, lodge owners in Ghorepani identified it with more Indians moving into the country setting up businesses and consequently influencing locals’ and/or trekkers’ behaviour.

6.2.5 A LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Also [the] police [are] corrupt – so [the] 100% honesty has gone with [the influence of] India – because India taught this [dishonesty]. Twenty years before, [there was] very honest trekker[s] and very honest Nepali[s] also – not just [regarding] chicken, bread, jerseys, [but] everything. [Now there is] Too much bracketing. When the Nepali people see the tourist too much bracketing [or treating as object / non-associated other]”.

Lodge owners from both villages viewed this “Indianisation” as a negative development, but felt their country was powerless against a nation such as India due to its size and perceptions of its power. They perceived India to be influencing the behaviour of trekkers especially those trekkers who had travelled through India immediately prior to their visit to Nepal. Lodge owners had negative conceptions of the bargaining practices in particular of these trekkers, as they were perceived to be adopting considerably more aggressive bargaining techniques and consequently more problematic behaviours than trekkers who had not visited India prior to the Nepal visit.

Importantly, although lodge owners had negative perceptions of the bargaining techniques of these trekkers (which were occurring in both of the villages, despite the supposed banning of bargaining) the lodge owners were still ceding to them (See Section 7.1.1) The changing nature and/or typology of the trekkers in general were perceived as cultural changes over which lodge owners had no control.

6.2.5.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Till the late 80s or early 90s trekkers were more likely to come to see the environment as it was- how their countries used to be – more of an experience than a holiday”.

6.2.5.C LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “At first it was [a] simple bed etc – but tourists demand more. [Now] tourists check mattresses for thickness. [The] Captain is making [a] sauna bath but [there is] not enough electricity”.

This transpiration was viewed with considerable concern by lodge owners in both villages, who perceived trekkers’ behaviours and requirements as having changed within the last ten to twenty years with negative consequences. Lodge owners claimed that trekkers who visited the area in the earlier years (– until the early 1990s) were more environmentally concerned and aware. Trekkers visiting the area during this period were perceived to be more interested in an ‘experience’ rather than a ‘holiday’ and their behaviours reflected this (see Boorstin, 1961).

Current trekkers were perceived as constituting a different typological group which was more demanding of facilities and services (e.g. in the recent past and present – flush toilets, and in the future separate bathrooms/toilets), and often showed less recognition of the fact that Nepal was an undeveloped country. Lodge owners frequently described trekkers as people from developed nations expecting a developed lifestyle, holiday, break, and/or trek in an undeveloped country/area.

6.2.5.D LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “We have definitely seen there are a number of mainstream tourists who are here for a holiday, and they don’t want to worry about Codes of Conduct because they have enough worries back home”.

6.2.5.E LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “When people are on holiday they don’t want to be told what to do. They want to let their hair hang loose. But on the other hand, [it would be good] if they were made aware of certain ethics of the Codes of Conduct – so that their holiday would be made more enjoyable”.

Such comments and beliefs also demonstrated that the trekkers’ superficial immersions in the area were encouraging other local actors to stereotype and generalise them as a cohort, ignoring the fact that the trekkers were experiencing the community in different ways (Wickens, 2002).

At a micro level guides travelling via the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani identified trekkers and their behaviours as a major external force upon the area. Guides frequently believed trekkers were respecting codes of conduct related to the natural environment, but not those relating to the social and cultural environments. Trekkers’ inappropriate dress, requesting their guides act as porters without recompense, and taking photographs without permission were all commonly cited as examples of trekkers’ inappropriate cultural or social behaviour. The guides frequently singled out two particular groups of trekkers as impacting negatively upon the social, cultural and natural environments. Young Israeli trekkers (particularly those who had recently completed military service);

6.2.5.F GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Israelis expect instant food and drink – their guidebooks are partly to blame. [They] don’t know what can be cooked really fast – or what sort of ovens the people have. Sometimes they change lodges if the food is not ready fast enough”.

6.2.5.G GUIDE TATOPANI: “Normally individual tourist[s] don’t follow the Codes of Conduct – most of them are from Israel”.

6.2.5.H GUIDE TATOPANI: “Every individual must have a guide or porter – to make sure they respect the environment and culture –Israelis bathing in the river naked”.

and to a lesser extent trekkers (particularly young trekkers) who had arrived in the area following travel through India were commonly singled out as groups who were responsible for an inordinate amount of impact upon the social, cultural and natural environments in the area (See Section 7.1).

6.2.5.I GUIDE TATOPANI: “If trekkers have come through India this means they are much less likely to care about the Codes of Conduct or take heed of them - like bargaining - because of their experiences there”.

Guides indigenous to the region (none encountered were from the immediate area – see Appendix 5) or its tribal groups frequently voiced beliefs the area was ‘losing’ its culture or variations upon this theme. These guides viewed this loss of culture as evidenced by the younger generation’s dress and cultural pursuits. They perceived the youth generation to be adopting the ideals and lifestyles of the western generation, and to be neglecting their traditional culture in favour of a western ideal.

6.2.5.J GUIDE TATOPANI: “Everyone in Chitre and Sikha used to play the drums –now all the young males play guitar”.

6.2.5.K GUIDE TATOPANI: “Marijuana has replaced tobacco, English words, dresses, wearing caps not hats, painting hair, food, raksi [has been replaced by] - beer, dero [has been replaced by] dal baht, food, music, drinks, language”.

Guides from the region identified the adoption of this ideal as leading to an increasing homogenisation of cultures in the area and claimed that it was diluting the distinctiveness of Nepal.

A final key external force impacting on tourism and development in the area identified by the lodge owners of both villages was the enticement of the external world in general. Lodge owners of both villages perceived the external world to

offer opportunities to the young of the villages which were not available to them in the villages. These opportunities included a better education – (see Appendix 5) and increased employment opportunities and/or potential.

6.2.5.L LODGEOWNER – TATOPANI: “If you work hard enough in the season you will get out of Nepal – [to somewhere] like. Japan. Five years as a waiter/waitress [and] save money. [Then] you [can] build a three storey building in Pokhara, rent out the bottom floors for business, and live on the top floor or you try and make a hotel”.

Although many lodge owners voiced a desire for their off-spring to become professionals (usually doctors) and return to the area, the reality was that those who were professionals had all left the area and were working in Pokhara, Kathmandu, or India. The enticement of countries other than the Indian sub-continent (such as the Middle East – e.g. Saudi Arabia or to a lesser extent Europe or Japan) was also noted as a force on the area’s development and tourism. However this enticement was principally economic and usually involved off-spring (but sometimes the lodge owners themselves) in non-professional occupations, and required significant levels of initial capital. The political and economic situation in Nepal (and in particular the Maoists’ conscription tactics and the RNA’s suspicion of younger people still residing in middle-hill villages) was viewed as providing increasing impetus for locals to leave the country and find better opportunities abroad.

6.2.6 Tourism Industry

Tourism was recognised by actors as constituting a significant external force on the area. In this instance ‘tourism’ constituted the tourism industry, which was determined by the majority of actors as constituting tourists from western or other developed nations (e.g. Japanese and South Korean). The external forces

attributed to tourism were the forces and/or changes the presence and actions of these tourists were producing in the area.

Although the industry was noted by the ACAP officials as bringing money to the area and making a positive economic contribution, the industry was also mentioned in conversations by the local ACAP officials to be a significant external force impacting upon the development of the village. The ACAP officials perceived the tourism industry as potentially constituting a negative external force upon development in the area due to its potential to ‘destroy’ the environment and or culture (see Section 6.1).

6.2.6.A ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “ACAP want to develop tourism, but if it destroys the society or culture then it is not a good thing – for example the pens, sweets, etc given to children is not the right way”.

Furthermore, the officials believed that the tourism industry had engendered some social conflict in the area due to the concentration of economic benefits from tourism upon the trekking trail (See Section 7.1).

The tourism industry was understood by trekkers to be principally responsible for a number of external impacts upon the area. These impacts and influences were predominantly comprehended within three contexts: those of ecological /natural environment impacts, those of socio-economic impacts; and to a lesser degree those of modernisation.

The impacts of the tourism industry upon the area were frequently perceived by trekkers in socio-economic terms, recurrently with references to the standard of living of local community members. Tourism was judged to have increased this; the trekkers’ views of trekking and tourism’s economic impacts on the areas were regularly equated to constructive socio-economic impacts (see Section 7.2). Tourism was viewed by trekkers as a positive form of development in that it increased the socio-economic level of those in the area who were part of the

industry, and had aided the villages to becoming comparatively wealthy when compared to other areas in Nepal. Tatopani was an example regularly used.

6.2.6.B TREKKER TATOPANI: [He said that he] Felt the most important point to make was that trekking is extremely good economically for the area. “The results of the money coming in are clearly visible in this area”.

6.2.6.C TREKKER GHOREPANI: [She said she has] Seen some people doing well out of tourism in comparison to the rest of the country.

Trekkers’ perceptions of the tourism industry itself as the exclusive external agent can perhaps be best understood in the context of their lack of intimate familiarity with the area noted in Section 6.1.1.

On a more macro scale the guides also perceived the tourism industry in general to be a prominent force impacting upon the natural, social and cultural environments of the area. The guides perceived the number of trekkers, especially in the busy years, as a considerable source of impact;

6.2.6.D GUIDE TATOPANI: “[In the] Peak season –[there are] too many trekkers”.

6.2.6.E GUIDE GHOREPANI “Maybe it [tourism] is not digo [sustainable] because nowadays more population, more tourists like wise more reasons [for it not being sustainable]”.

Tourism was deemed by guides to be responsible for some levels of social dissatisfaction in the area due to perceived unequal dispersion of the benefits amongst the local communities.

6.2.6.F GUIDE GHOREPANI “Other [people- external to the tourism industry in the area] are low economic-base people. They are not friendly because they are jealous of the money being made from tourism and the fact they aren’t getting any”.

However these sorts of comments could also perhaps have been inspired by friction between guides as ‘outsiders’ and local people, and also tribal/cultural differences (see Appendix 5).

The situation for the tribes with Hindu beliefs in the middle hills was further affected by the caste system. For example, one porter met during the research period identified himself as lower caste and stated that tourism was enabling him to achieve more, and was gradually eroding caste beliefs.

A further impact of trekking and tourism upon the local society mentioned included the effect it was having on the younger children in the area, some of whom guides perceived as adopting bad habits such as begging for sweets and school pens and increased laziness.

6.2.6.G GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Giving money, pen, to children, because of it, [things are] is no good for children. It makes bad habit of children [encourages children into bad habits] and [they] become lazy”.

Some repeat visitation guides also noted the difference tourism was making to societies which had traditionally practised transhumance but were now remaining in their villages due to the extra economic income tourism afforded them.

6.2.6.H GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Traditionally before tourism they wouldn’t actually stay north of Jomson – they would migrate south for winter and take their cattle with them – a meeting would be held and ten people would be elected to stay behind and watch the village – usually older and less physically fit people. But with tourism in the last 30 years this has changed – they used to go to Gorkha, for example. An old man told me there is no need to sell herbs or move south for winter anymore as they have enough with tourism-related activities to keep them there [despite the harsh climate]”.

Wider external impacts of the industry can also be viewed in the regulation of behaviours. The guides all believed that ensuring the trekkers’ actions were

appropriate by notifying them of the desired behaviours was a requirement of their role. Almost all of the guides stated they actively did this, although guides frequently stated that trekkers would ask questions about it or consult their guidebook if they were in doubt. The guides claimed their role in advising and ensuring the trekkers' appropriate behaviour was assisting the development of sustainable tourism within the area. The perceived thus was in contrast to non-guided trekkers, whose behaviours and actions the guides perceived as unmanaged/uncontrolled.

Finally, although villagers living off the trail and external to the two immediate villages upon which the research was centred invariably did not have the capital to begin tourist projects (e.g. lodges), there was hope expressed that this capital could be gained from locals working outside the country through remittances and/or donations.

Residents of villages near Tatopani identified the school and medical centre in Tatopani as examples of development which tourism had contributed to, whereas villagers in other areas identified economic reasons. Although some villagers were ambivalent towards the impacts of tourism the majority saw it as a positive external impact, and were actually eager to develop tourism within their own village.

6.2.7 External Media –Trekking

The trekkers' experiences of the areas were obviously tailored by their individual past social and cultural histories, but there were a number of important historically recent external determinants in their perceptions of the impacts of trekking and tourism on the natural environment in the area (the extent of which the trekkers were often unaware). A recurrent and fundamental influence on the trekkers' interpretations of the influences and impacts of tourism upon the natural environment (and to a lesser but still notable degree the social, cultural, and

economic environments) was the external media they had consulted before and during their visit to the area.

External media played a powerful role prior to visiting the area (see Section 1.1.2 and Appendix 5, and the reference to reports of the Nepali political situation in the media). Principal among these sources were guidebooks⁹⁰, which generated many of the conceptions and contexts that trekkers used as reference points for their reflections. Immediately prior to the visit, and within the area itself, guidebooks played a particularly influential role on trekkers' perceptions of impacts across all the environmental contexts. The information in guidebooks often could be said to have provided the 'backcloth' for trekkers' values and perceptions of the area, and often directly impacted upon the area in the type of trip, choice of lodge, the prices paid, the length of stay, and the environmental actions of the trekker. It also provided justifications for all of these actions.

Further to this, guides who were new to the area from other regions of Nepal often studied their clients' guidebooks for information about the area (attempted usually in an inconspicuous or discrete manner), although for directions they usually asked locals in Nepali. Trekkers who had consulted externally developed media, especially guidebooks, were more likely to either express increased alarm at perceived levels of deforestation and littering for example, or (less commonly), alternatively express the opinion that levels of deforestation or littering did not appear as severe as expected.

6.2.7.A TREKKER GHOREPANI: She felt that deforestation was the principal issue in the area, and the most important thing that needed to take place was education and reforestation. Despite what she had read in the guidebooks about the work of ACAP, she had seen no tree nurseries, and she doubted it was actually taking place. She doubted that locals cared for their environment, and she hoped they learned to before it was too late.

6.2.7.B TREKKER TATOPANI: She said she only knew what she had read in the guidebooks and what she had seen.

⁹⁰ A study by Holden (2006) notes that over 65% of trekkers in the fieldwork area at the time of this research had consulted guidebooks prior to their trip.

6.2.7.C TREKKER TATOPANI: She stated that there was nowhere near as much rubbish in this area or the Solu Khumbu as she was led to believe through reading the guidebooks and newspapers/magazines.

6.2.8 Geographical

The local ACAP officials also perceived geographical and climatic factors to be major external and uncontrollable forces operating on their work and tourism and development in the village of Ghorepani. The village's distance from the nearest road head (or source) was perceived to be a major factor due to the increased expenses associated with transport to the region.

This was understood to be placing greater economic pressures on the village and the local ACAP officials particularly noted its inhibiting role upon the use of alternative technologies as a result of the expenses associated with the transport of alternative fuels.

6.2.8.A ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: "Ghorepani does not use gas or kerosene as much as Tatopani because it is too far from the road head and [hence] too expensive".

The local climatic conditions (which were unlike those of other villages popular with tourists in the ACA due to the village's altitude and geographical condition) were also perceived by the local ACAP officials as impacting upon the village's tourism and development owing to the obstacles they too placed in the way of the introduction of alternative technologies;

6.2.8.B ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: "The pipes of the solar heater [are] broken because of the cold –but new technology [is] coming – vacuum – new solar heater suitable for minus fifteen degrees [Celsius]."

6.2.8.C ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: - “Mothers group in their planting of Japanese Pine - *Cryptomeria* - but not successful. Two years later only waist high-because of altitude and climate – but ownership-by the community”.

The area’s propensity for geo-climatic natural hazards and environmental disasters was a commonly cited external force that was identified by lodge owners in the village of Tatopani. In the last twenty years the village had witnessed several major natural disasters. The huge landslide of 25th September 1998⁹¹ east of the village had blocked the Kali Gandaki river for seven to eight hours, and the southern part of the village itself had been submerged in river water for several hours. A number of buildings, including a new lodge (the “Namaste” Lodge), had been destroyed, and the main trail into the area was also destroyed and had to be substituted. This was done initially by a pre-existing but precarious trail used by cow-herders right up the top of the mountain (which added three hours to the trip). The lodge owners viewed this landslide as unforeseeable and unavoidable, and had a similar attitude to other natural disasters, with one notable exception (listed below).

6.2.8.D LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “About 14 years ago, [a] flood came through... [We have] floods, landslides [etc]. [The] Tree plantations 16-17 years ago stopped landslide. In the next 20 years environmental change [will be] out of people’s control. Tatopani may not be here. [We] Thakali [are] wealthy – if there is a disaster [we] may shift”.

⁹¹ Nepali date 10 Ashwin 2055; although the exact date differs between accounts of the locals and that of the Nepali Department of Mines and Geology (see Sikrikar and Piya, 1998).

6.3 Summary

This chapter has examined two of the key factors which emerged as determining actors' perceptions of sustainable development through tourism in the area. Section 6.1 identified issues of time and change, and noted that temporal factors were key to actors' conceptualisations of the environmental contexts and their relationship to tourism in the ACA. The actors' attachments to and understandings of the area and tourism as a process within it were determined primarily by their length of stay and level of immersion in the community, along with associated factors such as role (further explored in Section 7.2). Section 6.1 explored the manner in which these factors were framing actors' references within the area, and consequently their behaviours and outcomes for the villages.

Section 6.2 examined the role of external forces upon outcomes in the area, and the actors' perceptions of them. External forces as key determinants of tourism and development within the area emerged from the results as a key theme across all stakeholder groups. However there was considerable variation amongst these key players as to what these forces constituted, and the relative effect they were producing within the field area. Section 6.2 examines the external forces identified as determining outcomes for sustainable development through tourism in the area. It did so by examining each of these key external forces in turn, and actors' perceptions of their influence on outcomes in the area.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FIELD KNOWLEDGES AND PRACTICES

7.0 Introduction

While Chapter 6 examined the external forces perceived as operating upon the research area, Chapter 7 examines the internal forces which emerged as operating within the area. These included the interrelationships between key actors, the rationales of the key actors of tourism/sustainable development matters in the area and their subsequent behaviours, and the complexities inherent in the interrelationships between the various environmental contexts and actors which were frequently not discerned by key actors.

Section 7.1 examines the roles of, and relationships and connections between the key players in the fieldwork area. The interrelationships between stakeholder groups in the area and the roles group members perceived themselves and/or their group to be playing emerged as significant themes affecting outcomes of sustainable development through tourism in the region.

The various stakeholder groups in the area are examined individually for their interrelationships with other groups of actors, and the role they perceived as occupied by their group is detailed. Interrelationships are examined from the perspectives of the actors' group from which they emerged. Hence the relationship between guides and trekkers for example is examined twice (once

from the perspective of the guides, and once from the trekker's perspective). Although the observations detailed were the same, the perceptions of this relationship of each group of actors of the relationship which emerged (and their resultant actions and behaviours) were different. Similarly, the roles each group of stakeholders perceived themselves to be occupying in the area were also perceived differently by other groups of actors and conflicted with observations in the area. These are also detailed in Section 7.1

Section 7.2 then examines the rationales and actions of key players related to the various environmental contexts and the variation between them which emerged during the fieldwork and post field work analysis. It does so in recognition that the isolation of these environmental contexts is artificial; indeed Section 7.3 highlights the inadequacies in artificially separating these environmental contexts for analysis. Nevertheless the results presented in this section reflect the way these contexts were conceptualised within the field by the key actors.

Section 7.2.1 examines these rationales and subsequent behaviours in the context of the natural environment. Sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 examine them in the contexts of the economic, and social/cultural environments respectively. Perceptions of the political environment also emerged as rationales, however it was considered that these have been adequately addressed in Sections 6.1.4, 6.2.3, and 7.1.4. Finally Section 7.3 concludes the chapter.

7.1 Roles, Relationships and Connections

This section examines the interrelationships and the roles groups envisaged themselves playing within the area. It explores the effects of such perceptions and connections. These emerged as key determinants of behaviours and thus outcomes in relation to tourism and sustainable development in the area, as detailed in Section 5.1

7.1.1 Trekkers

Considerable variance existed amongst trekkers in the fieldwork area at the time of the research. Trekkers were of various nationalities and travelling either independently, or with a group, on a shorter excursion or as part of a longer trip, and with or without a guide or porter. Despite these variations however, trekkers within the fieldwork area routinely held a dominant position in negotiations of roles between key stakeholders in tourism and sustainable development in the research area. Although trekkers commonly had no experience of the area or its culture (and often had not been trekking before), the adoption of a power-broking and decision-making role by trekkers was frequently evident. This was particularly apparent in relationships between guides and trekkers:

7.1.1.A OBSERVATION: Tall big Australian male approximately 18-25 years old looking at a map in the dining room, and discusses time distances between villages with his guide (30-35 short, possibly Brahmin). He argues with his (experienced) guide, who does not argue back but 'suggests' that the schedule the trekker proposes is unrealistic, given the amount of distance they have so far covered, and the terrain ahead. Trekker states they will follow the trekker's schedule – guide capitulates readily (even though he obviously knows it is almost impossible) and agrees. – The schedule – including Ghorepani to Muktinath in a day – was unrealistic.

7.1.1.B OBSERVATION: When T returned, he had (accidently in the dark) urinated on himself - His guide (a Sherpa) said "You have pissed all over yourself!" and started laughing. T adopted a mock serious attitude exclaiming "I don't think it's funny!" to which the sirdar replied immediately with a change of temperament to adopt an instantly servile attitude - stating "I'm sorry, I didn't mean it, you haven't pissed on yourself" with a look of horror on his face.

The representation of power identified agrees with conceptualisations noted by van der Duim (2007:966) in that the power noted was 'associative' and "its exercise depend[ed] on the actions of others; it [was] translated not diffused". In other words it was not a static thing possessed by the trekkers, rather as this section explains it was determined through relationships.

The dominance of the trekkers and the levels of power attributed to them were accentuated in exchanges with guides due to the continuous interactions with

them. However they were also common in interactions with lodge owners and other local business owners, especially in instances of bargaining (see quotes 7.1.1.N-Q below) but also in other daily occurrences:

7.1.1.C OBSERVATION: Trekkers ask if they can smoke in the lodge - they mean a marijuana cigarette. [LO7] nods and smiles. Trekkers light up and later, in the kitchen, [LO7] starts complaining to me and saying why do they do this? Then starts abusing them (to me) in Nepali.

Mowforth and Munt (2003) note that relationships of power in tourism are often either played down or merely implied in much of the tourism literature, and given the client - customer position inherent in these actors' negotiated roles and the service nature of the association, such a relationship may appear relatively straightforward. Such positions of power and servility between the trekkers and lodge owners for example could perhaps be compared to the familiar hotel-guest relationships existing in a capitalist, "developed" context. Such a relationship is also customary in Nepali relationships in the accordance of "ijjat" or prestige to those considered of a higher status (a concept which is usually caste-based).

However there existed a more exaggerated power imbalance in such interactions and in the servile / submissive nature of the relationship than would be typical in similar situations in a western context. The roles assumed by trekkers in the research area constantly exceeded in power those they would assume in their countries of origin (see Quote 7.1.1.D.) Furthermore, this divergence was borne out in the trekkers' perceptions of the other stakeholders, as the comment of an English trekker in Quote 7.1.1.E demonstrates;

7.1.1.D GUIDE GHOREPANI: Trekkers hiring guides and using them as porters without recompense. E.g. Last night and tonight J was complaining bitterly about his sore back – he estimated he had been carrying 15kg of his two trekkers' gear all day as well as his own stuff. He said they were obviously struggling so he had offered to help them by carrying something – but they had given him most of their gear. He stated "I am a guide not a porter, why do I have to carry all of this!" I asked him "What will you do?" He said "I will have to carry it".

7.1.1.E TREKKER TATOPANI: She said they wanted to go back to the tea house in Biretanti in time for her birthday, as the people who ran the lodge were "...such nice people, so cute".

The context of such relationships could appear to have colonialist overtones. Yet an important distinction was that such relationships were facilitated and emphasised by the adoption of a more servile role by guides, lodge owners and shopkeepers, who were thus active in the construction of such relationships. The servile role adopted by these actors was in turn creating a decision-making and associated power vacuum, which trekkers subconsciously assumed. The result was a relationship which, although agreed upon by sub-conscious mutual assent, assigned the trekker as the major decision maker, usually with the ultimate decree in an area where he/she had only superficial knowledge and usually no experience.

This adds a different dimension to the debate about power and tourism. The tourism literature has often reflected upon the power relationships involved in the political economy of tourism (see Bianchi, 2002; Harrison, 2001; Hall, 2000a) and the subjugation of hosts at community level (e.g. Mathieson and Wall, 2006; Duffy, 2002; MacCannell, 2001). Yet the role the hosts may play in subconsciously constructing these relationships at personal agency level has generally not been examined.

Despite their role in the negotiation of a more servile position in such relationships, disquiet was expressed by lodge owners and guides in varying ways within their stakeholder groups. Uneasiness with the dominant position of trekkers in these negotiated roles was evident in that they were often subverted or challenged in the satirising of trekkers by these two stakeholder groups; however this was without the trekkers' knowledge:

7.1.1.F GUIDE GHOREPANI: Confirmed with S – Trekkers are commonly viewed as either a cat, a dog, or an elephant. He agreed it is usually only joked about between Hindu trekking guides.

7.1.1.G LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Guides say people (trekking clients) are either monkey/cat/elephant in an effort to promote themselves as superior – because of the caste system – the Hindus want to be top”.

7.1.1.H OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: [In] tonight’s cultural show, the lodge owners, lodge workers, porters, guides were singing a traditional Nepali folk song to a small group staying in the lodge. Some members of the lodge owners family, lodge workers, porters, and guides change the chorus words of the popular Nepali folk song (which through knowledge of the words and song I identified as having been changed, but R confirmed) to “Trekking is monkey, rafting is donkey...” in Nepali with none of the trekkers the wiser. Trekkers perhaps mistake their associated laughter for the ‘gaiety of the natives’. R says they do it every time, but never tell the trekkers.

The interactions between trekkers and ACAP staff were limited and usually only occurred outside the research area in the case of the stamping of permits etc. The ACAP staff of Ghorepani were not employed in this role, and thus had little to no interaction with trekkers and the negotiated roles mentioned above were not enacted. Likewise, the trekkers’ interactions with each other did not involve the assumption or negotiation of roles such as those mentioned above. In the case of free independent travellers (FITs), these interactions were usually limited to the lodges at night or passing on the trails, and as such seldom involved any direct interactions which were influencing environmental contexts in the area. One exception to this rule existed in the early morning walk up Poon Hill to view the sunrise. A narrow congested trail and trekkers walking at different speeds sometime created frictions between trekkers.

The interactions between group trekkers were more continuous however. The influences of these interactions were difficult to assess and usually group dependant, nonetheless guides perceived these interactions as potentially positive in their ability to moderate other trekkers’ behaviours:

7.1.1.I GUIDE TATOPANI: “The behaviours of the others in the group stops some trekkers from breaking the [Codes of Conduct]”.

7.1.1.J GUIDE: S stated that ...the peer pressure of the group also works against some actions, for example littering, but most often the group leader’s behaviour sets the standard for the group.

There were key ramifications emerging from the structure of trekkers' relationships with other actors. The lack of interactions between ACAP staff and trekkers and the trekkers' lack of prior engagement or current immersion in the area (see Section 6.1), coupled with the trekkers' lack of detailed knowledge of the Minimum Impact Code (see Holden and Ewen, 2004:59) resulted in guides and lodge owners possessing a potentially key role (as identified by Gurung, Simmons and Devlin, 1996) in influencing trekkers' behaviours (for example their resource usage or social behaviours).

Although the dominant position of trekkers in the negotiated roles with these stakeholders was usually accepted by them subconsciously and not reflected upon, there was an assumption by trekkers that guides would inform them if any of their behaviours was inappropriate. This presumption was often supported in comments by the guides themselves:

7.1.1.K GUIDE GHOREPANI: "Of course I tell trekkers if they are not behaving in the right way. Sometime they try to take a picture without asking. This time [I] tell them you need to be allowed to take a picture because [the] people are poor and not well educat[ed]– they don't like [it when you] take a picture".

(see also Section 6.1.6). However, frequently upon consideration and/or further questioning (and confirmed by observations), trekkers and guides identified this assumption as flawed:

7.1.1.L TREKKER GHOREPANI: She said that she (and they) was/were relying on the guides to tell them if they were doing anything wrong - and what the appropriate behaviour was. She then reflected on this and said that their guide would probably be too nice to tell them anyway.

7.1.1.M GUIDE TATOPANI: "Some guides advise lightly, slowly, give their opinions, but they like to be nice to them [trekkers]. 75% of trekkers try to be environmentally friendly – because of guidebooks, and ask their guide/porter, but there is the economic relationship there...".

The main roles assumed by guides and attributed to them by trekkers were to provide knowledge on lodges and trail directions, to provide the names of visible mountains, and to act as a general conversational partner. The main role assumed by lodge owners and attributed to them by trekkers involved meeting the trekkers' accommodation needs on the trekkers' terms. Neither of these stakeholders was thus attributed roles conducive to direct behavioural influence of trekkers.

Consequently, although guides and particularly lodge owners possessed more knowledge about, and experience of, the implications for sustainable development of tourism in the area (as explored in Section 7.2), these stakeholders often played a minimal role in informing or influencing trekkers' behaviours⁹². This was despite these actors identifying a number of negative behaviours of trekkers which were directly working on and through the area's environmental contexts (see Section 6.1.5 for example), and hence conceptualisations of sustainable development through tourism in the area.

When questioned about behaviours which other actors deemed negative (bartering in an area when aware of fixed prices, including only paying for meals and not accommodation costs, for example), trekkers were either unaware or used consonant cognitions (psychologically consistent propositions) to counteract cognitive dissonance (inconsistency between accepted cognitions and actions). This commonly involved trekkers claiming unawareness of the perceived negativity of such behaviours (despite contradictory evidence); referring to perceived differences between host and guest cultures; claiming hardship, or maintaining that the accepted social actions were uninformed. Emphasis was often placed upon local customs, behaviours and/or requirements, enabling the subject to successfully shift the emphasis away from his/her own behaviour (and the reasoning behind it) onto the host culture. This is demonstrated in the following quotes of trekkers questioned about bargaining:

⁹² It must be noted that this knowledge was largely a result of experience or derived anecdotally: simultaneous research (Holden and Ewen 2004:58-59) discovered that approximately half the guides interviewed did not know of ACAP's Minimum Impact Code (MIC), and many of those who cited knowledge of the MIC could not recall the details of its content.

7.1.1.N TREKKER GHOREPANI: “The locals come across all nice, but they will try and rip you off, so you have to barter”.

7.1.1.O TREKKER TATOPANI: “Bartering is part of the culture here, like India...”.

7.1.1.P TREKKER GHOREPANI: “When you get used to it bargaining is fun”.

7.1.1.Q TREKKER TATOPANI: [He] said he was getting irritated by one of his travelling companions who was always attempting to barter over everything. He said his travelling companion had first travelled to this area approximately eight years earlier with his son, who was a student at the time. His friend’s son was actually quite poor at the time, and so was bartering over everything. Now he said his friend had grown accustomed to it and was trying to haggle over the price of everything, including the price of meals in restaurants. Sometimes his friend was haggling over the equivalent of 20 or 30 rupee (or approximately 20-30 pence) and he didn’t need to - he had the money.

Despite the negative roles and interrelationships of trekkers noted above, trekkers were perceived by some guides as having a positive influence on their guides’ and/or locals’ behaviours in relation to the natural environment. However this was contested, and related specifically to the natural environment and not other environmental contexts:

7.1.1.R GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Guides learn more off trekkers about the environment than the other way around”.

7.1.1.S GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Half of guides get their environmental awareness training from the tourists”.

7.1.1.T GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Many Westerners care about environmental codes of conduct, but not cultural – like wearing a bra and short pants”.

7.1.1.U GUIDE TATOPANI: “Most tourists are not environmentally aware, but most Nepalis don’t want to [go into this in depth]”.

In summary, the influence of internal economic forces, in conjunction with social and/or cultural factors which were not specific or identified by actors (and remain in need of attention by the literature), resulted in interrelationships which were usually highly trekker dominated. These interrelationships were formed through the subconscious negotiation of a role between trekkers and guides and/or lodge owners which attributed more power to the trekker than would be the case within a similar context in the trekkers' point of origin.

This additional power, coupled with changing desires and /or typologies of trekkers over time (as detailed in Section 5.1) and a superficial understanding of the environmental contexts in the research area, was resulting in both negative and positive influences on development through these environmental contexts.

7.1.2 Lodge Owners and Shopkeepers

Lodge owners in both villages perceived their interrelationships with trekkers to have been undergoing negative change in the last two decades. The changing typologies of trekkers were perceived as placing increasing demands upon the lodge owners (see Sections 6.1.5 and 7.1.1), and changing the nature of their relationship with lodge owners. In a reflection of Urry's identification of a shift to a Post-Fordist consumption model over a decade ago (1995)⁹³, lodge owners believed the relationship was becoming more business and service-orientated. They believed the changing tourist typologies had resulted in a host-guest nexus (see Burns and Holden, 1995:119-120) which had lost its social element and intimacy in the last twenty years:

7.1.2.A LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "20 years ago trekkers slept in the forests with locals and at the roadside – very good people".

⁹³ In which "consumers [become] increasingly dominant and producers have to be much more consumer-orientated" (1995:151). A supposition could be that the decades delay between Urry's observation and the lodge owners perception's could be due to the peripheral areas of tourism becoming increasingly more explored and more incorporated into contemporary mass/megamass tourism.

Trekkers in previous years were perceived to be more honest, more culturally sensitive, more accepting of local conditions (with more basic needs), and much less demanding of their hosts than current tourists. This perhaps echoes Boorstin's (1961) idea of a shift from the individual 'traveller' who is prepared to undertake 'arduous conditions' to the "tourist' for whom travel has become a mass and packaged affair" (Holden, 2000a:2). Other factors which were undoubtedly influencing the relationship included the increase in trekking numbers which had occurred (thus resulting in increasingly busy lodges) and a perceived (but unable to be verified) reduction in the bed nights stayed of each trekker. Both of these factors had worked to remove individual trekkers from the prolonged interactions which were deemed positive by lodge owners and staff.

Lodge owners' relationships with trekkers were determined by similar considerations to those determining relationships between other actors (see Section 7.1.1; and Shaw and Williams, 2002) however they were primarily based upon their ability in a shared language. Other principal factors included the occupancy of the lodge and how busy it was. Due to these last factors, lodges (particularly in Ghorepani) which were not specifically recommended in guidebooks and thus were usually operating at a lower capacity frequently saw considerably more interaction between lodge owners and staff than the busier lodges:

7.1.2.B OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: [S] and [M] lodges both very quiet tonight. One Korean woman in [M] having dinner in kitchen with family, and Dutch couple having dinner in kitchen with family at [S]. Families only get trekkers in to have dinner with them if they are quiet, and more often if there is no guide or they know the guide well. E.g. [T], [S] [S2] and [M] in the last week.

Lodges in Tatopani also witnessed more interaction between guests and lodge owners during quieter periods. However such interactions in Tatopani did not usually occur in the kitchens of the lodges, rather they would occur between the younger staff of the lodges and took place in the dining rooms.. This was due in

part to the internal layout of the lodges, but also due to the fact that local cultures living in both Ghorepani and Tatopani commonly considered the kitchen as a more familial and intimate environment.

Direct and prolonged interactions between lodge owners and trekkers were thus becoming rarer as the lodges became busier, and the lodges recommended by guidebooks were conversely less likely to witness close interactions between the two groups of actors. The conditions of the host-guest nexus were thus shifting due to changing typologies of trekkers with increasing requirements. Lodge owners were subsequently perceiving their relationship with trekkers to be more a case of meeting these increased requirements. This echoes the conceptualisations of Urry (1995) noted earlier, and the work of Nepal (2007) suggests for example that trekkers' requirements could have more impact than local government decisions upon the planning and development of settlements in the area.

As identified in Appendix 5, the shops in Ghorepani were all owned by lodge owners, apart from three curio stands operated by three older male Tibetans. However the majority of the shops in Tatopani were owned by independent shopkeepers. During the fieldwork period guides were observed to have limited interaction with shopkeepers within both villages. Upon arrival, trekkers and their guides would together check into a lodge, after which the trekker may spend time looking for souvenirs/camera film/basic necessities within the shops or curio stands. Often the trekkers would undertake this activity of their own accord, but if in the company of guides, the guides would adopt a background role. Hence there was a limited interaction/relationship between guides and independent shopkeepers or curio stand holders.

The relationship between lodge owners and guides was based upon the culture of the guide, the number of times the guide had brought guests to the lodge and to a lesser extent the occupancy rates at the time of the guide's visit. Guides from Tibeto-Nepalese (Mongoloid) backgrounds were generally more readily accepted and welcomed into the confidences of lodge owners in both villages than guides

from Indo-Nepalese (Indo-Aryans, or Caucasoid) backgrounds. The following extract from one lodge owner in Ghorepani explicitly states comments and perceptions which other lodge owners also frequently mentioned or alluded to:

7.1.2.C LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Sherpas have their own language, but they are not too different from Magar – in their eating, their laughing, their dressing, their society they are close to Magar. Also the Sherpas are honest and they don’t beg. Hindus from Kathmandu/Pokhara are breaking LMC [Lodge Management Committee] rules. [They are] breaking Mongolian discipline. They want to sit [as] the top caste. They are not friendly inside – [their] mouth [is] 100% friendly, but [their] brain and heart maybe 10% friendly. They break LMC rules. When hotel prices are fixed, Hindu type people say – “Give me discount, food”. Sherpas, Gurung, Magar, Rai Lumbu – [are all] very good. Because of the caste system the Hindus want to be top. Hindu people and Magar clash. The Hindus are from the Terai – Mongolian type people live in the hills. Hindu people don’t know hill culture – they demean it sometimes to their clients”.

Although the lodge owner cited above and others implied the differences could be noted according to religion (i.e. in the identification of Hindus), this is perhaps a distortion of what was in reality a caste and/or ethnicity-based prejudice (i.e. in reality the lodge-owner was referring to those of an Indo-Aryan background, usually also of a caste deemed ‘higher’). The lodge owner quoted above, similar to the other lodge owners in the village and those in Tatopani, was himself syncretic in his practice of Hindu and Buddhist beliefs (see Appendix 5), and a Brahmin Hindu priest was called in to the village to officiate at a funeral during the time of the fieldwork.

Furthermore, the principal behaviours of these guides identified as negative (i.e. their bargaining) could be partly attributed to their lack of experience or knowledge of the variations between socio-economic relationships in tourism regions (e.g. in the Solu Khumbu region of the Sherpas, or the ACA region home to the Gurung and Magar). The idea or concept of fixed prices in particular is at variance with traditions of bargaining and calculations of prices based on how much the customer is perceived to be able to pay. Other causes for such tensions could be attributed to perceptions on both sides that the opposite party was of sufficient economic means to be more reasonable in such economic matters.

In summary, interrelationships between guides and lodge owners/shopkeepers were principally polite, and civil; however there were underlying frictions in the relationship principally between lodge owners and guides of Indo-Aryan ethnicities. These underlying tensions were associated with issues of power (which the current economic situation had seen reversed), and a perception (by both groups of actors of the other) of an over-emphasis on an economic prerogative.

As noted in Chapter 6, despite literature to the contrary (Bajracharya, 2002; Nepal, 2000a), the relationship between ACAP officials and lodge owners was also at times frictional. Section 6.1.3 noted the lodge owners' perceptions of ACAP as an external force operating within the area. The lodge owners' perceptions of ACAP and their interrelationship with the organisation suggested that the public displays of friction and frustration between the actors evident at lodge management meetings were underpinned by a deeper sense of frustration with ACAP's role:

7.1.2.D OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Another LMC meeting and more arguments... Some locals [Lodge owners] are quiet then make a pointed comment with venom. This is what [LO4] was alluding to.... [AO1] is doing the most talking, but she is obviously simultaneously frustrated but trying to placate people as well.... There is an obvious hierarchy with the Chairman and "bouncer" [LO7] at the front with [but not supporting] AO1. There are a number of contentious issues though and many people not apparently happy. Quite a bit of shouting – tends to be either by AO1, or at AO1 (see also Section 6.1.4 and 6.1.3).

7.1.2.E LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "[The main problems are with] ACAP staff – they do not have any plans, they do not follow our plans, [they are] not from the area, [there are] high levels of wastage. In 20 years they have done six years work – they are fulfilling 30% of their potential. ACAP staff never come out of their hole...".

The above quote is especially illuminating, as it includes a number of comments made singularly by other lodge owners in the research area. ACAP staff in general did not associate freely with the villagers, due in part to perceptions of ACAP and its staff as an external force (see Section 6.1.3), and cultural factors

(ACAP staff were generally from other ethnic groups) but also to other factors (ACAP staff were significantly younger and comparatively well paid) and usually stayed in close proximity to the ACAP building.

7.1.2.F OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: ACAP staff [AO3] sitting on the veranda again with a cup of tea. Seems to be always doing that – have not seen him talk to other villagers since he has been here (or leave the office for that matter).

An exception to this was the Women's Development Officer, who was from the same ethnic group as the lodge owners, and actually related to many of them. As such she was informally assigned the spokespersons role for ACAP in the village. Although this staff member appeared more actively involved in community projects, the other staff members did not take part in direct community action throughout the period of the field research.

Lodge owners in Tatopani perceived the role of their local Village Development Committee (VDC), and their interrelationship with it, in a different manner to which lodge owners in Ghorepani viewed ACAP. There were limited interrelations between the two groups. The VDC members were of a different ethnic group to the lodge owners, and in addition the lack of education amongst members of the VDC was viewed as a barrier, as was the fact the VDC was based in another smaller village off the main trail (See Appendix 5). However the lodge owners of Tatopani were content with the present make-up of the VDC as they viewed it as empowering a section of the area's community that might otherwise have grown uneasy with, or envious of the economic power of the lodge owners and Tatopani.

Although one particular family of lodge owners had a considerable history of business and land ownership in the Tatopani area, it was believed a role in the VDC would not be looked upon favourably by local villagers, in that it would suggest a concentration of the economic and political powers in the area. As such the idea of ceding political power of the VDC to the Bhurung villagers was

viewed as a politically strategic move aimed at empowering (or giving the impression of empowerment) to the villagers. Furthermore, the Tatopani lodge owners were not dependant upon the VDC for local development measures, and were accustomed to assuming this role themselves in relation to the village.

Finally, shopkeepers perceived their role in sustainable development through tourism in the fieldwork area to be limited to economic growth in the area which they perceived as difficult given the present political conditions (see Section 6.1.). Although some shopkeepers in Tatopani also made contributions towards the school, these were not cited.

Lodge owners perceived their own roles to be restricted by the external forces mentioned in Section 6.1. Lodge owners also noted the actions and requests of trekkers were placing additional demands upon the area's resources and their role in protecting them:

7.1.2.G LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "They want clean water, hot water and so on and so on – but they want [it] for 20 rupees".

Lodge owners, like shopkeepers, viewed their role as one incorporating economic growth in the area, the proceeds of which they perceived were assisting development in other areas (through providing employment for example). Lodge owners in Tatopani cited their donations to the school and the employment opportunities they were creating as evidence of their contribution towards development within the area.

7.1.2.H LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: "We have paid one lakh [40,000 rupees] to the school already. The government is paying for six teachers out of 11. We are paying for four teachers and [other lodge] for one".

7.1.2.I LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Every year there are extra jobs for all types of work. Lots of tourists, lots of money, lots of problems. In season at least five porters are hired from the village everyday – everybody from the village and neighbouring villages. I have to hire mules [he has 11 but this is not enough in busy season] to bring the grains from Beni- some [few] tourists help the community with the school [by sponsoring a child] etc”.

The view of the lodge owners and shopowners of Ghorepani and Tatopani of their roles in promoting the sustainable development of tourism in the area would not appear to concur with those presumed for them by institutions either at a local (eg. ACAP – see Section 7.1.4) or at a global (e.g. the UNWTO) level. The World Tourism Organisation’s contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2001), whilst noting the role industry could play, failed to note the consequences of increasing tourist requirements, and increasing economic priorities for indigenous tourism operators in majority world countries.

Despite other actors’ perceptions (and the researcher’s observations) of a personal emphasis by lodge owners on economic and monetary matters, the lodge owners individually did not perceive a personal emphasis on these matters. Lodge owners supported such claims with reference to their small (or in some cases non-existent) margins of profit, and the impacts of external costs and pressures (for example trekkers’ bargaining practices or the increasing costs of fuel wood). Yet some lodge owners in Ghorepani did perceive an over-emphasis on economic matters (in the form of increasing competition and attempts at flouting LMC regulations) amongst other lodge owners (as noted in Section 6.1.2).

7.1.3 Guides

The majority of guides in Nepal could be classified as middle-class by Nepali standards. They were commonly viewed as intelligent or knowledgeable by villagers not involved with tourism because of their ability to speak a foreign language - usually English (this concurs with Nyaupane and Thapa, 2004). The following field notation illustrates this perception and the status of guides

amongst some young Nepali males. A more in-depth account of guide typologies is presented in Appendix 5.

7.1.3.A OBSERVATION TATOPANI: When K was young, some tourists pitched their tents in his school yard in Ghorka and gave them balloons and chocolates. He thought the guide was a “big boss” because he could converse with the tourists – so K aspired to be a guide.

The roles and relationships of guides within the Annapurna Conservation Area emerged as dependant upon a number of variables. The negotiated roles in interrelationships between trekkers and guides emerged as a key theme in relation to concepts of sustainable development through tourism in the area, and thus were examined in depth where relevant in Section 7.1.1 as well as below. This section also examines the interrelationships between guides and other key actors, and examines the themes that emerged from them.

The dominant position trekkers held in the negotiation of roles (despite their inexperience in the area or its culture) was examined in Section 7.1.1. It was noted that the adoption of a power-broking and decision-making role by trekkers was frequently evident. This form of power edict existed in the relationships between both guides and free and independent trekkers (FITs), and guides and group trekkers (GTs). It was more pronounced in the relationship between guides and FITs due to the immediacy of the relationship. Yet guides who were working with a group trek without an assigned leader usually actively designated the most dominant person as the group leader and adopted a similar role with them.

7.1.3.B GUIDE GHOREPANI: “If there is no group leader I choose one that the others listen to. They are the boss, I talk to them [and] if there is a problem I go to them”.

7.1.3.C GUIDE TATOPANI: “Most often the groups leader’s behaviour sets the standard for the group. The group leaders are usually following their own personal code of conduct”.

While such relationships between trekkers and guides (and trekkers and other stakeholders in the area) were primarily underpinned by economic power, there were other powerful determinants at work. The adoption of these roles was facilitated by additional factors (as noted in Observation 6.1.3) including cultural considerations, degree of language ability and to a considerably lesser degree physical size, gender and age (these and additional issues which influenced and determined this relationship are listed in Appendix 5). For example, the cultural trait of not wanting to disappoint, provide negative answers, or appear to criticise in the public space of a lodge dining room for example (see Burbank, 1994) resulted in guides choosing a course of action whereby they were ‘advisors’ and avoiding any conflict or discord with their clients.

As such, disagreements between guides and their clients, even at a low level, were rare, and in fact avoided at all costs by guides. The happiness and satisfaction of the client took precedence over other factors, for example ensuring the trekkers’ responsible behaviour with regards to the areas various environmental contexts:

7.1.3.D OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: [G10] said this morning that despite what the other guides had been saying to me about speaking to their clients and advising them of the code, or that their (the trekkers) actions are wrong, many don’t because they don’t want to affect their tip at the end by upsetting the trekker (because they don’t know them well enough to judge their reactions). This is backed up by the times I have seen trekkers breaking the code⁹⁴ (usually taking photos without asking permission, also bargaining) while their guide hangs back.

The dynamics of the relationships between guides and other stakeholders in the area, like those with trekkers, were complex and influenced by economic issues, cultural considerations, gender and age for example.

Indeed guides of the Indo-Aryan groups mentioned above by lodge owners also privately noted tensions in the relationship with lodge owners, but associated such tensions with lodge owners desire for/ priority of economic gain above all else:

⁹⁴ The ACAP “Minimum Impact Code” and additional ACAP guidelines – see Appendix 10.

7.1.3.E GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Lodge owners [are] always thinking [about] money – not interested in other things, just money”.

Such perceptions were not limited to lodge owners either, as some guides voiced similar comments about the wider community in the research area (see Section 6.1.6). Again these feelings appeared to be reciprocated; although guides were commonly perceived as being intelligent or knowledgeable (see above), members of the wider community also perceived them as having an economic focus over a required social one, as alluded to above. The following quote from a guide demonstrates an appreciation of this fact;

7.1.3.F OBSERVATION TATOPANI: When asked about assistance in conducting interviews with local community members, N replied that his presence could be detrimental “...they will not be keen on [a] guide because they will see him as rich – rich people don’t contribute much to society”.

Such perceptions worked to indirectly affect tourism and development in the area. This undercurrent of discord/frustration in interrelationships between guides of Indo-Aryan ethnicities and the local lodge owners emerged as placing pressures on local tourism processes especially upon economic contexts. Such findings add further depth to the results of a study by Gurung, Simmons and Devlin (1996:122) which found that “many local residents believe[d] training local indigenous youths as tourist guides may help to maintain social and environmental capacities of local areas”.

In addition the political situation and the resultant downturn in tourist numbers explored earlier had brought about a shift in the dynamics of the relationship between lodge owners and guides. Previously when there were large numbers of trekkers, a room at a lodge would have to be booked in advance, placing the power of acceptance in the hands of the lodge owners. However the downturn in trekking numbers had placed this power in the hands of the guides, who frequently selected the lodge for the trekkers. In cases where guides were not

employed, this power usually resided in the guidebooks, or in the recommendations of other trekkers (who had frequently been influenced by guidebooks or their guides). Groups had usually pre-arranged their accommodation. In instances where the group had a local guide charged with the local ground-handling (and thus with making prior-bookings), the power of the relationship was also now with the guide.

Such situations resulted in the guides (both those with FITs and GTs) having increased ‘bargaining’ power with the lodge owners, and the guidebook authors having an amount of power extra ordinate to the amount of time they had personally stayed in the village (see Section 6.1.7, and Observation 5.1.1.A). This increased power in the hands of the guides was causing resentment amongst lodge owners; however it was also causing division amongst lodge owners themselves as noted in Section 7.1.2.

At the time of the research guides did not have an active relationship with ACAP, despite the literature which promotes the role of guides in the development of tourism (e.g. Gurung, Simmons and Devlin, 1996), and their potential role as disseminators of low impact education (Weiler and Ham, 2002). Most interactions between these stakeholders were centred upon the obtaining of permits from ACAP for their clients, or alternatively getting these permits stamped at checkpoints. There was no longer a checkpoint in the village of Ghorepani, and consequently the ACAP staff in the village normally had no daily interaction with guides. Some guides felt a more direct relationship was necessary:

7.1.3.G GUIDE GHOREPANI: “ACAP does not have any relationship with trekking guides... first they need to do that. Normal [the majority of] guides don’t know about the codes of conduct”.

The need for such a relationship and improved communication was also illustrated in the contradictory / conflicting perceptions of ACAP held by guides (see Section

6.1.3) and additionally the expressed desires of some guides to know more about the natural environment of the area:

7.1.3.H GUIDE TATOPANI: L stated he felt he had good level of knowledge about the environment, but would like to know more.

7.1.3.I GUIDE GHOREPANI: R said guides (including himself) believed they had a good knowledge of the Annapurna environment but wanted to learn more.

In addition to those practices mentioned above, internal economic forces were of paramount importance in deciding the actions of guides and porters. This is evidenced obviously in the initial reason for guides being present in the area (See also Appendix 5). However it was also leading to some potential guides having obtained the position through family members/relatives, (but possessing no experience in the area) utilising initial deceptions in order to achieve the economic opportunities afforded by guiding:

7.1.3.J OBSERVATION TATOPANI: He was asking about the route to Ghorepani and whether it was straightforward. [S] asked him if his trekkers knew that he had never been around the circuit, and he said he thought they had guessed now but they didn't mind. He was reading a Lonely Planet about the route which probably belonged to his clients. This was the same situation as [name] who had also pretended to be a guide despite having had no experience and having never been to the area. [S] said this was common.

As Section 7.1.1 alluded to, economic forces were primary factors in the guides' decision making in the area, and they also often underpinned the continuance of relationships with clients outside the area on the part of the guides and occasionally porters.

7.1.3.K OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: K said he didn't want to go up Poon Hill the other day, so was going to suggest to his clients they sleep in because the view would be better later. But he thought he might miss out on a good tip if he did that, so he changed his mind.

7.1.3.L OBSERVATION TATOPANI: [P] said that when the trek was finished he would take his clients to his place near Pokhara to meet his family. If his trekkers were 'good people' he would always ask them to come to his place, and then they could maybe help with his children's school fees or books.

The interrelationships and roles played by other trekking support staff depended principally upon their profession, their language ability, their culture, and their familiarity with the guide and/or lodge owners/workers.

For example the chefs and/or cooks of camping groups usually travelled in advance of such groups, and upon arrival until leaving the village were busy with preparations, and hence had limited involvement with other key actors (excepting the 'sirdar,' meaning 'head guide'). The ability of porters to converse in the native tongue of trekkers (which was usually limited) was the principal factor determining the level of their interaction with them, and additional factors included whether the porters and the trekkers were walking together or at different times. The porters' familiarity (i.e. if they were regularly worked) with the guide, along with their ethnicity and or caste were the determining factors in the level of their interaction with the guide (i.e. Brahmin guides were less likely to interact with porters). When a number of porters were involved, for example with groups trekking, the seniority of the porter would be the determining factor in the level of their interaction with guides.

As such the interrelationships and roles of trekking support staff and hired lodge workers have not been detailed here because they did not emerge as direct or key determinants upon outcomes of tourism and development in the fieldwork area.

It is important to note that despite their key role as cultural brokers and mediators and (reiterating Salazar's 2005 findings) the position they occupy between global, national and local cultures, guides are underrepresented in the tourism literature (Gurung, Simmons and Devlin, 1996). This is particularly so in the literature on tourism in Nepal, despite the significant role trekking tourism plays in Nepal's economy.

7.1.4 Local Management Agencies

Varying levels of interaction with and/or knowledge of ACAP's activities occurred amongst the actors. Consequently key actors had differing perceptions of ACAP's role as an external and/or internal force in the area as noted in Section 6.1.3. Furthermore, the assumed roles of ACAP and its relationship to other key actors in the region (and their perceptions of it) varied according to the ACAP staff member and the actors concerned, as the findings presented in this section illustrate.

In initial interviews ACAP officials portrayed trekkers as responsible and cooperative. They stated that most trekkers read the ACAP Minimum Impact Code and that the majority acted responsibly and followed the Code, with little or no problems. This sort of engagement with the relevant educational literature (such as ACAP's Minimum Impact Code – see Appendix 10) would appear to be of particular benefit in incorporating ideas of sustainable development in the area given the findings of author such as Marion and Read (2007)⁹⁵.

However afterwards, in later discussions and often in more informal settings, the officials would frequently express contrasting beliefs. Officials commonly stated that trekkers would often violate the code and act irresponsibly. They often voiced the belief that although the trekkers may not know the details of the Minimum Impact Code, they (the trekkers) knew what was accepted/expected behaviour. Despite this knowledge, the officials believed trekkers often feigned ignorance in order to circumvent such behaviours.

There was a disconnection existing between trekkers and ACAP officials due to the trekkers' lack of awareness of ACAP and its functions and relevance, and a lack of direct engagement with trekkers on the part of ACAP officials. While

⁹⁵ Marion and Read (2007:5) found that such “visitor education efforts evaluated did effectively alter visitor knowledge, behaviour and/or resource and social conditions in the intended [i.e. towards low visitor impacts] direction”.

trekkers were frequently aware of ACAP, it was commonly perceived solely in terms of its role in administering visitor entrance permits for the area:

7.1.4.A TREKKER GHOREPANI: “[ACAP?] I don’t know about them really – [because] my guide got my permits”.

The exceptions to this were trekkers who had been in the ACA for longer periods, trekkers who had a guide who was well-informed about the activities of ACAP, and/or trekkers who were part of a group which had previously viewed the ACAP promotional video in Ghandruk. Although such trekkers often had some idea of ACAP’s management role, they frequently did not have a detailed knowledge of ACAP’s activities (i.e. involving the management of tourism within the area).

7.1.4.B TREKKER GHOREPANI: “The ACAP staff just check people in and out”.

7.1.4.C TREKKER GHOREPANI: “Who is ACAP? ... I thought they were just a government department”.

Such findings perhaps highlight the fact that despite the significant literature on tourism impacts in Nepal (Nepal, 2000b) much of the literature on management within the Annapurna Conservation Area (and indeed on many of the protected areas around the world) often tends to concentrate upon the relationship between management organisations and local communities⁹⁶. Whilst this is undoubtedly a key relationship, the relationship between management agencies and tourists (and the amount and the quality of the interaction between them) is also important when considering issues of sustainable development in the area (See Section 6.1.4).

⁹⁶ See for example; Bushell and Eagles (2007), Bajracharya (2002), and Nepal (2000a).

In the Tatopani and Ghorepani areas for example, individual trekkers had frequently not absorbed information on ACAP activities. This was despite purchasing their permits from an ACAP office in either Pokhara or Kathmandu and passing through the ACAP checkpoint at Ghar Khola, all of which contained detailed information on ACAP and their activities (appearing as posters on the wall and in leaflet form) in the ACA. In the instances where trekkers had booked a guide prior to their trek, the guide or agency responsible often assumed the role of purchasing the permits and the guides often completed the bureaucratic details associated with the Ghar Khola checkpoint.

Trekkers travelling from Tatopani to Ghorepani were usually passing the checkpoint in the initial stages of a reasonably strenuous day's journey, and subsequently were usually unwilling to spend time digesting the information at the checkpoint. Alternatively trekkers travelling from Ghorepani to Tatopani were nearing the completion of a reasonably strenuous descent, and hence were also often unwilling to digest the information. Such points may seem minor, yet as a consequence, ACAP's attempts at communicating their assumed role (and/or associated ideas) to trekkers appeared to be meeting with only limited success: As such, the space between the published policies of structural agencies and the reality in the field becomes apparent. Whilst the WTO informs the World Summit on Sustainable Development that it commits itself to "use communication opportunities with customers and host communities to pass on the messages and practices of sustainable development" (WTO, 2002:24), the reality of this message getting to key stakeholders in the field is thus often different.

Trekkers who had knowledge of ACAP and its activities had frequently gained this knowledge from guidebooks. Other trekkers, principally group trekkers, had gained information on ACAP through viewing the ACAP video presentation at the ACAP headquarters at Ghandruk. Although the Ghorepani office of ACAP had utilised the same video presentation in the past, it was not viewed by trekkers as particularly effective, and commonly considered as more of a marketing exercise for ACAP:

7.1.4.D TREKKER GHOREPANI: He said they were aware of ACAP because they had been to Ghandruk and seen had seen the ACAP video presentation - it was included as part of the itinerary by their trekking company. At this point (T) stated “I fell asleep during it” and there was a consensus that not much had been gained from it.

These results from interviews and observations with trekkers conflicted with the perceptions of some ACAP officials of the interrelationships between the two groups, and of the transferral of knowledge from ACAP to trekkers. However there were conflicting views between the ACAP officials of the efficacy of such measures, as detailed below.

Although trekkers frequently relied upon their guides for information regarding ACAP, the ACAP officials of Ghorepani did not have regular contact or communication with guides, porters and other trekking staff in the area. As Section 6.1.3 noted, there was considerable variation in the views of these guides as to ACAP’s efficacy as an external/internal force, and similarly, there was considerable variation amongst the perceptions of these stakeholders of the organisation and their interrelationships with it (see Section 7.1.4).

The interactions between these two groups of actors were usually confined to the checkpoints⁹⁷ where ACAP’s tasks were to:

7.1.4.E ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “...register names and permits, passport, nationalities, guide (their name), porters, total days, backpack tourists, FIT - free independent tourists”.

When questioned on ACAP’s role with reference to guides in the fieldwork area, local ACAP staff cited the work of Trekking Agencies’ Association of Nepal (TAAN) in licensing guides and believed that the guides were regulated by this. Although the staff noted their interactions with guides at the checkpoint, the

⁹⁷ In previous years there had been a checkpoint in Ghorepani but this had been shut down. The nearest checkpoint to the fieldwork area was shut down under Maoist orders in the initial stages of the research fieldwork phase.

Ghorepani staff rarely worked at a checkpoint. In these circumstances such interactions were also minimal (see above).

The variation in guides' perceptions of ACAP (see Section 7.1.4), and their lack of in-depth knowledge of ACAP's information and advice for trekkers (see Section 7.1.1) could be attributed to some degree to their lack of interaction with ACAP or its officials. This is an issue which has since received some recognition, with TAAN and KMTNC agreeing on 29th June 2005 to sign a memorandum of understanding to work together on "...tourism promotion, conservation, conducting trekking guide training supporting porters and discouraging illegal operations" (Shah, 2005: "TAAN, KMTNC Agree to Work Together", para. 2).

In later discussions the officials voiced perceptions of lodge owners and the general community which conflicted with perceptions voiced in initial interviews. Initial statements alluding to a non-problematic harmonious relationship with lodge owners were later amended with comments which highlighted the intransigence of the locals to change, their focus upon economic factors to the detriment of other issues connected with sustainable development, and their perceived non-interest/complacency in participating in ACAP/LMC instigated activities. The Lodge Management Committee was perceived to reflect this intransigence of the wider lodge-owner community, although the ACAP officials often voiced their perceptions in terms of the lodge owners generally rather than the LMC specifically.

The problematic nature of the interrelationships between ACAP staff and the local community in Ghorepani (see Section 6.2.3) resulted in the officials (apart from the Women's Development Officer), being largely perceived and perceiving themselves as a separate entity to the village. The observation below recorded what the researcher detailed as a metaphor for this interrelationship during the fieldwork phase:

7.1.4.F OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Postal trip. Saw metaphor on the way to post office in Sikha – young ACAP guy from the checkpoint at Gar Khola on his way to Narcheng with money for the bridge. He was dressed in a down ski-jacket and western clothes – behind him about three paces is the old (about 60-65?) helper guy from Ghorepani ACAP – he is carrying all the young guy's stuff and is dressed in more traditional clothing – which is not in very good condition... The ACAP guy is carrying nothing. The local expert?

The ACAP staff members' - at times strained - relationship with lodge owners was transparent in interviews with lodge owners, the officials' lack of interaction with these lodge owners, and the strained nature of the Lodge Management Committee meetings. Yet the ACAP staff frequently omitted or disregarded such frictions in their summary of their relationships with lodge owners. Such clashes were occasionally blamed upon the lodge owners' desire for financial gain over other measures related to sustainable development. However such tensions in the relationship were frequently omitted altogether in discussions.

7.1.4.G ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: "[The main success of ACAP in the area] is the support of local people for and by ACAP".

Such frictions appear to have been overlooked in the literature on the relationship also. Nepal (2000a83-83) notes that "ACAP has encouraged local participation in resource management and helped villagers to maintain control over their resources and identify their immediate needs and priorities...The relationships between the conservation area, tourism and local communities have been favourable". Whilst Nepal does not acknowledge the tensions which existed in the relationship in Ghorepani, it must be acknowledged that Ghorepani was one VDC amongst 55 that ACAP was consulting with at the time.

Upon further questioning about their perceptions of the local interrelationships, (when inferences of possible inconsistencies with those of the lodge owners were suggested), the ACAP staff invariably mentioned a good relationship with the villagers of Upper Narcheng, a village outside the research area and off the trekking trail. Perceptions of the lodge owners prioritising of financial gain over

tourism management issues were also mentioned at such times by ACAP staff, as was ACAP's changing focus from sustainable development through tourism management to the economic uplifting of the areas off the tourist trail using alternative methods (see Section 6.1.4).

In initial interviews ACAP officials frequently perceived ACAP to be an effective and a positive force within the area, with harmonious relationships with other stakeholders in the region. They commonly identified the villages of Ghandruk and Chomrong (both outside the research area) as examples both of ACAP's work and also of best practice examples of tourism management in the area. However this is perhaps unsurprising given that Nepal (2000b:670) notes that "Most of the community development programs initiated by this project [ACAP] are concentrated in the Ghandruk area while the vast majority of poor farmers in other areas have hardly benefited".

When questioned about the changes brought about in Ghorepani ACAP officials identified the introduction of back-burning stoves, the re-roofing and re-cladding of the lodges, the relocation of lodges that were previously further up Poon Hill, the self imposed ban on further lodge-building, the recycling centre and the projects of the Mothers Group (e.g. the building of lavatories on Poon Hill, and the waste bins there) as significant changes in the village. Past attempts at change in the village which had been failures were also noted; for example a reforestation project, and the introduction of solar panels for hot showers.

Future possible changes related to tourism and sustainable development which ACAP staff based in the village of Ghorepani identified were primarily technological in nature. These included the introduction of improved solar panel technology, and the introduction of the "Safe Water" drinking stations (which were in place in other parts of the Annapurna Conservation Area). Additional future changes included the making of arts and crafts for retail and future cultural shows by the Womens Group, the maintenance / repair of the trekking trail to Ghandruk, and the broadcasting of an ACAP video for the benefit of trekkers which was being shown in the village of Ghandruk also. Staff in the village were

presently working with villagers on improving waste management facilities and the construction of a new ACAP centre with a Magar museum and environmentally-friendly waste management facilities. Despite the variance in assessment of the above measures between ACAP and the local lodge owners, the officials claimed there was no appraisal system in place locally, or in the wider organisation of ACAP.

The ACAP officials primarily viewed their role as one of ‘tourism management’ (which they perceived as managing the impacts of tourism) traditionally, however they noted the shift of focus of the organisation to uplifting other areas economically. This shift of focus reflects a need determined in the literature in the 1990s for greater dissemination in the area of the economic benefits of tourism⁹⁸.

Despite this, ACAP officials still cited unmanaged tourism as the “biggest possible danger” to the area. The ACAP staff identified this as the principal threat to changes which their agency was attempting to implement (in conjunction with the LMC and its sub-committees) in the village of Ghorepani. This was resulting in conflicts at the Lodge Management Committee meetings between ACAP representatives and members of the LMC.

7.1.4.H OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: ACAP staff expressing frustration – particularly over attitudes of lodge owners. Discussions in LMC are getting quite animated between AO1 and lodge owners over directions and choices.

ACAP's interrelationships with trekkers were were also problematic; however this was primarily due to the lack of interrelationships occurring as noted above.

When the influence of ACAP or its activities (supposedly tasked with managing tourism's impacts) was raised for example, trekkers often referred back to their guides or locals for comment or information, or mentioned the bureaucratic

⁹⁸ Pobocik and Butalla (1998:168) note that “the problem is that much of the revenue generated by tourism is very likely to bypass the local communities”.

functions, or individual functions (e.g. the painted ACAP rubbish bins) rather than functions such as the Minimum Impact Code. Such findings further reinforce the earlier points made in relation to the efficacy of ACAP in successfully delivering education programmes (see Marion and Read, 2007). It must be noted however, such communication or interrelationships between ACAP and trekkers were undoubtedly more difficult given the political situation and insurgency (see Section 1.1.2). For example, whilst ACAP had in the past conducted video evenings, this was not possible due to the curfew imposed on the villages at the time of the research (see Section 5.1.2).

Whilst ACAP in effect constituted the Local Area Management Agency of Ghorepani, in Tatopani this role was purportedly fulfilled by the Bhurung-Tatopani Village Development Committee (VDC). As Appendix 5 notes, the Bhurung-Tatopani Village Development Committee (VDC) was comprised of members from the village of Bhurung. As this village was approximately 30 minutes trek off the tourist trail and the VDC members were farmers, they did not interrelate with other key actors apart from lodge owners in Tatopani, and then only occasionally.

The Bhurung-Tatopani VDC members were reluctant to speak of their interrelationship with Tatopani lodge owners, yet, like ACAP in Ghorepani, they also identified an over-emphasis upon economic gain of the lodge owners and villagers in Tatopani. The VDC members also voiced the belief that the interrelationships between the two villages were no longer as strong socially as they had been in previous years. They cited the example of religious ceremonies at the temple (in the hills above Tatopani and between the two villages), which it was claimed were usually no longer attended by Tatopani lodge owners and villagers. This was also attributed to a breakdown in social obligations and the over-emphasis on economic gain associated with tourism, and mentioned above. Despite these perceptions however, VDC members were united in their desire to establish/launch tourism in their village (see Section 7.2).

7.2 Rationales and Realities

Section 7.1 examined the interrelationships between key actors and their perceptions of their role. The actors' rationales of tourism and sustainable development and their subsequent behaviours in context also emerged as a central theme, and will now be examined.

The disparity between rationales of the various environmental contexts of the principal actors, their underlying theoretical conceptualisations and the contextual/situational actualities of the actors' behaviours emerged as a key theme of the results. Rationales of sustainable development through tourism varied as groups of actors placed different emphasis and values upon environmental contexts and applied and used contextual evidence to support or reinforce these assumptions. When the actions of players conflicted with their stated rationales various methods were utilised to alleviate or discount these dissonances.

7.2.1 Natural Environment

Section 3.4 of Chapter 3 identified the complexities involved in conceptualising the natural environment, and the differences in backgrounds, cultures and religious convictions of the various actors resulted in considerable variety in their conceptualisations of the natural environment. This section examines the rationales of the natural environment and tourism's relationship to it; i.e. the key actors, their subsequent behaviours, and the context within which this was occurring.

The natural environment was rationalised as a primary context by trekkers in the Annapurna Conservation Area and was the principal focus in discussions of

tourism and sustainable development in the area. This concurs with the findings of simultaneous research in the fieldwork area by Holden (2006:5) indicating that 66% of trekkers in the area “regard(ed) themselves as possessing a higher level of environmental concern than the average tourist”. The results suggested this emphasis was accentuated by both the influence of guidebooks and the lack of accessibility to the local culture (see Sections 6.1.1 and 7.2.4) as well as immediate visual cues provided by the surrounding natural environment to a more limited extent.

Trekkers commonly rationalised the natural environment in a sense whereby influences were disparate, stand-alone and distinct. The influences identified were invariably human and negative and were frequently voiced in terms of perceived negative impacts on the natural environment (e.g. concerns over deforestation) in the area. They were usually voiced in terms of either the extent of degradation to the natural environment, or the perceived lack of degradation when contrasted with previously acquired perceptions (e.g. litter - media reports on the Everest rubbish trail, guidebooks). A need for preservation against human influence or development or preservation ethic (as critiqued by Wilshusen et al, 2002) was commonly cited, sometimes substantiated by the need to preserve tourism in the area⁹⁹.

Trekkers’ reflections on the influence of the industry upon the natural environment were typically limited to direct and visible impacts and were often related to issues of deforestation or waste management. Although deforestation was frequently raised by trekkers as a topical issue, trekkers’ views on the scale of it and the tourism industry’s impacts on these areas were mixed and, as the trekkers themselves sometimes admitted, largely uninformed (See Section 6.1).

⁹⁹ However it must be noted that Western trekkers who had arrived in the area from India repeatedly referred to Nepal in positive terms when comparing the two, and statements that in contrast to India, Nepal was ‘civilised’, ‘like coming back to reality’, and ‘less polluted’ were common.

7.2.1.A TREKKER GHOREPANI: “It’s hard to know what is due to tourism and what is due to locals or just the increasing signs of the outside world”.

7.2.1.B TREKKER TATOPANI: “There seems to be quite a lot of littering and deforestation, but it is hard to know to what extent trekkers are responsible for it”.

Amongst those that perceived deforestation to be occurring and problematic, there was a variety of beliefs voiced including that locals were responsible, that the industry itself was largely responsible, that it was a combination of the industry and locals, and that it was difficult to discern who was responsible. Typically trekkers who believed that significant levels of deforestation were occurring perceived the local communities to be largely responsible, with the tourism industry an indirect contributor with a varying degree of culpability.

7.2.1.C: TREKKER GHOREPANI: Said she saw some examples of deforestation, and quite a lot of litter around, and said that she thought it was mainly caused by locals. She said “It wouldn’t happen in Europe - it seems to be an Asian thing, - maybe a cultural thing”.

7.2.1.D: TREKKER TATOPANI: “We saw them cutting down these big trees only two days from here. There were people on wooden platforms chopping down big trees and building more platforms so they could cut down even more trees”.

Trekkers’ perceptions of the causes and scale of, and suggested remedies for these impacts varied between a relatively few explanations; however these were often apparently contradictory and did not refer to capacity factors.

The trekkers’ propensity to apply reductionist logic when rationalising issues within the area was undoubtedly underscored by their transient nature and superficial interpretations of the area (see Section 6.1.1). These misinterpretations of environmental contexts can be considered an additional feature of the tourism and host and guest relationship (as identified by UNESCO, 1976; in Shaw and Williams 2002:98). Whilst trekkers frequently referred to what they perceived to

be happening (e.g. deforestation, or non-use of solar-power) the underlying causal factors (e.g. “why” such outcomes were occurring)¹⁰⁰ were not considered or pondered.

7.2.E TREKKER GHOREPANI: “I want to say to them all [the lodge owners] “Why are you burning firewood? Why not use solar power!! (see below)”.

7.2.1.F LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Here, there are no other means [to heat water]. [The] electricity [is] not regular, [there are only] three coils [and] one [is] damaged, two [are] working. [We were] advised not to use [them for] heating. [The] solar power pipes [are] frozen and cracked. [The] sun is not consistent – [Ghorepani is] not [a] sunny place. April [is the] hottest month. [In] winter [there is] no sun. [In the] rainy season [summer, we] have to dry [our] clothes in [the] dining room”.

7.2.1.G OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: [C – author of a popular guidebook on the Annapurna area] has arrived at the [name] lodge. He got here early and I didn’t get a chance to introduce myself. Overhead him say “This food tastes terrible –it tastes of kerosene.” This is because it is not cooked with firewood. The [S] lodge is one of the few to regularly use kerosene for cooking.

Lodge owners, guides and ACAP officials suggested this lack of reflection on the trekkers’ behalf was due to a lack of appreciation of the variance between the trekkers’ home context and that of the majority world context they were travelling in (or “over” – see Section 6.1).

Presumptions that the area’s various environmental contexts were distinct entities was further evident in the promotion by trekkers of ‘remedies’ for the issues they perceived in the area which invariably involved direct measures on one or two of the areas environmental contexts. These solutions were frequently non-contextual and invariably externalised to other actors, including other trekkers. The need for education of local actors was a common observation of trekkers, as was the provision of recycling facilities.

¹⁰⁰ Examples of ‘why’ such outcomes were occurring included climatic conditions, landslides, economic pressures, etc.

Trekkers often disassociated themselves from perceived resource issues and/or negative impacts in the area, and in fact often (in the case of young FITs – Free Independent Travellers) from the trekking community itself. Perceived negative impacts associated with tourism were extrapolated to the industry or to variables such as modernisation, whilst strategies of disassociation were utilised with regards to personal impacts. Such extrapolations suggest that whilst “the industry has the potential to undermine itself by being insensitive to the environmental impacts it is causing” (Andereck et al, 2005:1059), such insensitivity is occurring at a personal individual level as well as at wider levels of tourism operations.

These actions of trekkers would also appear to concur with lodge owners perceptions of changing typologies of trekkers (see Section 7.1). In particular, these perceptions were of trekkers increasingly interested in a (fully serviced) ‘holiday’ in an environment not geared to match their perceptions rather than ‘an experience’ in a ‘less developed’ destination.

The other actors generally perceived trekkers to be knowledgeable to some degree of the behaviours requested by codes of conduct in the area (although not necessarily the ACAP Minimum Impact Code).

7.2.1.H ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: AO2 believes 80% of trekkers are environmentally aware, with the remaining 20% either bargaining or ordering what they want when they want it.

Whilst ACAP and the guides initially claimed the trekkers were largely following them, it later emerged that these actors believed trekkers to be often knowingly disregarding such codes, including those related to other environmental contexts (see subsequent sections)

7.2.1.I ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “Most of the trekkers know what they should do, but they often bluff – they go against it. More than 80% come into the checkpoint and read everything”.

Pobocik and Butalla (1998:168) found that the responsibility for environmental degradation cannot be placed on tourists and that “the causes and solutions are more complex”. Whilst this research agrees with their identification of the complexity of the situation, there is no doubt trekkers are having a considerable impact upon the natural environment of the area, particularly with regard to resource usage. Furthermore, observations during the research period supported anecdotal evidence that trekking tourism is not economically paying the full costs of its impact environmentally. For example, while tourism has been influential in the introduction of alternative fuel sources into the area, a large number of lodges still use wood. Although the increasing pressure on local forests in the research area is due in part to increasing populations, tourism is a major contributor. Anecdotal comments and evidence suggested that between Ulleri and Ghorepani – to Tadopani the rhododendron forests were being hollowed out and largely consisted of older trees with a limited life expectancy due to the tourism industry’s demands on younger trees:

7.2.1.J: GUIDE GHOREPANI: “It is easier to fell young trees secretly – they make little noise – and can be taken away easier. Young trees are being eaten by mules and buffalo brought in to serve the tourism industry amongst other things.”.

Other examples include the fact that hotels are made out of wood, but local homes are usually not (although ACAP has introduced building restrictions). In Ghorepani a hotel in the peak trekking season may consume more than 10 quintal (1q = 100kgs) of firewood each day. An average household was estimated at consuming 25kg per day for heating and the cooking of rice. Similar resource consumptions (with associated complexities) are associated with water usage (see Section 7.3). Such estimates suggest that although not a sole contributor, trekking tourism is not paying the full price for its resource usage in the area, although the application of permit fees to such equations does make such contentions more complex.

Although guides commonly professed in initial interviews to have considerable knowledge of the natural environment, once sufficient rapport had been established they frequently indicated they would like to learn more. However interviews, observations, and guides' statements suggested that the guides were varied in their conceptualisations of the meaning of the natural environment (commonly referred to as "the environment") as a term of reference for communication with their clients. Guides obviously had their own personal terms of reference of their environment and conceptualisations of it bound by their ethnicity and background. However the way they conceptualised its meaning for their (predominantly western) clientele varied, with guides who had been on a TAAN training course commonly perceiving knowledge of the 'environment' as knowing the names of local mountains, villages, and fauna (which they had learnt on the course).

Guides alternatively conceptualised the natural environment as an entity to be preserved, or stated that the environment had been 'disturbed' and decried the effects of litter pollution upon it. Such conceptualisations of the natural environment reflect western anthropocentric analyses which perceive the environment as a separate entity to the human existence. Ironically, they perhaps signify a shift away from a more "inclusive and spiritual" view of the environment to a "rationalised, scientific and external view" – the antithesis of what authors such as Holden (2003:105) claim is required for a more appropriate environmental ethic.

Conceptualisations of the natural environment and its relationship to tourism of the guides, and the degree to which they were informed by western conceptualisations, was based on a number of influences. As detailed in Section 7.1.1, some guides believed that guides in general gained more knowledge of the natural environment of their clients than they imparted/conveyed, although this was contested. A further source was the trekkers' guide books which the guides sometimes consulted (see Section 6.2.7), however many guides could not read English or were illiterate.

This common inability to read English or illiteracy amongst many guides coupled with the lack of any formal training or interaction with ACAP (see Section 7.1) resulted in the majority of guides lacking knowledge of ACAP's Minimum Impact Code. Although guides often professed to awareness of the Code, most could not recite any details from it. Issues such as illiteracy amongst guides pose questions of attempts at tour guide training (see Weiler and Ham 2002, for example) and attempts for capacity building in majority countries. Such training programmes would appear to presuppose a level of social capital¹⁰¹ that many village-based guides do not possess.

The guides generally did not perceive the impacts of tourism on the natural environment to be as prominent as those on the other environmental contexts; however some guides did note that the influence of tourism was resulting in the local communities losing their traditional bond (based on religion and spirituality) with nature.

7.2.1.K GUIDE TATOPANI: "Nepali believe[d] a tree was a god. If [they] cut a tree (only if necessary) then ten trees have to be planted to replace it. Every area has temples – different gods, [but] same basic meanings – the [surrounding] area cannot be cut [due to] the relationship between plant, animal, and nature – but these areas are starting to be cut..."

7.2.1.L GUIDE TATOPANI: "[Traditionally] One village had two or three water spouts – depending on village and water resource – the land above the water spout can't be used. This is [often] where trees were planted – but weren't to be cut – the land below can be used though. – So a toilet [etc] can't be made above the water spout – this [is a] religious belief with a scientific [background]. But this type of cultural belief [is] slowly giving way..."

Guides also noted increased levels of deforestation due to the need for wood for firewood, lodge building, and furniture. Whilst guides in general did not place the level of emphasis on the natural environment expressed by trekkers (see Section 7.1) some did claim local villagers were losing their bond with nature due to their desire for economic gain.

¹⁰¹ The relevance of which is highlighted by Jones (2005).

Guides never mentioned their own effects on the natural environment unless questioned, when they would profess their influences to be negligible. Observations suggested guides' impacts on the natural environment were considerably less than those of their clients, with guides usually consuming a similar amount of resources as their hosts as opposed to their clients (e.g. eating the same food, cold showers, etc). Alternatively guides variously externalised environmental issues and their responsibility to every other stakeholder (as noted in Section 7.1).

The rationale of the ACAP organisation towards the natural environment was based upon the specific geographical sector involved and the specific core programmes for that sector. In the case of the "Special Management Zone" of Ghorepani, the focus was upon tourism management, women's development and forest management (See Appendix 5), thus the core activities of the offices in Ghorepani at the time revolved around these foci. For example within its tourism management focus ACAP was endeavouring to get a Safe Water drinking station set-up in the village whilst simultaneously obtaining the shopkeepers' and lodge owners' agreement to ban the (comparatively lucrative) sale of plastic bottled water in the village.

ACAP officials of Ghorepani commonly cited the example of Chhomrong (in another ACAP sector outside the fieldwork area) as a model village, and this example also features in the academic and industry literature as a model village (Bajracharya, 2002; Last Frontiers Trekking, 2004). Interviews with the ACAP officials indicated Chhomrong had been accorded this status due to its application of ACAP ideals; for example the micro-hydro power project and subsequent reduction in the use of firewood and the banning of the sale of plastic-bottled water. In the sector of Ghorepani, the local ACAP officials cited the case of the village of Narcheng (upriver from Tatopani, yet off the tourist trail and outside the fieldwork area) as an example of a village with which they were enjoying a constructive (i.e. non-problematic) relationship.

Yet the ACAP official in Ghorepani believed that the village possessed considerable obstacles to successful tourism management and development. These included the geographical, climatical and locational factors identified (see Section 6.2) but also the intransigence of the local lodge owners and their prioritising of economic gain.

Despite the obstacles to successful tourism management and development identified by ACAP above, the degree to which ACAP measures in the ACA area and in the fieldwork area in particular were successful was relative. ACAP often (particularly in initial interviews) rationalised its operations as successful, and even in instances of apparent failure, positives were found.

7.2.1.M ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “Some measures not successful but side effects successful – e.g. tree planting [initiated by] ACAP. [The planting of] Japanese Fir Pines not a success, but a success because it was collective action –locals don’t see it that way”.

However, as Section 7.1 demonstrated, there were mixed perceptions of ACAP existing amongst other key actors. Interviews with ACAP staff and other actors along with observations suggested conflicts existed between ACAP’s role as a non-governmental organisation (and the subsequent perceptions of this) and its assumed role as a vehicle for local community led grassroots development. These conflicts were becoming manifest in a variety of ways, and becoming open at Lodge Management Committee meetings (see Section 7.1).

The structure, core values and focus of ACAP reflected its western-inspired sponsorship (both financially and ideologically), but perhaps more pertinently, reflected its role as a non-governmental organisation. Due to the prevalence of NGOs in Nepal over the past decades and their subsequent role as principal employers in a nation with considerable underemployment (see Section 6.1.4), non-governmental organisations were presumed by many Nepalis to be high paying careers. Although associated with charitable or volunteer work in the West, staff of non-governmental organisations in Nepal usually earned

considerably more than the average wage in a largely subsistence economy. In this respect ACAP's role as a non-governmental organisation could be said to be in conflict with the organisation working at a local community level and serving the community.

The impacts of ACAP in the fieldwork area were limited by the amount the project was paying its officials and the roles they were expected to fulfil, in an area where much of the work was either primary (i.e. physical tree planting for which the Ghorepani office had one elderly Natural Resource Conservation assistant) or specialised technical work. In addition to these conditions there were other factors affecting the success of ACAP operations and their ability to practically realise the rationales they were asserting for tourism and sustainable development in the sector. The ethnic differences which were affecting the interrelationships between lodge owners and ACAP staff were undermining such operations (see Section 7.1). Furthermore a programme which was based upon technical solutions to resource usage (e.g. electricity, solar panels, safe water drinking stations) was undermined as such measures either were ineffective or created dependency.

7.2.1.N LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "ACAP must arrange technicians to fix power/ovens / electricity".

7.2.1.O GUIDE GHOREPANI: "Each office has local – NRC [Natural Resources Conservation] worker, cook etc – relegated to nothing job".

Initial interviews with ACAP suggested the ACAP officials perceived the organisation was underpinning constructive measures which were working to preserve the natural resource base. However, upon the establishment of sufficient rapport, alternative viewpoints came to light. ACAP officials suggested an overemphasis of lodge owners on economic gain, and violation of the Codes of Conduct by some trekkers (see Section 7.2.4). This externalising of culpability

also led to criticism of a perceived focus of trekkers and western interests on natural resource preservation:

7.2.1.P ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: AO1 claimed it was easy for developed countries to focus on environment conservation because their basic needs have been fulfilled, but developing countries have to focus on basic needs first. Gave the example of a Nepali farmer with no medical insurance. This statement by AO1 sounded like it came from elsewhere.

Yet lodge owners perceived this same undue focus on natural resource preservation in the aims of the ACAP organisation itself. Such a focus (and in fact the western interests underpinning it) could indeed be argued to be present in the conservation imperative of the project and its mother organisation (the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation). Furthermore the officials' criticisms of the foci and behaviours of trekkers were concurrent with a lack of effective engagement on the part of the officials and their organisation as a whole with both the trekkers and their guides (and the community as a whole)¹⁰² as noted earlier. This is perhaps reflected in the findings of Nyaupane and Thapa (2004), who suggested that in some instances ACAP campaigns of information and awareness (in this instance in regard to the environmental impacts of plastic water bottles) had been ineffective when confronted by the desires of trekkers.

The relationship between lodge owners and the natural environment was contextualised differently by the lodge owners than by other key actors. The relationship was sometimes contextualised by guides (and villagers resident in villages off the trail but near to it) as exploitative, and with an overemphasis on economic priorities as opposed to social, cultural, or natural environmental values.

Lodge owners were sometimes deemed by these other actors to be wasting natural resources. However such views were not universal, with other actors from the

¹⁰² Again it must be noted that this may well have been accentuated by the political situation, but interviews and discussions with guides, ACAP officials and anecdotal evidence from trekkers on return visits suggested this had previously been the case when there had been an ACAP checkpoint in the village.

same groups agreeing that the actions of lodge owners were responsible for placing some pressures on the natural environment but arguing that these were minor, particularly when assessed against the positive economic impacts being generated.

The lodge owners themselves viewed their relationship with the natural environment as being determined to a large extent by the requirements of the trekkers, and hence placed responsibility to some degree on that stakeholder group.

Although Pobocik and Butella (1998) cautioned against laying blame for environmental impacts on trekkers, placing such blame directly on lodge owners would be equally simplistic and uninformed. Whilst the choices and actions of the lodge owners were undoubtedly placing pressures upon resource usage, such choices and actions cannot be examined accurately as selective impacts using the western positivistic methods critiqued in Section 2.4. Hence, Appendix 11 only situates these choices and actions to a minor degree yet still provides an illustration of some of the contextual processes both at a minor and a more structural level in the area.

Whilst the processes in Appendix 11 were significant, the actions and choices of the lodge owners with regard to the natural environment were undoubtedly influenced to a large degree by indirect pressure from their trekking clientele (which was increasing – see Section 6.2.5). In addition it was undoubtedly influenced by competitive pressures brought about as a result of the cycle of competition amongst lodge owners in the area (see Appendix 12).

As a result of these pressures, the lodge owners placed more emphasis upon economic and political contexts (i.e. discussed more privately and at LMC meetings), as these pressures were more immediate (both physically and in relation to time) and were of more impact upon the lodge owners' immediate futures.

Lodge owners frequently voiced the perceptions that trekkers had a lack of awareness of, or simply choose to ignore the contextual factors and pressures related to the lodge owners' resources usage (including the part the trekkers themselves as individuals played in this). This included the increased reliance on firewood over alternatives (e.g. electricity, gas, kerosene, solar power) due to practicality (see Appendix 11). Lodge owners believed they were occasionally being demonised by trekkers for their use of wood, but trekkers did not appreciate these contextual factors.

The use of back boiler stoves was cited as a model example of technology which was simple, practical, did not require continued technical maintenance and helped conserve natural resources whilst being economically viable.

Alternatively, the other technical solutions to limit resource usage promoted by ACAP for example were often found to be impractical (see Appendix 11) and suggested as example of the failures of ACAP in the area by lodge owners in Ghorepani.

In addition to the factors noted in Appendices 11 and 12 and the economic considerations, the lodge owners' use of fuel wood was also conceptualised by the lodge owners in terms of its social implications. The collection of firewood involved either hired labourers (in the case of one group in Ghorepani these were orphans of a nearby village) or a member of the lodge's household, who did not have significant language ability in a additional language (usually English) and thus were not required at the lodge. The collection of firewood often involved such people being away from home for long days, and far from the village (see Nepal, 2000b).

Lodge owners viewed the pollution caused by trekkers in a similar fashion to the resource issues associated with the burning of firewood. Where measures which were economically viable were available, lodge owners undertook such measures.

However in cases where such measures were not available or practical, lodge owners frequently cited the needs or requirements of trekkers as a primary cause.

Yet lodge owners again conceptualised such instances differently from trekkers. Whilst lodge owners viewed such instances as further evidence of changing typologies amongst trekkers, trekkers alternatively viewed them as evidence of a change amongst village cultures, to a more materialistic and consumerist model. Trekkers subsequently often perceived a need for education amongst the local community in how to deal with these pollution and waste issues.

Finally, it is important to note that previous research has observed that widespread environmental impacts were present in the Annapurna Conservation Area prior to the establishment of the project (Nyaupane and Thapa, 2004; Nepal, 2000b). These analyses have also noted an increased awareness of tourism impacts due to the establishment of the Annapurna Conservation Project – a finding which was not able to be studied in the context of this research. As this section has noted however, this research has found that the complexity of the relationships between stakeholders and impacts on the natural environment has not been fully appreciated in past research, and thus issues of sustainable development not fully acknowledged.

7.2.2 Economic / Monetary

“Trekking are like bees”
Ghorepani Lodge owner

A consequence of the creation of a capitalist, market-based industry (i.e. tourism)¹⁰³ in an area of traditionally subsistence-based economy (i.e. subsistence farming) was the prominence of economic gain (or the minimisation of economic loss) as a driving force in relations between stakeholders. In the case of the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani, tourism, as the primary industry, was the context within which such relationships of economic gain were mostly determined. This section examines the economic environment of the area, and particularly the prominence of economic gain. The decisions which actors within the area were making on tourism and development-related behaviours in the various environmental contexts can be conceived as being increasingly individualistic, and based upon economic forces. This focus on economic profit and the increased competition brought about by market forces were resulting in changes in the traditional social and societal structures and an increasing individualisation, which is examined in Section 7.2.4.

Observations in the field suggested that those who benefited economically from tourism in the area included western trekking companies, trekking agencies in Kathmandu and Pokhara, and trekking guides and porters (who are almost always from outside the area). Amongst those who were resident in the area this list included lodge owners and their families (who often spent a significant percentage of their income outside the area), and those who were employed either directly or indirectly by the lodge owners. This group included chefs/cleaners, others employed to collect firewood, the mule owners and mule drivers, tea shop or storeowners in the villages (a small number) the local tailor or labourers, etc. In addition there were individuals who provided goods or services to the trekkers, e.g. the occasional porter hired locally for blistered or tired trekkers.

¹⁰³ Although it may be argued that the fixing of prices prevented it from being a fully capitalist market-based economy, as this section will note, in practice these measures were being circumvented in a competitive, market-based manner.

7.2.2.A OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: [LO20] of the [X] lodge was out all day collecting firewood today. Most other lodges are paying labourers to do it. Yesterday [R] and I talked to two of them... Collecting the wood was their only income.

Whilst tourism was the only major industry in the area, the spread of the monetary income at the time of the research was not great. Of the estimated 120 000 inhabitants of the park, some local anecdotal estimates were that perhaps 5% or less were direct recipients of tourism income, with perhaps 10% or less benefiting from some income from tourism indirectly (with those living on the tourist trail the most likely recipients). These findings would correspond with those of Nyaupane and Thapa (2004), Nepal (2000b), Pobocik and Butalla (1998), Banskota and Sharma (1995), and Gurung and De Coursey (1994), all of who found that expenditure in the area by tourists was relatively low, and/or dissemination of this spending amongst the local community/communities was not high. Others in the area had to rely on subsistence agriculture, or income generated from relatives working outside the ACA - either in Nepal or overseas.

Although the economic benefits of tourism were only directly reaching a small percentage of the resident population, the fact that the remaining population was mainly surviving on subsistence agriculture meant that tourism was the dominant force economically in the area. This importance is demonstrated by the way in which it was often viewed as an opportunity (in fact the sole opportunity) for economic growth and development by villages off the trail but adjacent to Ghorepani and Tatopani. This was despite residents in these villages (and one VDC) perceiving such an economisation of the tourist villages had led to a diluting of native traditional social and societal structures.

The influence of internal economic forces, in conjunction with social and/or cultural factors (see Section 7.1), resulted in interrelationships which were usually highly trekker dominated. Trekkers enjoyed considerable power due to the prominence given to the economic forces within the area. The status of the trekkers' position of power due to their economic potency largely went

unchallenged by actors in the area. Locals usually conceptualised it through a lens perspective of fatalism.

7.2.2.B LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Probably half of what you make in a lifetime [money-wise] is being worn by trekkers [i.e. trekkers clothing is often worth half of a Nepali villager’s lifetime wages]”.

Despite their highlighting of natural environmental matters, the trekkers’ personal requirements and the expenditure required to attain these personal requirements (or perceived needs) usually took precedence over natural environmental and/or social practices. This was particularly so amongst free and independent travellers. At an individual level, independent trekkers, especially those arriving in the country from India and/or those on a world trip (i.e. visiting a number of countries over an extended period of travel) were the most likely to take advantage of this economic power within the area. They frequently used bargaining techniques in both villages despite the publication of fixed prices and requests not to bargain (see Section 7.1).

7.2.2.C LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Tourists bargain. Mostly students – [If s/he] has to travel [to] many countries they are travelling for a year, [or] six months – but it’s not nice for us. They want clean water, hot water and so on and so on – but they want [it] for 20 rupees”.

Alternatively, trekkers on package tours frequently had no expenses in the area, apart from souvenirs and associated goods (e.g. camera film). Apart from the entrance fee into the area, trekkers not on package tours usually did not pay for anything except food and accommodation, guide and porters’ fees (if they were utilising them) and souvenir postcards etc. This meant that the money spent by trekkers in the area was going to a limited number of service providers, as noted in the preceding section. This corresponds with the research of Pobocik and Butalla (1998) who found that the contribution of group trekkers to the national

(Nepali) economy was higher, whilst the independent trekkers contributed more per person to the local economy.

The trekkers in general largely justified their personal and economic wants as needs through referring to their role as consumers as evidenced by bargaining practices and/or requests for ‘good’ (meaning western) food. When such economic actions on behalf of the trekkers contravened acceptable social behaviours and/or regulations (e.g. bartering in an area when aware of fixed prices) trekkers employed cognitive dissonance techniques (see Section 7.1.1) to justify their actions. Trekkers were overcoming the resulting cognitive dissonance by highlighting their roles as temporary consumers in an apparently market-based economy, or through professed ignorance.

In addition, the changing desires and /or typologies of trekkers over time (as detailed in Section 5.1) was further evidence of the power of trekkers economically to cause outcomes on the environmental contexts of the area. This was occurring through adding further impetus to the competition between lodge owners (as detailed in the “Cycle of Tourism Competition” in Appendix 12).

The evidence supported previous assertions (see Chapter 3) that trekkers were not paying the true cost of their experience at a local level, and were in fact being subsidised. Whilst trekkers’ expenditure during their stay in the country may have been in credit economically at a national level, at the local level the prices paid by trekkers, whilst higher than locals, did not cover the ‘opportunity’ costs of their visit (which was, in the context of a largely subsistence environment, a luxury). Resource issues such as the additional water, disposal of waste, the increased usage of energy (firewood) and importation of food were not directly accounted for in charges.

7.2.2.D LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Wood is more expensive [now]. [The] rule [is] only cut dead trees, but they are further and further away - [and] more expensive”.

Further evidence could be found in the fact that the trekkers' contribution to ACAP through the permit fee was being supplemented by donations to external agencies (see Section 1.2.2), however this does not take into account the fact that many lodge owners and some guides perceived there to be a lack of transparency over the accounts of ACAP and the KMTNC¹⁰⁴, and there were varying degrees of concern over how the income from these permits was spent.

Economic forces were of paramount importance in deciding the actions of guides and porters. This was evidenced in the initial reason for guides being present in the area, in a country with very high underemployment rates (see Section 6.1.4) It resulted in instances whereby guides were inexperienced or lacking in knowledge of the area, but the potential income to be gained acted as an incentive (see Section 7.1.3. and Appendix 5).

Economic forces were primary factors in the guides' decision making in the area, and also often underpinned the continuance of relationships with clients outside the area on the part of the guides and occasionally porters (see Section 7.1.3).

As Appendix 5 notes, the guides' place of origin was outside the research area in all cases during the fieldwork phase, although in concordance with the findings of Gurung, Simmons and Devlin (1996), virtually all the guides were Nepali. The guides' origins outside the research area also resulted in ramifications for the local economic environment. Staff such as guides or porters from outside the area usually spent the bare minimum of their wages in the research area on personal subsistence. This was to enable them to save money for the off-season, or if they were married, retain their wages for their family, wherever their family was. As a consequence the guides' expenditure within the fieldwork area was very low.

ACAP's proposals of a socialist economic system for the community were being challenged as an external force due to the organisation's own structure and policies and the perceived (by ACAP) intransigence of the lodge owners.

¹⁰⁴ There has been recent cause to believe these suspicions have validity (see Haviland, 2008).

Structural issues were cited by lodge owners in the area who referred to ACAP's pay rates as excessive and set-up as detrimental to the functioning of the organisation. A further practical example of this variance was to be found in the political situation at the time of the fieldwork. The situation was frequently interpreted by lodge owners through its effect on tourism numbers and income; this drop was deemed as more critical to locals than any natural environmental pressures. The (perceived) economic necessities of development were thus winning over the longer term visions of sustainability of the ACAP management agency.

7.2.2.D LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "[The] real problem is not enough tourists".

However ACAP's immediate focus was upon the establishment of a safe water drinking station and the measures necessary for this. The accentuation of such issues and the further divergence of opinion appeared possible with the reported change of focus of ACAP policies in the area (see Section 6.1.4) to a concentration upon villages off the trail, when ACAP lodge owners already believed they were not receiving due support at present for their contribution to tourism in the area.

Finally, despite the work of ACAP and the Bhurung VDC, levels of development within the area varied starkly, especially in the form of economic capacity.

7.2.2.D OBSERVATION TATOPANI: [B] recommended taking oranges up to Bhurung and so took a full pack.... Oranges proved very popular, the VDC members and [school teacher] said some of them had never had them before because they couldn't afford them (despite all the trees in Tatopani and trekkers drinking orange smoothies).

Whilst ACAP in Ghorepani was having difficulty suppressing the competitive instinct of lodge owners and diverting economic gains to the wider community, in the Tatopani area, the Chair of the Bhurung VDC was acknowledged (although

not overtly) as less powerful than the principal lodge owner in the village. Some lodge owners and villagers of Tatopani maintained that the Chair had in fact been given his role to appease villagers in the less economically developed villagers of Bhurung and that his lack of education was preventing him from making the appropriate decision. Such perceptions could illustrate an increasing divergence between villages on the trail and those off it, particularly considering the lack in economic benefits accrued from tourism (as reinforced by the findings of Pobocik and Butalla, 1998).

A quest for private gain through a market based model of competition was causing considerable disquiet amongst lodge owners and villagers in Ghorepani. This was despite (and in fact in conflict with) the ACAP-inspired community participatory model of development of Ghorepani, which had itself arisen from the previously largely subsistence economy of the lodge owners' home village of Khibang (see Section 1.2.2, Map 3 Appendix 1, and Appendix 5). The lodge owners of Tatopani, although descendants of traders and a trading culture, were also experiencing and concerned about increasing competition amongst themselves, despite their small numbers and informally agreed pricing structure.

In fact both villages had taken measures to restrict open market-based competition. In Ghorepani the Lodge Management Committee in cooperation with ACAP had taken action in the past to reduce levels of competition to prevent perceived unfair advantage. For example, a maximum number of rooms (fifteen) for a lodge had been agreed upon. Nevertheless this was being contravened as demonstrated in Quote 7.2.2.D. In Tatopani there had been informal agreement on pricing structures by the informal Lodge Management Committee.

7.2.2.D LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: "He is building more than fifteen rooms now. How many rooms does he have? [The] LMC says each lodge [is] to have fifteen rooms but [lodge name] has more than fifteen, so other lodges must build [more than their present fifteen or less rooms]".

The increasing levels of competition amongst lodge owners was creating divisions, particularly in Ghorepani. Despite the formal nature of the agreement on pricing in Tatopani there was a residing suspicion (supported by research observations) amongst lodge owners and their staff that this was being contravened. Related to this sense of economic competition was an increasing individualisation and breakdown of community activities and structures into family units, which was particularly prevalent in Ghorepani (see Section 7.2.3).

Although societal bonds were in fact superficially encouraged through the participatory aspects of the ACAP inspired management programme (see Section 7.2.4), these were being tested by increasingly vigorous business competition amongst lodge owners. These findings are in concordance with those of Nyaupane and Thapa (2004) and Nepal et al (2002). The business of lodging provision had pitched members of the wider clan of both villages, through lodge ownership, into direct competition with each other.

7.2.2.E LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Here we are relatives, but in business [being a] relative is not enough – everyone wants to earn money”.

7.2.2.F LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Business is [like a] war without weapon”.

Some lodge owners were continually circumventing or ignoring community-agreed regulations designed to control the levels of such competition. Such individualistic economic contest (as explored below) was further exacerbated by the drop in tourist numbers due to the political situation, and associated with an increasingly demanding trekking populace as noted in Section 6.1.

7.2.2.G LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “People like only new guest house[s]. [People] don’t like old guest house[s]. [The] danger is they will like [i.e. want] attached bathroom. Trekkers want more new things each year”.

7.2.2.H LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Most trekkers like the new bigger lodges and they go up the hill [to Ghorepani Duerali from Ghorepani]”.

Although improvements to lodges and bargaining over prices with trekkers (see Section 7.1) were the predominant areas of competition and disquiet amongst the lodge owners, a variety of other measures were used to gain competitive advantage, for example the deliberate use of attractive young daughters as frontline staff to attract guides (and thus their clients) to the lodge.

7.2.2.I GUIDE GHOREPANI: “[Lodge name] is always full, [and] busy [because] he [the lodge owner] has two beautiful daughters. He always puts them out to serve the guides when they arrive. Thakali are very cunning and use daughters to bring in guides and then trekkers. All the guides like going there”.

7.2.2.J OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Overheard M [LO] bargaining with two young American trekkers. They bargained hard - stated they would not pay for room only food – or they would go to another lodge. [LO] agreed to provide the room free of charge.

Observation 7.2.2.J illustrates the economic prerogative as determined by both lodge owners and trekkers. Of additional note was a follow-up observation to this quote, which, while not an everyday occurrence, was not a rare one either during the fieldwork period:

7.2.2.K OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: M [LO in previous quote] was bitter at the American tourists from last night. They were supposed to pay for their food but not accommodation but only ordered hot water (which they didn't pay for) and boiled their own noodles and tea bags for dinner and breakfast.

The latter observation illustrates the economic environment and its associated pressures the lodge owners were often working within. Lodges owners who could financially afford to utilise a variety of these measures were in turn the most successful, as illustrated in the Cycle of Tourism Competition within the village of Ghorepani (see Appendix 12).

Lodges which utilised more of the measures featured in this Cycle of Tourism Competition were more successful and in turn, through word-of-mouth recommendations to other trekkers and guides, attracted additional clientele and dominated the market.

7.2.2.L LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Tourists give villagers disadvantage. Trekkers are like bees, [they] all go to one lodge – maybe, not only in Ghorepani but everywhere because of other trekkers already in [the] lodge. They think it is better comfort and security, food, or [it is because of the] guidebooks... Trekkers forget that Nepal is underdeveloped. They are looking for comfort; they think they see [it] where there are other trekkers. When one lodge gets more than another there is [growing resentment]”.

Conversely lodge owners without the financial or other means to undertake the above measures were forced into offering (surreptitious) discounts to bargaining trekkers (See Section 7.1), and hence were caught in a negative economic spiral. Owners of older lodges continually complained of a growing disparity between the lodges in the amount of business they were generating and the resultant income.

7.2.2.M LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Trekkers like the new bigger lodges. How can we become new if we don’t have trekkers?”

7.2.2.N OBSERVATION TATOPANI: [Lodge name] is always busy – because of guides taking trekkers there, it’s food, guidebooks, because of the newer and more comfortable rooms...

Examples of competition such as that provided by the “Cycle of Tourism Competition” in Appendix 12 may be the norm in western market-based societies. However in a setting such as these two villages, based largely on tourism within a context of closely related families (principally either brothers and sisters or first cousins), such competition constituted a powerful internal force on both social and cultural life in the area.

Lodge owners who implemented visibly competitive practices which were outside those accepted by the community in general justified them as demonstrations of initiative, innovation and entrepreneurship, often also necessitated by the need to compete with other lodges.

7.2.2.O LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “More tourists come in the future and [this lodge] is too small. Not enough trekkers [will be able to stay here]. [We will] build six more rooms – other lodges build more than fifteen rooms so we must build this”.

7.2.2.P LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Tourist start[ed] asking for these rooms [with ensuite]. We [were] the first lodge in Tatopani to have them”.

Lodge owners involved in competitive measures which were non-visible but outside those accepted by the community in general (e.g. yielding to the bargaining power of trekkers, or offering additional benefits to guides) had two forms of dealing with this dissonance. These lodge owners frequently either initially denied the use of such practices (despite direct and anecdotal evidence to the contrary), or alternatively insisted such practices were necessary to compete with other (often more successful) lodges who were utilising such practices.

7.2.2.Q LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “If trekkers want to bargain we say no, [we] tell them there is fixed price and they must not bargain. But other lodges do [concede to them]”.

The current political situation and the associated decrease in trekkers visiting the area were heightening instances of bargaining, due to the lodge owners’ need to increase occupancy rates. Lodge owners claimed bargaining practices and or the use of similar / associated techniques (see below) were increasing competition amongst lodge owners in both villages (although in Tatopani this was mainly perceived to be due to the actions of one lodge in particular) and as a consequence was leading to feelings of disquiet in the village of Tatopani and increased disharmony and antagonism amongst lodge owners in the village of Ghorepani.

Thus bargaining practices were perceived to be detrimental to the economic and social contexts of the villages, especially in the case of Ghorepani.

The primacy of the economic factor was occurring in a context of increasing economic struggle amongst some lodge owners and decreasing capacity to meet trekkers' demands. The changing tourist typologies (noted in Section 6.1) with different priorities and increasing expectations of a developed world lifestyle in an less developed world could be argued to be both symptomatic of and contributing to the resulting individualisation.

These findings add to the literature in providing depth of analysis to the circumstances underlying competition between lodge owners in the research area. Other authors¹⁰⁵ have noted the competition between lodge owners, but have not noted the degree to which this competition is causing disparity in income and circumstances, nor the underlining circumstances.

¹⁰⁵ For example Nyaupane and Thapa (2004); and Nepal et al (2002) as mentioned earlier.

7.2.3 Social / Individualism

The increasing levels of individualisation at a societal, familial and personal level and the allotment of responsibility and accountability for individual player's actions (often to perceived economic necessities) raises significant questions about forces driving behaviours in such destinations. It also raises the fundamental question of whether actors, as 'rational utility maximisers' in relationships determined by an economic construct, can be incorporated into a development and/or tourism form which is sustainable across environmental contexts and 'responsible'. These issues are further examined in Chapter 8.

Conceptualisations of the social, and cultural contexts of the research area by trekkers commonly reflected a romantic ideal. This was reflected in trekkers' conceptualisations of the local communities and their desires for the area as well as their purpose of visit.

Trekkers' romanticist viewings of the area commonly expressed an individualistic ideal, whereby they could be viewed as travelling to escape the 'prison' of modern industrial life (Krippendorf, 1989) which Urry (1990) labelled the 'Romantic' gaze and Graburn (2001:50) spoke of as a "search for the pure and the Other". This was most obvious in the trekkers' aspirations for a more solitudinal experience, evidenced through expressed desires for limitations on tourist numbers to preserve the 'experience'.

7.2.3.A TREKKER TATOPANI: She said she felt that there should be a limit on the number of trekkers entering the area.

7.2.3.B TREKKER GHOREPANI: He said he couldn't believe how many people there were living in the mountain areas eking out a living in inhospitable conditions and almost on the sides of hills - he said the sheer number of people around - both tourists and locals - had surprised him in one way, but seeing how many lodges there were and how empty they all were... had made him realise just how quiet the area was compared to usual. They said it was great for trekkers but not so good for the locals. This has been a common comment of trekkers, although probably 20% of them (the trekkers) don't add the "but not so good for locals" part.

Such romanticist views were also present in trekkers' voiced disapproval of the visual evidence of modernity/development in the area (see Section 6.1), but were in turn contradicted by trekkers' increased requests for more developed facilities (especially bathroom and toilet facilities) and more individualistic and increased wants (see Boorstin, 1961, and Holden, 2002, as noted in Section 7.1.2)

Perceptions of the local communities by trekkers commonly revolved around a romantic ideal, whereby the locals were undeveloped and uneducated, but obliging and (thus) friendly. This romantic ideal was centred upon conceptualisations of local cultures which were based on traditional practices of the culture, and often did not account for societal change within the communities (see Sofield, 2000b).

Hardships endured by locals which did not correspond with romantic ideals were also not explored, and the trekkers' conceptualisations frequently did not explore the locals' lifestyles in other than a superficial manner.

The influence of romanticism on trekkers' perceptions (see Urry, 2002) also extended to trekkers' assessments on change in general in the area; and change which conflicted with the romantic ideal (e.g. road, helicopters, showers/toilets) held by many trekkers was often viewed negatively by them in spite of the cognitive dissonance which often resulted (see below).

However these conceptualisations were also dependant upon type of trekker and cultural factors; for example trekkers from one national group did not maintain such a romantic ideal, and commonly perceived the locals in general to be untrustworthy and to be prone to employ extortionist tactics.

Guides frequently attributed 'impacts' upon the area's society and culture directly to tourism. However the direct influence of the industry itself as opposed to its role simply as an agent of inevitable westernisation/globalisation was not clarified in these perceptions. Guides from outside the region commonly viewed tourism

as an agent assisting in the “preservation” and “protection” of the local culture, citing tourism’s encouragement of local festivals and performances as examples. In the process they were reflecting the reasoning behind Sofield’s critique of the ‘billiard ball model’ of static cultures (2002), and simultaneously, it could be argued, applying a cultural version of the biodiversity-inspired protection paradigm critiqued by Wilshusen et al (2002):

7.2.3.C GUIDE TATOPANI: “Culture is being protected as it is liked by the trekkers”.

7.2.3.D GUIDE GHOREPANI: “They [the trekkers] deeply study our culture. The trekker[s] are encouraged [encourage] the local peoples culture and festival”.

Guides from the region (but not the research area – see Appenidx 5) were also more likely to express concern about the impacts of tourism on a more micro level in the region:

7.2.3.E GUIDE GHOREPANI: “There are several things impacts of trekkers on the Annapurna region. The people are flowing to [going to] American/ European system. They forget in our own culture our traditional [our own culture and traditions]”.

7.2.3.F GUIDE GHOREPANI: “Especially in [on the] trekking route, environment and culture has been distorted but economy is improving”.

7.2.3.G GUIDE TATOPANI: “Important impacts for environment, culture, and people, but few gains, [they are] for [the] hotel owner not for [the] farmer and porter, because [it is] difficult for them – a meal of rice a day. They [the trekkers] hire a guide and porter in Kathmandu and Pokhara [and hence local farmers/porters do not get the work]”.

The origin of the majority of guides outside the research area (including those employed by package groups) usually meant these guides were from different cultures and ethnicities. This had consequences for their interrelationships with

local actors (as noted in Section 7.1). This factor, combined with the economic prerogative noted earlier, meant that while many of the western trekking companies promised or promoted good practice (environmentally, socially and culturally), the reality was often different (see below). This perhaps explains the reasoning behind the wording on ACAP's Minimum Impact Code (see Appendix 10) which states: "Your example affects the locals' attitude towards their culture and environment. Therefore, please apply these rules, not only to yourself, but also make them a condition of your trekking staff".

As the staff of such western companies who were 'on the ground' in Nepal and had no connection to the areas they were visiting, and did not (or could not) always share western environmental or social ideals and economic advantages, often the promises made or good practices promoted were not realised:

7.2.3.H TREKKER TATOPANI: He said he suspected their porters who were supposed to cover up their toilet sites (for faeces) weren't doing so.

7.2.3.I TREKKER TATOPANI: He said he had questioned the sirdar¹⁰⁶ about some environmental matters, and especially the welfare of the porters, but he had been given short answers, and the sirdar appeared to be growing increasingly irritated the more such questions were put to him.

ACAP officials, especially the resident Women's Development Officer (who was Magar and related to the lodge owners) were endeavouring to develop actions that would simultaneously develop tourism and provide a bonding agent for the village society (e.g. a Magar museum with information on the ethnography of the tribe, and the re-introduction/revival of craftwork amongst the local women). However these attempts while being superficially encouraged by some members of the LMC, were not actively supported by most members of the community.

¹⁰⁶ Guide and/or trekking leader.

7.2.3.J LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “They want to teach Mothers Group craft and skill – but they already have skill – card playing”.

7.2.3.K LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Mothers group should learn [to make] crafts to sell to tourists, but [they] don’t want to. Don’t want to make crafts but ACAP want them to”.

Occasionally these activities met with some level of success, if only in bringing elements of the society together. Typical examples of such instances included:

7.2.3.L SUMMARISED FROM OBSERVATION TATOPANI: Lodge workers and community members in Tatopani work together to plant seedlings up the valley towards Bhurung; Each family must donate either money or a family members time, with the lodges donating more money and/or more than one staff member.

Similar to the above agreements, after the major landslide of 26th September 1998 (Plates E and F, Appendix 4), the community of Tatopani, with the encouragement and leadership of the lodge owners, worked over several weeks to clear a new path to the village and beyond. The previous trail on the banks of the river had been washed away and an alternative and much longer and more arduous cow-herders trail was being utilised higher up the valley. The trail constructed by villagers and landowners again largely followed the banks of the river.

7.2.3 M SUMMARISED FROM OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: The Ghorepani Mothers Group conduct a “working bee” day whereby the Mothers Group came together to break blocks for use as building materials for the museum and ACAP office toilet block.

A further instance was when the the lodge owners and their families came together to dig a ditch for water supplies to the new facilities. As in the case in Tatopani, most lodge owners and families were represented, even though they were not directly benefiting.

While the above activities were “communal” and were well supported, the Tatopani activities arose out of the direct needs of the community whereas the Ghorepani measures were largely ACAP inspired. However the actions undertaken by the Tatopani community were more in areas where it was deemed essential change was needed (the planting of seedlings was due to concerns about landslides due to much of the forest cover being burnt off by a drunk villager). In other areas where it had been recognised change was needed for some time, no action had been agreed upon or undertaken:

7.2.3.N LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “We know we need to put the water and waste pipes underground, but there are many arguments about who is responsible. While there are arguments, there is no action”.

This factor was considered to be a weakness in the villages’ practices by ACAP staff in Ghorepani, though they perceived the Tatopani community to be consciousness of tourism’s impacts.

7.2.3.O ACAP OFFICIAL GHOREPANI: “Tatopani has not got good waste management, but does have an awareness of the impacts of tourism”.

The actions undertaken by the community working with ACAP in Ghorepani included some work which could be determined non-essential (such as that noted in the examples above). However the perceived failure of some previous ACAP-inspired operations (see 6.1.3) and the pessimism inspired by the failure of other development projects (e.g. the RCUP project mentioned in Section 1.2.2; and a Red Cross water supply tank next to the village that was had never been fully-functional) resulted in some suspicions amongst community members that such projects were misguided.

Thus, there was a difference between the communal work of the Tatopani villagers which arose out of the need for essential work, and the ACAP (as an

external “outside” force – see Section 6.1) inspired work on tasks which could be considered non-essential for the immediate needs of the village. However of additional note was that such activities in Ghorepani predominantly involved the Ghorepani women’s group (Ama Samuha). Whilst the empowerment of women in the Annapurna area has been an acclaimed success of ACAP, in the village of Ghorepani this predominance was equally due to the work of the sole ACAP official who was from the area and the Pun Magar clan, and in this instance happened to be female (the ramifications of this are further explored in Section 7.2). In addition, as Nyaupane and Thapa (2004) observe, the fact that the men were (or had previously been) often employed outside the villages in the ACAP area, resulted in women becoming head of their households (despite the patriarchal nature of the local ethnic groups).

Appendix 5 briefly highlights the nature of the local key actors in the research area, and noted the lodges in Ghorepani were each owned and managed by families whom were related members of an extended clan (the Pun Magar originally of Khibang). Of the four lodges in operation in Tatopani at the time of the research, two were owned by members of an immediate family, with the third owned by a cousin and the fourth by a more distant relative. Consequently it could be presumed that the social structure of both villages (in particular Ghorepani) would be principally communal and based around the extended family. Such a presumption could possibly have influenced ACAP in the structuring of tourism and development committees in the area and in particular the use of a bottom-up model (see Hough and Sherpa, 1989; and Heinen and Mehta, 1999).

Yet it emerged from the data that the decisions which actors, including these local actors, were making on tourism-industry related behaviours in the various environmental contexts were becoming increasingly individualistic. The prerogatives were now becoming economic (as noted above) and individual, whereas in the past (in the local community at least) they were traditionally social and subsistent. This was sometimes resulting in instances of conflict at the

interfaces where decisions on tourism behaviours and outcomes were made and decided.

However the business of tourism was one factor amongst many responsible for the altering of social units in the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani. Ghurka recruitment, transhumance, the political situation and economic processes not directly related to tourism (e.g. migration to Kathmandu or Pokhara or further afield for employment opportunities) were all constantly altering a social structure that was not static.

Nevertheless, an increasing individualism (as identified in Giddens, 1992) and subsequent alteration in the social units of the villages, particularly in Ghorepani, emerged as a central theme in the research. This increasing individualism was connected strongly with the emphasis on economic prerogatives mentioned above, but was also a product of additional factors largely engendered by the income from tourism (for example lodge owners' children going outside the district for schooling, community members no longer working the traditional fields together).

This change in social units was perhaps most obvious in the increasing prevalence within the village of nuclear family units as opposed to the traditional extended families existing in the villages of origin. Again this was particularly evident in the village of Ghorepani, where an increasing number of the households had older relations who had returned to, or stayed in their original village of Khebang. Although in some circumstances this could be due to their ties to their original village, evidence suggested that the increasing levels of individualisation of the families in the village due to the market based economy and associated competitive practices of tourism were also having an effect:

7.2.3.P OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: G [a Ghorepani LO] said he was going to visit his mother in Khibang. I asked him if she came to Ghorepani very often. He said she used to live with him in Ghorepani but she didn't like it and so moved back to Ghorepani. He said that she had said there was too much focus on business and money and competition between lodges, and not enough village community. I asked him what he thought of that and he said he thought she was right.

While such changes and differences in familial roles and responsibilities obviously have considerable impact upon the social fabric of the community, they were not directly identified as an immediate social impact by the stakeholders concerned. Rather they emerged as a key theme running through many conversations, but not often as the underpinning subject. This could perhaps have been due to the pace at which this change was occurring.

However Ghorepani was not the village of birth for any of the adult actors residing in the village (as discussed in Appendix 5). Thus a lack of total commitment to the village or its development (as examined in Section 8.1) by tourists, guides, porters, other actors (e.g. mule drivers) and to some extent lodge owners increased the individualisation amongst actors who did not have shared interests vested in the area.

In general however, a transformation had been occurring within the area (particularly over the last two decades) from wider societal units into more specific and individual nuclear units:

7.2.3.Q OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Tonight I watched a Bollywood movie with everyone from H and T lodges. They H watched it with us because their lodge is right next door and K told them it was on. I asked N [Ghorepani LO] if they watch movies with other lodge families and she said they don't anymore – “Everybody watches [their] own [by themselves]”.

As the evidence in Section 6.1 suggests, due to the reliance on the single industry of tourism as a vehicle for development (See Section 3.1) such individualism was becoming increasingly more pronounced due to the fact that lodge owners were essentially competing directly against each other in a market economy and were individually sharing the returns of individual gains. This individualisation of society in the area also had significant additional effects on the social and cultural relationships of the hosts and guests:

7.2.3.R LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Twenty years ago trekkers slept in the forests with locals and at the roadside – [they] were very good people... Twenty years before, very honest trekker and very honest Nepali also... Now too much bracketing...”.

The distance in the bond between the two actors in the host-guest nexus (see Section 7.1.2) in the area was in contrast to previous cultural traditions of offering a traveller rest and accommodation. Development through the increasing involvement of the capitalist marketplace would undoubtedly have placed pressure upon such practices, as had the sharp increase in tourism numbers and changing tourist typologies (see Section 6.1). However by centring around and commodifying this relationship (at the instigation of the local actors it must be remembered) tourism was undoubtedly accelerating this process, with the result that the principal and binding agent between the actors in this relationship was economic rather than social or humanitarian.

7.2.3.S LODGEOWNER TATOPANI: “Some tourists demand 5 Star facilities – they might have paid a lot of money to the agencies. Some people don’t think the agencies pay much to the lodges. Trekkers are [sometimes] angry if there are no soap bars in the toilets or bathrooms [but the] rest are ok”.

7.2.3.T OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: German party tonight spoke good English. They (and most other groups, and the majority of couples etc) only talked to [LO] or [LOs spouse] when they were ordering food, asking if there was hot water and paying the bill. The relationship is that similar to the staff at a large hotel, but this group (and the others) are staying in T’s house and could be referred to as guests...

7.2.3.U LODGEOWNER GHOREPANI: “Trekkers must give fixed price. If you go to Japan - \$1 for 1 cup – here you can buy a big pot”.

The sense of fatalism amongst local actors which economic aspects made more pronounced (as detailed in Section 6.1) undoubtedly exacerbated the individualistic tendencies of the key local actors. In uncertain political and economic times, some lodge owners’ fatalistic attitudes and short-term views prompted their “off-loading” of communal and societal restraints and concentration upon the self and family. However strong societal bonds between

lodge owners (all but one of whom were Pun Magar – see Section 4.2.2) were still evident in Ghorepani.

7.2.3.V OBSERVATION: The young males of the household and other Ghorepani Duerali households are busy going into the forest to cut wood for funeral pyre.... all households are contributing some wood... about 8:30am the funeral procession goes down to the pyre... most of the village lodges seemed to have representatives there... Yesterday and this morning there has been a procession of people up to the [deceased person's] lodge obviously to pay their respects.

Despite a gradual individualisation of the society (associated with modernity by Giddens, 1992) there were key times when the community of Ghorepani was brought together, including Lodge Management Committee meetings (see also above quote).

7.2.3.W OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Lodge Management Committee took place and I have been invited to attend the initial stages. Everyone present, including most of the Mothers Group. Everyone pleasant at the start, but as meeting continues some people have got more agitated, mainly at what [AO1] has been recommending.

Although lodge owners and/or workers in Ghorepani usually took part in the activities noted above, their misgivings and their perceptions of the externally derived nature of ACAP projects sometimes resulted in feelings of a lack of genuine ownership of the projects and a further separation from the ACAP. Such perceptions further externalised the agency (see Section 6.1) and exacerbated the subsequent problems in co-ordination of planning (which were already exacerbated by the feelings of fatalism and lack of long-term planning for the area noted in Section 6.1). The subsequent failures of some of these projects and the uneasy relationship between some lodge owners and between lodge owners and ACAP was leading to blame apportioning and disputes:

7.2.3.X OBSERVATION GHOREPANI: Another LMC meeting and more arguments... Some locals are quiet then make a pointed comment with venom. This is what S was alluding to.... AO1 is doing the most talking, but she is obviously simultaneously frustrated but trying to placate people as well.... There is an obvious hierarchy with the Chairman and 'bouncer' at the front with AO1. Ill feeling is quickly expressed then things move on. There are a number of contentious issues though and many people not apparently happy....

Whilst Lovelock (2002) suggests the potential value of conflict in processes of sustainable development, in this instance the conflicts and the antagonism generated was proving negative. The disputes and blame-apportioning in turn were weakening individual accountability (with some lodge owners exploiting the lack of consensus) and collective accountability (e.g. that of the LMC, or ACAP in initiating change). These occasions and the perceptions of lodge owners noted in Section 6.1, (although in contrast to the communal action events noted earlier), suggested the existence of expectations of ACAP which were in contrast to the increasing individualisation of the village. They were also in contrast to the largely self-reliant, lack of expectation and autonomous nature of planning in the village of Tatopani.

Although some activities of ACAP in Ghorepani were providing a societal focus and were supported in a practical sense, the underpinning rationale for them was often not. The conceptual distance between the beliefs of ACAP officials in their organisation's convictions (expressed through frustration and protestations with lodge owners' intransigence) and the lodge owners' prioritisation of economic concerns and perceived lack of concern with the natural environment was informative.

The officials' reliance on socialistic economic systems (empowered through social and cultural forces) to control competition in the area was proving of limited efficacy in an area increasingly open to capitalist market forces. In this instance it appeared the participatory model was at a minimum in conflict with, and at most in opposition to these capitalist market forces. ACAP's failure in this instance to

engender what it deemed as positive change¹⁰⁷, was the reasoning behind its apparent withdrawal from the use of tourism as the area's principal tool for sustainable development over agriculture.

¹⁰⁷ I.e. sustainable development through tourism in the form of nature preservation, along with economic growth and its dissemination across both tourism and non-tourism communities.

7.3 Summary

It is manifest that the primary reason tourism is encouraged in undeveloped nations by government and community has been due to its economic potential (see Krippendorff, 1989:46: “Economic Interest Dominates” for example). Yet this desire for economic development (through economic growth) emerged as a major internal force working through tourism at an individual and familial level amongst local actors in the research area. This in itself is perhaps not unusual given the dominance that capitalist principles have in current global economic systems. However, the power of the economic and monetary forces in the area and the effects of this system were more pronounced. This was primarily due to their proximity and immediacy, both in time (for the local community) and geographical distance to subsistence-based lifestyles, and also due to the traditionally social and community environments of extended families in which they were increasingly taking place. It rendered the economic priorities of the actors in the area a powerful internal force, as detailed below. As by far the principal source of income in Ghorepani and Tatopani, these heightened economic forces were operating directly through and on the provision of tourism (and as such, development) within the area. The internal economic forces operating in the research area were often the major determinants in negotiations of power in relationships between key actor groups, rather than social or cultural relationships, as alluded to in Section 7.1.

A conceptual understanding of the processes at work was not present in the views expressed by trekkers, who were more likely to identify cosmetic changes or natural environmental rather than social or economic issues. The reasons for this have been elaborated upon in Section 6.1 to some extent, where it was also noted that trekkers themselves sometimes observed they were also unaware of the underlying background or causal issues.

PART FOUR

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER EIGHT

TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT **IN THE ANNAPURNA REGION OF NEPAL:** **REFLECTIONS**

8.0 Introduction

This final chapter reflects upon the findings of the research, addresses the main aim and its objectives, and concludes the thesis. It does so by first summarising the findings and in the process addresses the particular objectives of the study they encompassed and the issues they raised. Following this the contribution to knowledge of the study is discussed and recommendations of the research are detailed. The thesis is then concluded. The following paragraphs note in more detail the content of each section of this concluding chapter.

The next section, Section 8.1, reflects on the issues of structural power which are influential in determining outcomes of tourism and sustainable development within the field area. It examines how this power is often wielded based upon perceptions and conceptualisations that are western-orientated but inaccurate. This is because they do not account for the field conditions or processes in them, and in fact cannot account for these conditions and processes using the currently-favoured scholarship approaches. Hence this section argues that these western-inspired perceptions and conceptualisations cannot be said to reflect or be conducive to true community development or people's participation models for example, or crucially sustainable development through tourism. This section addresses Objectives 1 and 2 listed in Section 1.1.1.

Subsequently Section 8.2 reflects on the social roles of the various actors within the field, player interrelationships, and the insider/outsider nature of relationships, influences and felt impacts with regards to sustainable development and tourism. It reflects on how these are directly influencing outcomes of sustainable development and tourism but are largely ignored by the theory and policy. It addresses Objectives 3, 4 and 6 of the study listed in Section 1.1.1.

Next, Section 8.3 builds on the two preceding sections and traces the relationships between theory, policy and practice – identifying the differences that exist between them and addressing directly (following the findings of the previous two sections) the dissonances which exist between western conceptualisations of sustainable tourism and development and those on the ground in a less developed country example – namely the fieldwork area. It addresses Objectives 1, 2 and 5 listed in Section 1.1.1.

Section 8.4 discusses the contributions of the study to the knowledge of sustainable development through tourism in less developed countries. It notes that although the findings of the study are limited due to its scale and thus not necessarily actionable, the thesis still provides useful contributions to the literature in illustrating areas in need of further research. Section 8.5 presents recommendations of the research and identifies ways in which the findings of the thesis could inform future studies of tourism and sustainable development.

The final section, Section 8.6, provides a short summary to the chapter and the research, and concludes the thesis.

8.1 Issues of Structural Power and Perception

“East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet...”

(Kipling, 1889)

Contemporary development models often stress the need for “peoples-participation”, “grass-roots development” and “bottom-up models of development”. Yet this study has demonstrated that in the field area under investigation, the most dominant approaches inevitably are outside-in. Whilst this was in evidence technically (e.g. through the encouragement of the use of solar panels in Ghorepani against local advice), and politically (through the decision to put the road from Pokhara to Jomson in without consultation), it was perhaps ideologically that it was at its most powerful. The modelling of ACAP upon Western non-governmental organisations (despite their considerable lack of success in the area as noted in Section 1.2.2) demonstrate that western ideas and ideals of development remain structurally powerful in the area.

The initial chapters of this thesis noted the tendency towards theorising and policy-making in sustainable development to reflect the structural concerns of western hegemonic and popular interests. For example, Section 2.6 reflected upon contemporary discourses of sustainable development and noted the frictions which occurred at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (Peta, 2002).

These frictions were identified as largely a product of the dissonance which existed between the occidental focus on natural environment concerns or others with direct consequences for the West (e.g. biodiversity conservation and/or climate change) and those of a less developed world which was principally focused on social development. This thesis has found that such frictions are also being played out at community level in the Annapurna Conservation Area. The goals of ACAP were found to be primarily concerned with environmental

conservation through technical means, and such environmental priorities were also found to be of considerable importance to trekkers. However, local actors in the area such as lodge owners or guides had very different priorities, with economic income (occasionally at subsistence levels – see Section 7.2.2) often being the principal priority goal.

It is argued that such variance amongst actors regarding priorities for tourism in the area (and importantly their implications for processes of sustainable development) have not been given the attention in the literature that they warrant (for example in studies such as those of Bajracharya (2002), and Nepal (2000a). Such findings indicate that meaningful community participation is not occurring. Furthermore, they reflect the findings of conflict between the policy-makers and the private sector in other majority world countries (see Briedenhann and Wickens, 2003 for example) that are hampering participatory models of sustainable tourism development internationally.

Chapter 3 argued that the focus of theory and policy-making in sustainable development on western hegemonic (and thus it was argued technocratic, romanticist, and Cartesian-inspired) influences at a structural level has been reflected in the term's application to tourism. It demonstrated this by illustrating how contemporary ideals of sustainable development have their roots in western histories and western thought (a view supported by Mowforth and Munt, 2003; and Bianchi, 2002, for example). An example noted of the endorsement of western values through structural discourses was the significance attributed to ecotourism by international agencies (e.g. the “International Year of Ecotourism” and the “World Ecotourism Summit”). This was despite the UNEP Tourism Programme Coordinator admitting ecotourism often had a negative effect on indigenous and local communities and the WTO's acknowledgment of the small scale of the sector.

Yet western discourses in Nepal have a far greater history and a more powerful legacy than those of contemporary notions of sustainable development or

ecotourism for example. Development within Nepal, and in fact within the Annapurna Conservation Area, operates within clear contextual power parameters such as those outlined for tourism by Mowforth and Munt (2003:39) and featured in Appendix 6. As such, the use of tourism as a vehicle for wider development in the field area has inherited the legacies of past efforts in the area and in the country. This ideological power of western development models was identified and critiqued by Pigg (1992, 1993) over a decade and a half ago. It is a legacy whereby “development” is more powerful as an ideological perception than either as a practice, or as Pigg (1993:47) referred to it “a set of technical solutions”, in a clear reference to the western hegemony (see Section 2.1) determining what constitutes development.

The condition of development (or more particularly perhaps the condition of underdevelopment) which Nepal has inherited from Western conceptualisations has led to a sense of fatalism and resignation within the field area. Whilst this is compounded by other factors (e.g. the political situation), the failure of western-inspired technical solutions (e.g. the RCUP project, and Red Cross water tank in Ghorepani) has resulted in a pessimistic attitude to externally-inspired development attempts. It has meant that attempts at development within the area are met with doubt and reservation – whether it is through suspicions of the intentions of the supporters (e.g. suspicions amongst some guides that ACAP’s overseas donors may have been corruptly drawing money from the enterprise – see Section 7.2.2) or scepticism of the success of externally-derived technical solutions proposed in the area (e.g. the solar panels in Ghorepani).

Such feelings of pessimism and suspicion of development, echo the despair voiced over a decade ago by Shrestha (1993, 1995) about the form which development has taken within Nepal, and equally the lack of control the Nepali have over the form of its ideology. This research has found that local stakeholders not only perceived external forces to be determining outcomes within the areas, they also frequently perceived the real beneficiaries of development through tourism within the area to be external, echoing Hancock’s observations of the

results of development in 1989 (1989:155). Yet perhaps the most illustrative demonstration (and damning indictment) of the power of western external hegemonic discourse is that this ideology has never been radically challenged at a structural level, despite the fact that it has been recognised as ineffective after nearly five decades of planned development (UNDP, 2002:34).

A situation whereby many thousands of NGOs reputedly generate a significant proportion of the nation's foreign currency in addition to favoured employment prospects clearly demonstrates the failings of the development industry within Nepal. Although the reality is complex (due, for example, to political instability over the past few decades and inherent corruption), and there have been successes, there is little doubt the ideology and practice of the development industry within Nepal has largely been ineffective and in fact could be argued to have created the dependency which Shrestha (1993, 1995) observes. The use of tourism as a vehicle for development within the Annapurna has reflected this failure, and the expectations of some stakeholders (for example those of some Ghorepani stakeholders that ACAP should be repairing local trails and personal electricity-powered ovens) would suggest a dependency on development has emerged within parts of the field area.

Yet the development industry itself operates within wider hegemonic and ideological boundaries, including those of economy and of academia. The international NGOs which operate within Nepal do so within a global market place (evidenced nationally in the NGOs' license to import vehicles, and locally in the lodge owners' observations that ACAP is paying its staff many times the average wage to plant trees). The western tourists who visit the field area are a product of this global marketplace, and as the next section concludes, are agents in the imposition of its values locally. Additionally, the hegemonic pressures are obvious when participation within this marketplace is perceived as constituting a requirement to be 'developed' rather than 'undeveloped', with all the inherent subjugation such labels entail (see following section).

The western hegemonic ideology of development hence requires “undeveloped areas” to participate in the western economic construct in order to achieve the social development (e.g. health, education, and escape from poverty) that they seek. This was reflected in the field area, where an increasing quest for private monetary growth and its attendant competitive element existed amongst lodge owners in both villagers and emerged as a key theme determining outcomes of sustainable development within the area.

However participation in this economic model has very real and social impacts for such societies. For example, the social “gel” or “binding agent” in the research area appears to be changing from one of familial or host/guest ties to one of economic materialism, and from one of social requirements to the individual needs and wants of a neo-classical economic model (see Quote 7.2.3.P for a poignant example). This change is one which does not always appear to be deliberated upon in the literature. For example Honey (2003:23) states the importance of shifting economic control to “local communities, village, cooperative, or entrepreneur” without contemplating the issues involved if an area has more than one of the above varieties competing for the same limited economic resources.

The growing levels of individualism were no doubt heightened by the divisive nature of the political situation at the time of the research and its very real threat to parties who communicated their allegiances (see Section 1.1.2). In addition, a reliance upon the single industry of tourism as a vehicle for development within the area was also resulting in a more pronounced individualism. Lodge owners were essentially competing directly against each other in a market economy and were individually sharing the returns of individual gains. Yet these societal changes have their basis in economic and social transformations which are ‘glocal’ (see Friedman, 1999; and Salazar, 2005) in nature, and not purely a product of the political insurgency or local area commerce.

These same major transformations are occurring in the Annapurna Conservation Area, an area which has often featured in the literature of community development through tourism, yet these transformations remain practically unacknowledged. Why? The answer to this is evident in an examination of this literature and its methods. Hall (1994, 2005a, 2005b) has noted that much tourism research is one-dimensional and is afraid to engage and critique the theoretical constructs within which it operates.

Previous research (e.g. Banskota and Sharma, 1995; Nepal, 2002, 2007) of issues related to tourism and sustainable development in the Annapurna region has usually utilised quantitative and positivist methods to examine and quantify particular issues such as resource usage or visitation. Such studies have gathered valuable baseline figures for research in addition to quantitative depictions of outcomes related to tourism and sustainable development in the area¹⁰⁸. Yet such research cannot provide an analysis of the relationships determining issues of sustainable development within the region. Whilst it has the ability to highlight the complexity of the situation, it does not possess the ability to engage with this complexity in depth (as examined in Appendix 11 for example).

In Section 3.4 Ryan (2005:662) observed that “...it has been relatively easy for researchers to gain publications of technically skilled quantitative based pieces... which actually offer little in terms of new conceptualisations or are able to articulate any significant difference to the literature”. This research has not only examined the outcomes of relationships between tourism and sustainable development in the Annapurna region. It adds to the literature in the ways it has examined the contexts within which these outcomes are occurring, including for example the relationships of power¹⁰⁹ amongst actors which lead to these outcomes.

¹⁰⁸ With which this study has usually concurred (see Section 6.1.1 for example). Instances where there has not been concurrence can predominantly be explained by changes over time, or other factors such as the political situation at the time of this research.

¹⁰⁹ Including at a structural level (e.g. within international institutions) and at an agency level (e.g. between trekkers and guides).

Further to Ryan's quote, this research has contended in Chapter 4 that there are three inherent weaknesses of much of the occidental research programme; firstly its inability or unwillingness to examine subjective evidences, secondly its inability to contextualise its quantitative investigations and outcomes and thirdly its inability to self-critique and appreciate the weaknesses inherent in its approach, thus often rendering itself impotent (see Habermas 1972; Hollinshead, 1991; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; and Tribe, 2004 as featured in Appendix 8). Such claims may appear strong, yet they find support in comments from local stakeholders (see Section 6.2.0). Lodge owners noted for example that indicators of development for the area did not "take account of socio-political factors" or the fact that "the formula for sustainability changes daily" (see Section 6.1 and Section 6.2.0).

In summary, external structural powers are determining the form that development takes through tourism within the area and the analysis of it. This is occurring through a hegemonic discourse which is grounded in western ideological conceptualisations of what constitutes development, and what constitutes research and scientific method. Despite the United Nations Development Programme (2002) recognising that NGO approaches (based on these same ideologies) have been unsuccessful in Nepal for approximately five decades, and despite continuing evidence of dependency in the research area, these approaches remain relatively unchallenged. The form that development through tourism takes within the field area is thus determined to an extent by external structural powers. The following section explores issues of power at a personal agency level within the field.

8.2 Considerations of Tourism, Sustainable Development and Social Roles

This research has found that many of the practical outcomes of tourism as a form of sustainable development are also decided as a result of interactions between individuals at a personal agency level in the field area under study. It argues that these conceptualisations and perceptions at this personal level may reflect the reasoning invested in the structural discourses mentioned above (particularly in the hegemonies and issues of power involved – see next section). To clarify, this means that actors within the area are operating within frameworks of what is determined to be sustainable development through tourism which are actually determined by parties *outside* the area. These external determinations are inherent in much local policy and planning through inherited discourse as mentioned in Section 8.2. Yet this research argues that although they underpin perceptions and actions of stakeholders within the area, they are seldom accounted for or examined¹¹⁰.

For example, neo-classical economic reasoning presumes that its economic and political model is easily replicable anywhere, based upon a view of all stakeholders as “rational utility maximisers” (Rapley, 2002:170). However this can be challenged when applied to the field area of this research and the social interactions within it. These interactions were frequently framed within assumed or conferred roles and conceptions, and when challenged any discrepancies with the associated ethics or values positions of stakeholders were often either denied or explained utilising strategies such as cognitive dissonance.

The local stakeholders’ “desires of such things as are necessary to commodious living...” (as possessed by trekkers) “...and a hope by their industry to obtain

¹¹⁰ For example, trekkers seldomly questioned their romanticist attitudes to the environment and what constituted them – with the result that they seldom questioned what the benefits for locals of the road from Pokhara to Jomson might be (see Section 7.2.3), and whether this development outweighed their own romanticist preferences.

them” (Hobbes 1651:63) were often frustrated by the trekkers’ alternative conceptualisations of their relationship. For instance, can it seriously be countenanced that people living on subsistence tourism, such as porters, or lodge owners with fixed prices, would rather barter for the price of something and subsequently receive a lower value due to the “fun” of bartering? (see Section 7.1). Such views, and other examples from Chapters 6 and 7 suggest that although tourists frequently perceived the relationship from a principally economic perspective, the role which they allocated/conferred to local parties was one of ‘hosts’ with themselves as ‘guests’ as alluded to by the edited work of Smith (1977a).

Smith’s work (and that of others) identifies the problematic nature of tourism relationships for societies which have traditionally operated under presumptions of visitors as ‘guests’ and accommodation providers as ‘hosts’. Such presumptions have been complicated by the “capitalisation” of these relationships through the placement of them in a market-based environment (Smith, 1977b)¹¹¹. The transformations associated with such changes (and the perceived problems they produce) are evident in the lodge owners’ perceptions of past relationships with trekkers “twenty years ago” who were perceived as much less demanding and “very good people” (See Section 7.1.2).

The findings of this research suggest that in the field area such inter-relationships are further complicated by a number of additional factors. Despite the fact the lodge owners and guides constitute the “hosts”; the power of these stakeholders is actually reduced due to the ‘economicisation’¹¹² of power mentioned above. The primacy of the economic environment was not only experienced through greater individualisation at a societal and familial level. It was placing increased power at a personal level, whereby trekkers were using their individual economic power to supersede structural and cultural forces for personal convenience/comfort.

¹¹¹ Which reflects the economic aspects of the changes Boorstin (1961) was referring to in Section 7.1.2

¹¹² I.e. as the increasingly economic emphasis over time changed the ‘guest’ to the consumer and the commercial maxim: “The customer is always right” began to be applied, whether consciously or subconsciously.

However other factors also serve to reduce the power of local stakeholders and accentuate that of trekkers.

Whilst Sumner's (1906) concept of ethnocentricity and its attendant view that societies and cultures presume the superiority of their own values and routines is not new, this presumption amongst western trekkers is being disseminated to some degree within the field area by some powerful hegemonic practices based primarily upon economic capacity (but also on additional factors such as language ability). This in itself reflects an inability amongst trekkers to discern that they are freely operating between the local and universal and/or culture and politics (Eagleton, 1999) and that their view is not "a view from nowhere...a non-perspectival understanding" (Anonymous, 2004:para.2). Yet it also reflects an inability in local stakeholders, even in those appreciative of their position as caught between this local and universal and/or cultural and political, to escape their own ensnarement (see Section 6.1.2).

The contentions above are demonstrated through the application of the construct of development as critiqued earlier in the text to the field area. The reduction of the "undeveloped" world to a conceptual understanding represented as "backward" (and indeed "undeveloped") is reflected at a local agency level whereby trekkers view lodge owners significantly older than themselves as "cute" and many cite the need for education for basic activities related to sustainability (e.g. the conservation and preservation of resources). Yet such judgements and conferment are undertaken whilst simultaneously ignoring the lack of success or inability to do so within the trekkers' own host communities and societies (which are, however, viewed as "developed" and "advanced").

Such perceptions are more easily disseminated in the field area due to the host-guest nexus (see Section 7.1.2) also being a "high context culture" and "low context culture" nexus (Hall, 1976). The brevity of the relationship and its particularised nature is more conducive to the individualistic, and fragmented nature of the trekkers' low context culture with its lower degree of emphasis upon

in-depth personal associations with others compared to the higher context cultures (Mead, 2005). In addition, the predisposition of the higher context cultures of local stakeholders for harmony in relationships and associated avoidance of conflict was often demonstrated in the field in a manner reflecting Cohen's (1997:143) conceptualisation of the "social affirmative" (see Section 7.1.1 for example) whereby providing a negative answer was socially and culturally difficult for such stakeholders.

Bezruchka (1997:83) states "the Nepalis always answer to please, - even though their feelings are offended" – a characteristic which is even more pronounced when their livelihood by way of a potential tip or their professional reputation and thus any future work (as a guide within a trekking company for example) is at stake. The implications of trekkers (already in a position of power due to the factors above) taking such communications at face value are obvious and reflected in examples in Chapter 7. Indeed such observations can perhaps be extrapolated to partly account for the reasons for which tourists are informed that many majority world tourism destinations are populated by 'friendly' locals (see Finlay, 2001:12 for example). Nevertheless this research suggests that "friendly" in the case of the field area could however mean subjugated (as evidenced in Section 7.1.1 for example).

Yet this power imbalance and subjugation inherent in such relationships is seldom publicly acknowledged. Whilst Nepal represents a classic example of the archetypical "friendly locals" as evidenced above, the local stakeholders often share their feelings with their peers (as noted in Section 7.1.1 for example). Due to the cultural and economic considerations outlined earlier in this section, trekkers are not made aware that the locals frequently feel that "tourists are vulgar, vulgar, vulgar"¹¹³ (as also evidenced in Section 7.1.1). The local stakeholders themselves, having not inherited a history of colonisation, could perhaps be said to have been caught unawares that "the guest of history who was

¹¹³ Pearce and Moscardo 1986:121; incorrectly citing Henry James, 1869.

the traveller of yesterday has turned into the barbarian of today” to paraphrase Mitford (1959:3).

The capitalisation of relationships, although most obvious in relationships with trekkers in the field area, was also a prominent feature of social roles between and within local stakeholder groups. Relationships within stakeholder groups (e.g. lodge owners, guides, or porters) of the same ethnic group and or caste were still primarily based around social, ethnic and familial factors yet there appeared to be increasing market-based pressure on these traditionally extended family, social, cultural or ethnic ties. Relationships within the changed conditions of the host-guest nexus were dictated by economic factors, yet increasingly so were relationships within local groupings including the extended family (as noted in Section 6.1.2).

This thesis contends that the ‘economicisation’ (as defined earlier in this section) of traditional social, culture and family roles is leading to a gradual breakdown, or “watering down” in these units in the field area, principally at societal level (as evidenced in Section 7.2.3). However it would be naive to argue that the introduction of a market-based economy (through tourism) to the area is responsible solely for the introduction of frictions between local societies or ethnic groups noted in Sections 6.2.3 and 7.1.2. In reality these frictions have existed long since prior to the introduction of tourism to the area and/or in fact the introduction of westerners to the area. There is perhaps even cause for argument that the occurrence of such relationships and interactions under the rules of interaction of a market-based economy has worked to formalise such relationships and interrelationships and thus has lessened levels of frictions and antagonism which may have otherwise occurred. However such a contention remains the thesis for another study.

Ironically the ‘economicisation’ of relationships between and within local stakeholder groups, although occurring amongst all stakeholders directly associated with tourism in the field area, is perceived negatively when observed in

others (see Sections 6.1.3 and 7.1.2 for example). Lodge owners who perceived guides and trekkers were feigning ignorance to employ bargaining practices or who perceived other lodge owners to be breaking LMC rules to build new beds, would themselves surreptitiously acquiesce to trekkers' bargaining practices. Guides who perceived lodge owners to be unscrupulously only interested in economic gain would lead their guests to the lodge which offered the guide free accommodation and/or food or other inducements.

It is not the intention of this research to assess such relationships and roles and place them on a values continuum (e.g. non-economic and social as good, economic and capitalist based relationships as bad, in a reflection of the imposition of the romantic values critiqued earlier in the text). Likewise the above conclusions of this research do not ignore the very nature of these enterprises as economic. The lodges were of course intended as a profitable venture in a capitalist sense. Guiding in the area fulfilled a number of functions (see Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Burns and Holden, 1995 and Meethan, 2001, for example). Yet it was primarily undertaken for economic reasons in the field area, and as the previous pages attest, usually existed as "...a profession whose business it [was] to explain to others what it personally [did] not understand" (to paraphrase Lord Northcliffe's impression of journalism, date and publication details unknown).

ACAP's lack of primary (or practical) engagement in the field area with two of the principal forces impacting upon issues of sustainable development (trekkers and guides) appeared to be fatally undermining ACAP's efforts and its stated mission. The identification of methods with which ACAP (both within the field research area and outside it) could effectively engage with these stakeholders to determine positive behaviours and outcomes is a much more complex issue than it superficially appears. Nevertheless primary engagement appeared necessary if the organisation was to effectively reflect and action its community-centred strategy and mandate. In the field area under study the community participation and determination model could be viewed as flawed, as the onset of capitalism and

materialism to the communities (particularly Ghorepani) was disrupting and destroying the communities' ideals and practices; i.e. these forces were resulting in heightened competition rather than cooperation. In such an environment the aims of a community participation model appear to be idealistic, and appear to ignore the ironies inherent in western development 'experts' from individualistic and materialistic competitive societies espousing community-led participative development.

The espousing of such a model is further undermined by the way in which ACAP officials and trekkers were focused on outcomes (e.g. in what was happening in environmental contexts, particularly the natural environment); meanwhile the underlying factors and causal features (e.g. why such outcomes were occurring) were not being examined.

In summary, the interrelationships between stakeholders have a critical significance in analyses of sustainable development in the field area. This is in part due to the nature of tourism as a service industry and the primacy of tourism as the principal form of non-agricultural industry in the area. However it is also due to the (often subconscious) implementation and diffusion of the value systems and the resultant behaviours of key stakeholders within the area.

Traditional rational and quantitative strategies cannot appreciate the social roles of stakeholders within the field area and their implications for tourism and sustainable development. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) may be correct in noting that we can never truly understand another culture; that we can simply itemise or categorise the aspects we learn of it. Nevertheless, there would appear to be moral reasons as to why a stakeholder in the role of guest should be knowledgeable of his/her host's requirements and adjust/modify his/her behaviour, ceding elements of power where necessary (see Burns, 2004 and Fennell, 2006). During the field research the onus for such behavioural changes and conceding of power appeared to be on the hosts themselves, as a result of

economic priorities (see Section 7.2.2). ACAP did not appear to be successfully diffusing such expectations.

Such changes and the issues raised by this section have important implications for conceptualisations of tourism and sustainable development within the field area (e.g. in the relationships between actors and in the ‘economicisation’ of these relationships). As Mowforth and Munt (2003) have observed, they can be primarily identified as issues of power, and particularly in the conceptualisations and dispersion of it. The next section explores the relationships between Sections 8.1 and 8.2 and examines the implications of the implementation of western theoretical concepts into policies and practices within the field areas.

8.3 Relationships between Theory, Policy and Practice

The previous two sections have noted the influence of structural powers and interactions at personal agency level on outcomes within the field respectively. This section draws conclusions on the relationship between the diffusion of occidental theory and policy in tourism and sustainable development, and events and practice within the field. In doing so it examines how western-inspired global ideologies of sustainable development and tourism are directly determining outcomes in the field. This may seem unremarkable given that the nature of most development policy and practice is “outside-in” as determined earlier. However this section takes this further by examining the imposition of western values and ideologies (e.g. through the concept of sustainable development as practiced through the theories of ACAP), into a non-western environment and the corresponding outcomes. Of particular note is that many of these outcomes (see Appendices 11 and 12 for example) cannot be said to be promoting sustainable development through tourism across the environmental contexts, rather they can

be viewed as impeding true sustainable development across the environmental contexts noted earlier (Section 3.4) in the research.

Much of the diffusion of western ideals of sustainable development policy and practice in the field area at the time of this research was occurring through ACAP. In this respect the template for ACAP's activities has been set previously through the activities of other NGOs over past decades in Nepal. ACAP is merely replicating the western ideas, ideals, and management values disseminated amongst local communities throughout the western tradition of development.

These ideas, ideals and values are practiced within the field in a number of ways. The use of staff who are external to the area in training, and who differ from their charges in ethnic, social, cultural, religious and or/economic circumstances, to offer advice on locally specific sustainable development is clearly deeply problematic¹¹⁴. This is especially true in the case of attempts at community-led and participative development particularly whereby lodge owners sometimes felt disempowered in the context of decision-making for the area (as evidenced in their attempts to exclude ACAP from such decision-making – see Section 6.2.3). In another example, ACAP was recognised as assisting the locals in the protection of forests within the area. However the idea that an officer originating from a different culture, village, and geographical and biological area of Nepal, by undergoing training in an office in Kathmandu or Pokhara, was in a position to offer advice on local forestry growth and usage to local community members living in a specific micro (and social/cultural) climate proved flawed, as the example of the planting of Japanese Pine (*Cryptomeria*) demonstrates.

The irrationality of offering such expertise to local community members who are from generations of subsistence landowners in the area is transparently illustrated in the failure of local ACAP inspired forestry growth efforts locally, as acknowledged by them. It highlights the differences between the information produced through undigested data generated by western (or western-inspired)

¹¹⁴ This is because in such a context it raises issues of the level of their expertise in the area (as demonstrated by their advocacy of the failed solar panels, despite local advice).

scientists, and the knowledge accumulated through life experiences of the local community members (Thomson et al, 2000). Similar to other development efforts, this western assumption of knowledge and its assertion of a right to determine what it personally could not appreciate was mirrored at a national level (see Bhattarai et al, 2002 for further examples). The level of forest cover in Nepal is still debated amongst western interests; however the social, cultural, and political factors which influence such outcomes are, with a few exceptions (see Thompson and Warburton, 1988; Metz, 1991; and Garforth et al 1999 for example) seldom incorporated into such studies.

The above arguments should not be interpreted as a reversion to a romantic ideal (i.e. the local community always knows best) which this study has criticised. However a constant theme throughout the findings of this research has been the site-specific nature of the various environmental contexts and their interrelationships. Western conceptualisations of the relationship between tourism and processes of sustainable development within the area can be viewed as unsound in that they do not account for the site specific nature of these processes, and by isolating them they cannot account for the way they work on and through each other.

This isolation of undigested data from its context is not merely symptomatic of western research interests however. The structure of ACAP into different sections whether they were conservation management, forestry, tourism management or women's groups - was effectively 'de-linking' or disengaging them from their environmental contexts and emphasising ACAP's role as an external management agency. In addition it was de-linking them from the traditional influences on sustainable development and the environment in the area (see initial quote in 2.4 for a further example) whilst not effectively managing the new ones (e.g. capitalism and consumerism).

The resulting diffusion of western ideologies (and ideals) through the policy and practice of ACAP was occurring at a time when the 'glocal' (see Swyngedouw,

1997, 2004) pressures of capitalism, consumerism, and competition were becoming particularly intense for a previously subsistence community-based economy (as echoed by McCabe's 2005 observation in Section 3.2.).

There was an increasing substitution of the social/personal element in relationships amongst local stakeholders with an economic element where social relationships were traditionally dominant. This was challenging conceptualisations of sustainable development (for example in the relationship between the Village Development Committee of Tatopani Bhurung and the informal lodge management committee of Tatopani). The ramifications of such interrelationships for conceptualisations of sustainable development in the area are not accounted for by sustainable development policy or planning or the academic literature.

Yet such interrelationships are determining outcomes of sustainable development (in this case through tourism) within the area. The frictions noted earlier (and above) which were evident at the WSSD in 2002 (Peta, 2002) in the variation between occidental conceptualisations of preservation and conservation of the natural environment and less-developed conceptualisations of sustainable social development also have their parallels within the field area in the frictions between ACAP and the lodge owners for example.

Whilst ACAP viewed the lodge owners as intransigent to change which was not economically beneficial, the lodge owners viewed ACAP as focusing upon technical solutions which were inoperative and/or overly prescriptive. The fact that ACAP, a purportedly community-centred organisation based upon a participative model (see Table 1-4) suffered from an (admittedly low-level) frictional relationship with the local community (see Section 6.2.3) did not auger well for the success of the operation in the location of this research.

The above criticisms are not intended to undermine the achievements or outcomes that ACAP can claim some association with in the area; women's empowerment

would appear to be one clear example. Yet despite its role in the creation of the women's group, in reality ACAP in the fieldwork area was external to the community and as such its actions frequently appeared (and were perceived) as prescriptive and 'outside-in' as noted previously.

Research and policies of sustainable development in the area also do not and cannot take account of societal changes within the local community and other stakeholder groups. For example, there were no specific measures or policies in place to deal with the changing typologies of tourists (and their changing demands) as noted in Section 6.1.2. Development and/or modernisation within the villages has been marked by the onset of consumerism, individualism and materialism which is sometimes in marked contrast to western conceptualisations of social and community development and environmental stewardship.

Such developments suggest that the ACAP model of community participation (see Table 1-4) is incompatible with the Post-Fordist consumption model as identified by Urry (1995) over a decade ago, and could in fact be "little more than window dressing, often deepening the process of homogenisation and furthering a (*externally induced*) hegemonic ideology" (as noted by Giampiccoli, 2007:188 and identified in Section 3.2. Italicised words added). The irony is that although community-participation ideals have traditionally been a strong part of the local cultures (for example the forestry management examples mentioned above), the onset of consumerism brought about by western development is weakening such links.

This dissonance between western conceptualisations of 'grass roots' development of the area and the reality of societal movement and change is evident in the way youth of the villages are becoming removed from their immediate natural environment due to the requirements of tourism. In the case of the children of many lodge owners who are educated in Kathmandu or Pokhara and going on to reside as adults in these centres or India, they (and subsequently their education) are becoming removed from the social environment also (see Section 7.2.3).

The dissonance between western (and western-inspired) theories, planning and policies of sustainable development though tourism and actualities in the field is evident in many other spheres. Guiding also provides an example of changes at a field level to societies caused by tourism. This is evident in the way traditionally higher caste Hindus from outside the Annapurna region often have to accept a socially more subjugated role and defer to the economic power of tourists (see Section 7.1.1). Yet Section 6.2.6 illustrates an example whereby a Hindu from a lower caste was empowered by tourism and the opportunities it gave him, illustrating the complexity of the situation.

Such relationships were thus found within this thesis to be impacting upon social constructs and hence implications of sustainable development at a social level. Yet these relationships and changes to the social fabric commonly do not feature in any western analysis of sustainable tourism and development in the Annapurna Conservation Area. This is surprising given that the Annapurna Conservation Area has often featured in the literature as a successful example of community development through tourism in the last two decades, and indeed won accolades for being such an example (see Section 1.1).

It is tempting when noting the above social changes to attribute western romanticist ideals to their analysis and view them negatively on a values continuum, or alternatively in a Manichean way of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ impacts. In fact Jafari’s (1990) identification of the dominant ‘Advocacy’ and ‘Cautionary’ platforms, and the dichotomy they implied, could still be argued to be true nowadays (see Section 1.2.2).

However it is important to note that the values that occidental agencies (be they political, charitable, academic or industry) are applying and attributing to the area through their policies, planning and analysis of it do not necessarily represent the values of local stakeholders. When the World Travel and Tourism Council and industry speak of “preserving a community’s natural or cultural heritage” and about “preserving indigenous cultures” (WTTC et al, 2002:9-16) their perspective

and the vantage point from which it is delivered is essentially different from that of the Mothers' Group of Ghorepani, for whom card playing is presently a large part of their culture (see Section 6.1.4).

Yet the voiced perceptions of trekkers and guides and the practices of ACAP in the area commonly reflect an inheritance of these same romanticist external views; whether it is of local cultures, societies or the natural environment (Ewen, 2007). The power that the discourses of these stakeholders have (see Section 8.2) results in such views being disseminated throughout the field, albeit often at a subliminal (e.g. in the views of trekkers being subsequently expressed by guides) or practical manner (for example through the practices of ACAP).

Problems occur when these newly acquired conceptualisations (or perhaps 're-conceptualisations' more accurately) of their environmental contexts are being erroneously evidenced as part of the 'development' process of such areas. Due to the hegemonic forces behind their dissemination they are seldom challenged in the western environments from which they originate or in the areas in which they are now taking root (see Shrestha, 1993 and 1995, for an exception to the rule).

These views themselves are a product of greater structural discourses; concerns over natural environmental impacts and suggested remedial efforts are relayed to trekkers through guidebooks and other Western media, yet this same media does not place the same levels of emphasis on social development (e.g. health and schooling in the area). Whilst many trekkers passing through Tatopani were able to relate problems of littering and the deforestation caused by the burning of wood (see Section 6.2.7), few were informed of the fact that 30% of the profits of the hot springs in which they had bathed went towards the salaries of teachers at the Tatopani school.

The knowledges and values of trekkers were echoed in the practices of ACAP. However the straightforward technical fixes (e.g. solar panels, more rubbish bins, etc) they recommended (and ACAP implemented) were superficial. Yet this lack

of acknowledgement of local contexts was not limited to ACAP and trekkers; it is symptomatic of western attitudes to sustainable development both through tourism and generally in the area. The dualist thinking of western (and western-inspired) agencies, whether it be non-governmental, political, industry or scholarship, does not address the true complexities of the interrelationships between environmental contexts (see Appendices 7, 8 and 9 for example). This thesis has argued that sustainable development consists of these interrelationships between environmental contexts, and the determinants of them. As such the proposals for sustainable development in the area at the time of the research were simplistic and superficial, and had any subjective elements removed.

The resulting exasperation and frustration felt by the lodge owners was evident, and compounded the fatalistic attitude years of failed development attempts and external influence have fuelled. Although these claims may appear strong, the evidence is present; after more than 10 years of operation ACAP had decided to change its focus from sustainable development of the entire area principally through tourism management to the economic uplifting of the areas off the tourist trail using methods other than tourism (see Section 6.1.4). Table 1-2 provides further proof that after approximately 15 years of ACAP attempting to initiate development through tourism in the area, results have been limited.

Divergence between local stakeholders and external agencies (for example in ACAP's emphasis on local stakeholders banning bottled water, as opposed to local stakeholders' emphasis on ACAP repairing the trail to Ghandruk) has no doubt influenced the view of all stakeholders on sustainable development through tourism. It has contributed to changes in ACAP's focus on sustainable development using methods other than tourism (see Section 6.1.4) as well as the fatalistic attitude of local lodge owners.

The acknowledgement of such a divergence between the values of external agencies and local stakeholders has considerable ramifications for the policies, planning and practices of sustainable development in the area. The ability of

tourism to achieve processes of sustainable development is obviously problematic if the external supporting agencies and the local community differ as to what those processes should entail (see Section 6.2.3 for example). Although this is discussed further in the next section, it is clear also that any recommendations suggested by this study are also value-inspired.

As evidenced above, this thesis has noted the inability of western theory and conceptualisations of sustainable development through tourism to account for the complexities of relationships between stakeholders and the various environmental or wider structural contexts. This is also particularly evident in the inability of these limited western conceptualisations of a linear, quantifiable system to adequately deal with issues of time and change. As such, policies and practices of sustainable development through tourism within the area at the time of the research were not conditioned for, or able to deal with the turbulence provided by life within the ‘glocal’, ‘socio-political-cultural’ environment of the 20th century (as evidenced in Section 5.1.1, in the political situation brought about by the Maoist insurgency, and the subsequent blowing up of ACAP’s headquarters in Ghandruk). In addition they did not acknowledge that stakeholders in tourism in the area differed in their levels of immersion, and subsequently, attachment to the area (for example in the case of the lodge management committee being a key local decision making forum, whilst some lodge owners spent much of their time outside the area).

Finally, perhaps the clearest example of the inability of western policies and practices to incorporate the time and change elements of sustainability was evident in the lack of long-term planning for the areas of Tatopani and Ghorepani. Such planning on an integrated scale simply did not exist, and where it did exist on a singular level (e.g. government plans for the Kali-Gandaki road) there was no ownership of it by the local community. Although such planning is undoubtedly problematic (due to the area’s propensity for natural disasters and political change for example) the failure of agencies charged with implementing practices of sustainable development through tourism in the area to formulate ideas of what it

would consist of in the long term is illuminating. As this thesis has illustrated, this has contributed to a sense of fatalism amongst local community stakeholders, which is itself unacknowledged by current western paradigms of sustainable development through tourism within the area.

8.4 Contributions to the Literature

This thesis has further advanced the literature in a number of ways as detailed below. However, it is important to firstly acknowledge some constraints on the contributions of the research. In common with other such theses, the study is particularly limited by its size, its single researcher methods of data collection and analysis, its relatively small longitudinal scale, and its analysis of contexts (the environmental contexts related to tourism and sustainable development in two villages in Nepal) which cannot automatically be generalised to a broader case. Additionally, the methodological approach and methods utilised in this study have inherent weaknesses as noted in Section 5.1.2 (however these weaknesses are often due to a challenging of the orthodoxy and alternatively are often argued as strengths in Section 5.1.2). Despite these acknowledged limitations, the thesis makes some important contributions to the literature on tourism and sustainable development.

An initial contribution which must be highlighted is the identification of the necessity of tourism to the areas of Ghorepani and Tatopani, and the rejection of dichotic models cautioning against its use. Section 1.2.1 highlighted the failures of past attempts at development in the area whilst simultaneously emphasising the need for development within the area. Section 1.2.2 expanded upon this and noted that the luxury afforded by approaches (such as that of the cautionary platform of Jafari's 1990 platforms) which possibly caution against the use of tourism as a development tool is simply not available to the field area. It was

noted that in the absence of any other economic options the question of *whether* to develop tourism was redundant and the question of *how* to develop tourism in the area was of necessity. Section 6.1.2 provided further evidence surrounding the reality of the lack of options available to local actors. As such, the study contributes empirical evidence from the field to support the assertions of Briedenham and Wickens (2004); Holden and Ewen (2004); Poon (1993) and Bjønness (1983) of the necessity of accepting and supporting tourism as possibly the only option for forms of development in some majority world areas.

The study has further contributed to the literature on tourism as a form of sustainable development by drawing attention to the origins of the concept of sustainable development and its contested nature (see Chapter 2). In doing so it has illustrated that the origins of the concept of sustainable development lie in western discourse, and also that the concept replicates previous problems associated with western conceptualisations of development (see Section 2.5). In this respect the thesis contributes to previous research which has identified the “contradictions and tensions” (Burns 2004:27) inherent in sustainable development and called into question its relationship with tourism (see for example Burns, 2004; Mowforth and Munt 2003; Southgate and Sharpley, 2002; Holden 2000a).

In the last two decades there have been a considerable number of studies undertaken on the impacts of development (e.g. Chitraker, 1988; Rademacher and Tamang, 1993; Heaton-Shrestha, 2002) at a structural and/or national level and the impacts of tourism (e.g. Gurung and DeCoursey, 1994; Banskota and Sharma, 1995, Nepal, Kohler, and Banzhaf, 2002; Nepal, 2007) at a more local level in the field area. These studies have all contributed valuably to the literature by providing either important analyses of development and its effects nationally upon Nepal (in the former case), or local level specific resource outcomes of tourism as a development tool within the area (in the latter case). Yet due to circumstance such studies are invariably undertaken by Nepali elite or westerners (as this one is), and hence have commonly used traditional western research techniques (e.g.

positivist and quantitative approaches, as noted by Riley and Love, 2000) to record western-influenced answers. As Sharpley and Telfer (2002) note in Section 3.5, the utilisation of such approaches has subsequently resulted in a lack of focus on the non-quantitative processes and interrelationships of tourism and development, and thus a failure of past analyses to fully account for the scope of the industry.

This research differed from these past approaches in a number of ways. Firstly it directly acknowledged the role of the researcher as an external influence upon the research area, and did not presume an objectivity that such studies cannot possess (see Denzin, 2001, in Section 4.1.1). Furthermore, as well as examining the contested nature of tourism as a form of sustainable development at a structural level, this thesis examined the reality of the implementation of these contested ideologies at ground level. However it did not do this by examining the outcomes of sustainable development through tourism relating to specific environmental contexts in a quantitative manner. Instead, as opposed to only examining the outcomes, or answers to the ‘what’ questions, this research has analysed the ‘why’ – i.e. the underlying processes behind why such outcomes are occurring. In other words, this research has examined the environmental (social, cultural, economic, political, and ecological) factors working *on* and *through* tourism, and which tourism itself works *on* and *through* (Mowforth and Munt, 1998:2). As the work of Barry (1999; see Section 1.4.4) demonstrates, an examination of such interactions is necessary to gain a more complete and contextual understanding of processes such as sustainable development.

This is in fact where the study makes an original and valuable contribution to the literature of sustainable development and tourism in developing countries. It critiques ideologies of sustainable development and then examines the forces that shape sustainable development through tourism within the field area and their outcomes. In doing so, this research traces the concept from theory to practice within the two villages. Such research is unique in that the approach taken enables the researcher to examine at first hand the perceptions of sustainable

development through tourism of actors within the field over time, and compare and contrast these with the conceptualisations which underpin sustainable development through tourism in planning and policy at a national and international level.

The ability of the research to do this has resulted in the thesis contributing some valuable findings in Chapters 6 and 7 to the literature on the use of tourism as a form of sustainable development. These findings support critiques of contemporary tourism development policy and planning and their lack of acknowledgement of the role of political economy (e.g. the work of Giampiccoli, 2007; Burns, 2004; Mowforth and Munt, 2003 and Bianchi, 2002). In addition Chapters 6 and 7 have highlighted the issues of 'glocalisation' facing tourism (see Sections 8.1 and 8.3) which remain largely unacknowledged (but noted by Resier, 2007 Salazar, 2005 and Milne, 1998).

Chapters 6 and 7 also highlighted some flaws inherent in models of alternative development in relation to the field area, in particular their emphasis on agency as opposed to structure and an associated neglect of the structural environments (e.g. the influence of political economy - as identified by the authors noted above) within which they operate. Furthermore, the research contributed to the literature by identifying issues of dependency on the ACAP community tourism-management project of the locals in the field area in Section 7.2.1 (identified as a possible danger as early as 1989 by Hough and Sherpa). Related to this was the perception of ACAP as 'outside-in', rather than community participative (see Section 7.1.4).

The thesis is also original in its analysis of the various environmental contexts within the area, particularly with reference to the principal actors' rationales and/or contextualisations of these environmental contexts (see Section 7.2 for example). Research has previously been conducted on the interaction of specific stakeholders with specific environmental contexts (see Holden and Ewen, 2004 and Nyaupane, Morais and Dowler, 2006 for example). Yet the research approach

(e.g. the data collection method, longitudinal scale, and/or alternative focus) of these studies has meant they have not examined the principal actors' rationales of all the environmental contexts (e.g. social, cultural, economic, political and natural environment for example – see Section 1.1.1) and importantly the interactions between these contexts.

Hence a further area of originality of this research has lain in its ability to examine these actors' rationales of these environmental contexts and the relationships between them over time. Although Wall noted in (1997b:1) that it was “...artificial to abstract tourism from this broader context” contemporary tourism scholarship continues to do so as noted in Section 5.2.2.

As such, this research has uncovered disparities between the principal actors' rationales of the various environmental contexts (e.g. instances where they have different values and placed emphasis on different contexts – See Section 7.2 for example). Furthermore it has revealed disparities between these actors' conceptualisations of their own behaviours and the perceptions of others (see Section.7.1 for example). Importantly also it has added a depth of analysis to existing descriptive studies of actors and their roles within the area.

For example, Gurung, Simmons and Devlin's (1996) useful study of the changing role of Nepali tour guides investigated the position of actors in the area who remain under-researched to this day. Whilst they provided a good descriptive account of the guides' role, this research has contributed further by uncovering the negotiated roles in interrelationships between guides and trekkers, and in particular the covert power agreements subconsciously negotiated between them (See Section7.1.1).

In addition, although not a longitudinal study, the length of time spent in the field enabled the researcher to make further important contributions to the literature regarding the relationship to the field of these actors (i.e. the guides) and others. These included highlighting issues of transiency and lack of connection to the area

of some of the tourism actors (due, for example, to migration to or from the area for employment opportunities – see Section 6.1). This raises doubts about traditional conceptualisations of ‘communities’ in majority world countries (e.g. in the work of Jones, 2005 and Campbell, 1999 for example) and in relation to community participatory models (such as ACAP) in Nepal in particular (see Nyaupane and Thapa, 2004 and Nepal, 2000b).

In summary, this thesis has contributed to the literature on tourism and sustainable development in Nepal and in other majority world countries in a number of ways. These contributions have included offering support for previous studies, but importantly they have also included a significant original contribution. This section has detailed these contributions with reference to the existing literature. The next section examines some recommendations of the research.

8.5 Recommendations of the Research

This research examined how the concept of sustainable development was transpiring through tourism at a local level in a specific area. In doing so the study analysed what sustainable development is and its origins, its relationship to tourism, the scholarship of it, influences upon it and how these various influences were perceived, and the outcomes of this.

The findings of this study suggest the need for a more informed research paradigm, in which the conceptualisations behind sustainable development and its relationship to tourism, the values underpinning them (and indeed the methodological approaches used to examine them) are all analysed in more detail. Such a study would be problematic however, given the current hegemony existing in research (see Section 4.1), and the discourse on sustainable development and tourism which exists at a wider structural level (See Chapters 2 and 3).

At a local level it is not practical or possible for local communities such as Ghorepani and Tatopani to remove themselves from these wider structures and yet still benefit from developmental processes; and in fact neither village would wish to do so. As this thesis has repeatedly stated, tourism is currently a necessity for the development of these villages as other development options simply do not exist.

However, an obvious need exists within both communities for further empowerment and independence in decision-making, particularly with regards to long term planning of all environmental contexts within the area. Although ACAP has created some sound foundations, it has not achieved the level of representation of the Ghorepani community its patrons would prefer. Indeed the findings of this research suggest it has created a level of dependency within the village. Likewise in Tatopani the lack of community input into the development of the future road through the village would appear to be a considerable shortcoming.

Change, whether it be labelled 'development' or 'growth', sustainable or otherwise, is inevitable in each of the two communities. The key issue for the two communities would be the level of control they have over the changes that occur. In addition these changes need to be assessed at community level as well as through externally-inspired scientific processes. Perhaps a key point is that the values attached to these changes have to be those of the communities themselves, and not solely those of external agencies or cultures simplistically determining the changes to be 'good' or 'bad' impacts for example, or applying a romantic aesthetic as has previously been the case (see Section 6.1.3 for example).

Perhaps the greatest threat to both villages lies not in a political or environmental disaster but rather the sense of fatalism that exists amongst stakeholders of both communities. The frustration felt by these stakeholders can only be overcome with long-term planning (across all environmental contexts in the area) in which the locals have a measure of ownership and a guarantee of commitment from

political forces. The deeply problematic nature of such conditions in a non-western, developing country is obvious however. The cultural and social reference points that locals may wish to keep intact may clash with the wants of tourists and the economic processes in place; and/or the natural environmental needs of locals may clash in an increasingly 'glocalised' world with those as interested in protecting the global commons as their own local ones. A change of the ACAP model involving a nationalisation of the project and greater local control of local programmes would perhaps aid the locals in such processes by giving them greater control over their own (and their village's) destiny. However simply empowering the local elites (as opposed to external ones) would not bring true sustainable development to the area.

In addition to the need to find alternative means for empowering the local stakeholders across contexts, there exists a real need to empower tourists to the area with further knowledge with which to make their judgements. Although ACAP has recognised this need and endeavoured to meet it, findings from the field suggested its methods were proving largely ineffective. For example, the fact that ACAP, fifteen years after it was attributed a tourism-management role, did not have a working relationship with guides' associations involving education and interchange of ideas is illuminating. However it must also be noted that ACAP and the lodge management committees have had some positive effects on the area; evidenced in their ability to empower local women, but also in their ability to draw attention to the need for the management of tourism in the area, and provide a potential resource base for doing so.

Trekkers' values-based behaviours and decisions need to be made more transparent to them, and to all stakeholders in the area, through a clearer contextualisation of their decisions. The transience of their stay shielded the tourists from local realities and compounded the features of the traditional 'tourist' experience, whereby the tourist is by necessity removed from and absolved of the problems of poverty, disease and hardship present in the area.

Whilst the very idea of comparatively wealthy western tourists indulging in temporary submersion in areas of poverty for enjoyment raises a number of ethical issues, the fact that these same tourists are not paying the full cost (financially or in respect of resource usage) of their stay is obviously in need of attention. Measure need to be adopted to ensure trekkers are aware of, and prepared to pay for the full cost of their experience. Such measures would require an assessment of the need for further regulation within the area, as well as an examination of the materials tourists to the area are provided with, and when and how they are provided. Wider measures could include an analysis of the typologies of the visitors and possibly measures to dissuade/prohibit those that were particularly troublesome, while simultaneously increasing those that are of most benefit to the area.

The recommendations noted above are made in light of indications from the findings of this study. It is acknowledged that certain processes of change (particularly those at a structural level) are frequently beyond the control of local tourism actors or agencies. Nevertheless, the recommendations detailed above suggest ways in which tourism can be more effective as a means for achieving processes of sustainable development in the future.

8.6 Summary

This thesis constituted a single researcher examining the processes of tourism and sustainable development in two villages of north-western Nepal over a five month field period. The thesis contributed to the literature on sustainable development through tourism by examining it from theory to practice. It examined the origins, influences and context of development, of environment, and of sustainable development, and approaches to their scholarship (Chapter 2). It then uncovered the relationship of tourism to these (Chapter 3). Next it proposed an alternative

research paradigm for the investigation of such concepts at field level (Chapter 4) noting the inherent (but largely unacknowledged) weaknesses in many contemporary approaches. Next it used this alternative research approach to examine the influences of the above conceptualisations on a specific area (two villages involved in tourism in a majority world country) and how these influences were perceived (Chapters 6 and 7).

The fieldwork component and the wider research process identified potential problems with the application of western theory and practice, whether it was in academic research or political policy and planning in the area. In these areas there would appear to be considerable variation between western and local conceptualisations of local realities. In addition there would appear to be considerable variation between western and local conceptualisations of the outcomes resulting from the implementation of western-inspired development practices within the area.

It is of considerable concern that despite an acknowledgement by a key international agency that the last 50 years has seen comparatively little improvement in various indices of development in Nepal, western conceptualisations and approaches to development in the area remain largely unchanged.

Yet to some degree this is understandable, given the lack of change at a wider structural level, and the apparent unwillingness or inability in western structural discourses for self-analysis. This is not merely the case in its scholarship, or the implementation styles or practices it adopts (whether it be in assigning dualist role positions to complex local environmental relations, or in its inability to recognise the 'outside-in' nature of most development approaches). At a much more insidious level is the inability of western structural discourse to acknowledge, let alone examine, the values inherent in the discourses which it is disseminating.

Such values were critiqued in the early chapters of this thesis and found to be problematic, primarily because they have their base in an occidental history which is reductionist in nature (and reductionist of nature among other things). In addition they have a lack of reference points shared with local contexts within the research area. Through existing at a wider structural level but being disseminated on the ground in the area these values are directly influencing the policies and practices, and thus outcomes, of the use of tourism as a form of sustainable development in the Annapurna region of Nepal. However these values, the discourses associated with them and the realisation of them through practices in the field are obscuring local actors' concerns and conceptualisations.

The problem that the villages of Ghorepani and Tatopani would appear to face according to the findings of this research is that critical local decisions are being addressed (sometimes inadvertently) by external forces, such as the market-based economy. Local stakeholders do not have power in such a sphere, and do not have the capacity to empower themselves to the level whereby they could address the above issues. This situation, and the unfulfilled promise of development over many decades, had manifested itself in a sense of fatalism amongst local stakeholders in tourism in the area, which emerged in the findings of this research.

Aacerbating such problems are the issues involved with planning in developing countries such as Nepal. Current planning for sustainable development and sustainable tourism is taking place within a vacuum, outside of social, political, economic and cultural constraints (as typified by the lack of knowledge, consultation or control over the Beni-Jomson road of ACAP and other local stakeholders). Too many times during this research it appeared that western-inspired policy, practice and observations were overly concerned with the "what" rather than the "why".

In the early 21st century era whereby development remains equated with modernisation and economic growth, villages such as Ghorepani and Tatopani exist in a liminal sphere economically and culturally in the 'glocal' world noted

earlier. The lack of empowerment the local stakeholders have in achieving processes of sustainable development processes through tourism (but more crucially determining what constitutes it) does not auger well for harmony across environmental contexts and thus for the future development of the villages. Tourism, as with other mediums for development, must determine how to externally empower local stakeholders to decide their futures through planning and practice without encouraging dependency or the imposition of values. Such a task is problematic however, due to the industry's current dependency on wider western ideological and economic structures.

This study has attempted to examine sustainable development through tourism in the Annapurna region of Nepal. As such it has uncovered and critiqued conflicts between theoretical approaches and practice in the area. However it must be noted that the use of tourism as a form of sustainable development for the two villages under study is not an option – it is a necessity. With few choices for development the use of tourism remains for many in the area the only alternative to a living based upon the unreliability of subsistence farming or Ghurkha remittances. This study has noted growing individualism and competition within the area, and possible issues arising between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. However, without the economic benefits of tourism, the two areas under study would still be principally the realm of those who have nothing but a subsistence lifestyle. Tourism is currently offering many locals a standard of living which would not otherwise be attainable.

Nevertheless, this thesis has identified potential problems in which the relationship between tourism and sustainable development in the area is theorised, conceptualised, measured, and acted upon, across environmental contexts. It has suggested the need for future research and the use of alternative methods to engender processes towards sustainable development in the region. Finally, it has highlighted the fact that the constitution of these processes of sustainable development and their final outcomes must be determined by a local community which is empowered to do so. Only this will ensure that the social, cultural,

natural, political and economic processes in the area are optimistically believed by the locals to be contributing through tourism towards a development which is truly sustainable.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Maps

Appendix 2: Structure, Goal and Objectives of ACAP, Principles of KMTNC

Appendix 3: Major Trekking Areas and Respective Visitors

Appendix 4: Plates

Appendix 5: Principle Actors/Stakeholders within the Field Area

Appendix 6: Tourism's Power Jigsaw with History

Appendix 7: Potential Contributions of an Interpretive Paradigm

Appendix 8: Habermas' Theory Of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Appendix 9: Emergent Themes: Examples of Coding Tables

Appendix 10: Codes of Conduct Examples

Appendix 11: Tourism and Resource Usage in Tatopani

Appendix 12: Cycle of Tourism Competition in Ghorepani

APPENDIX ONE

MAPS

Map 1:
Nepal Topography and Access

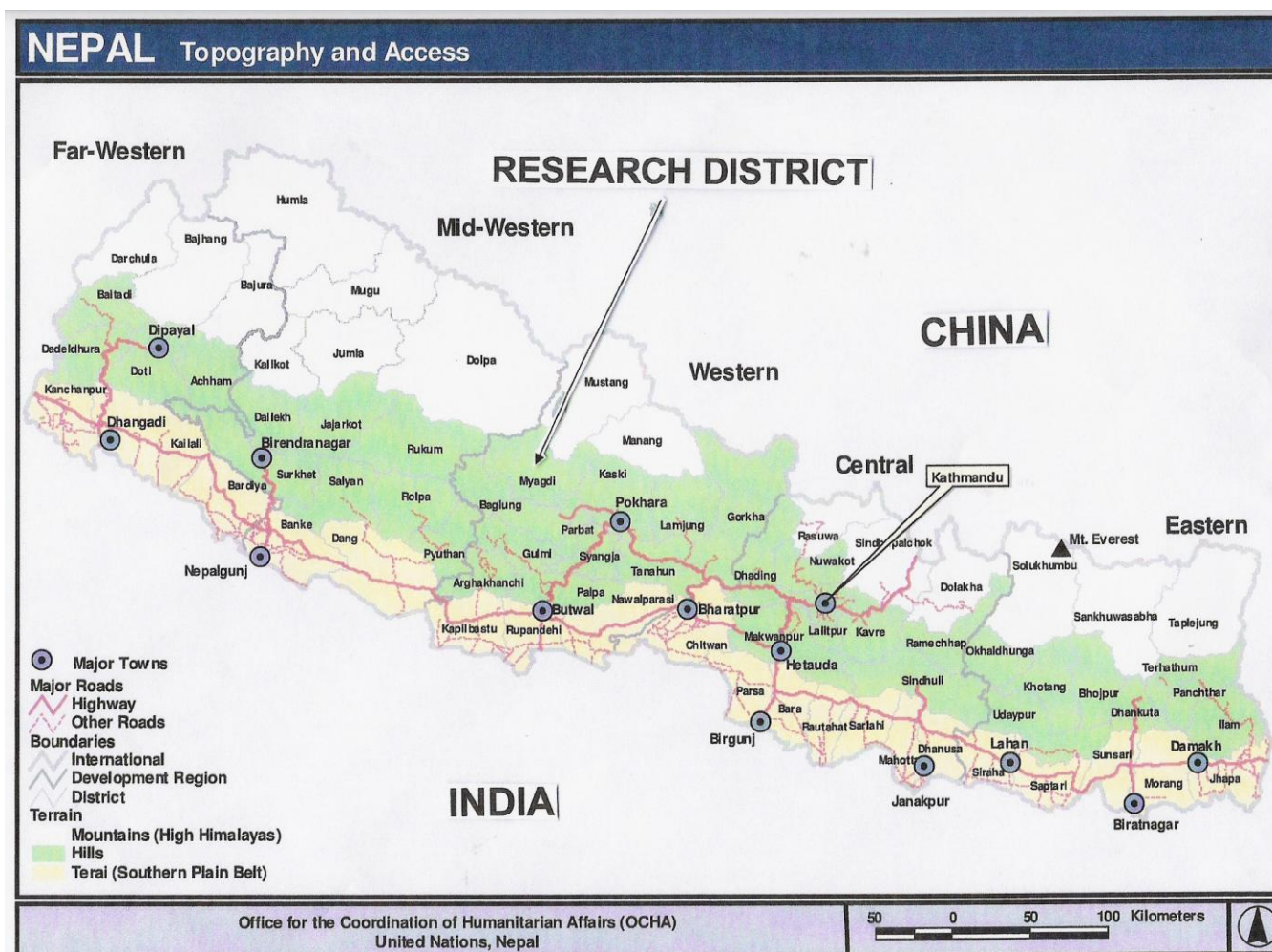
Map 2:
The Annapurna Conservation Area

Map 3:
Ghorepani and Tatopani Villages

Appendix 1: Map 1

Nepal Topography and Access

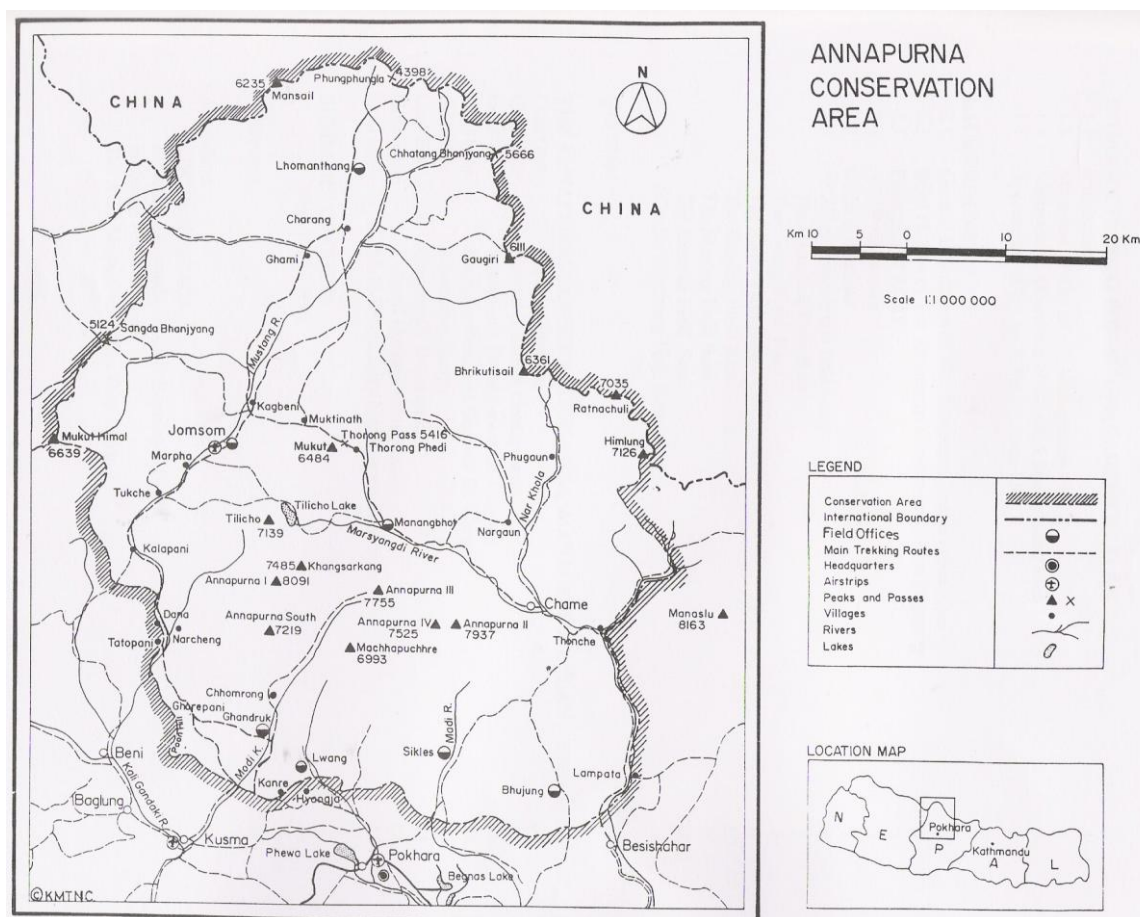
Source: Adapted from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations, Nepal (2001)



Appendix 1: Map 2

The Annapurna Conservation Area

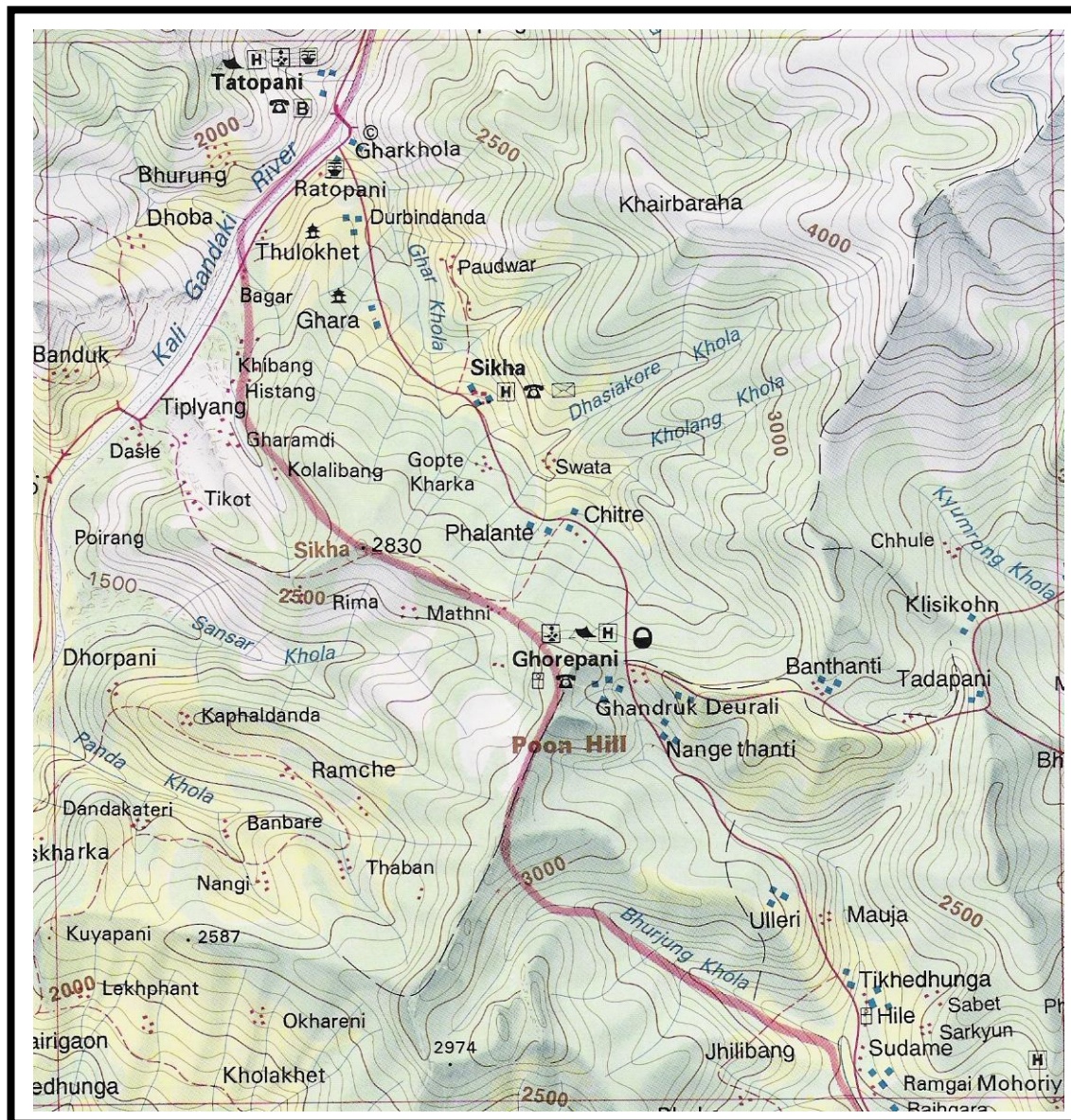
Source: King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (1997:ii).



Appendix 1: Map 3

Ghorepani and Tatopani Villages

Source: King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (2000b).



Legend:

Settlement, Temple, Monastery

Waterfall, Hot spring
facilities

Post office, Police Post
(Wireless)

Hospital, Health post, Helipad

ACA unit conservation sub-office



Camp site, ACA Museum

Settlement with lodging

Telephone, Radio

Money exchange / Bank

Kerosene depots, Airport



APPENDIX TWO

Part 1:

The Organisational Structure of the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)

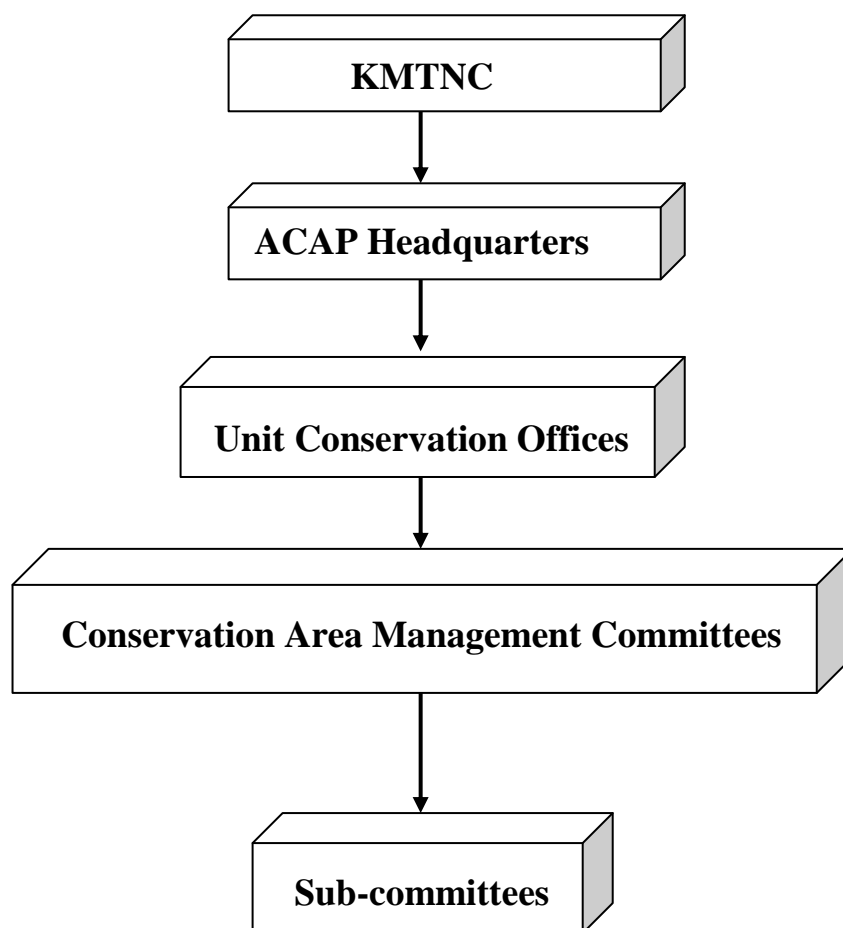
Part 2:

Guiding Principles of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation

Part 3:

Goal and Objectives of ACAP

Appendix 2 Part 1
The Organisational Structure of the
Annapurna Conservation Area Project



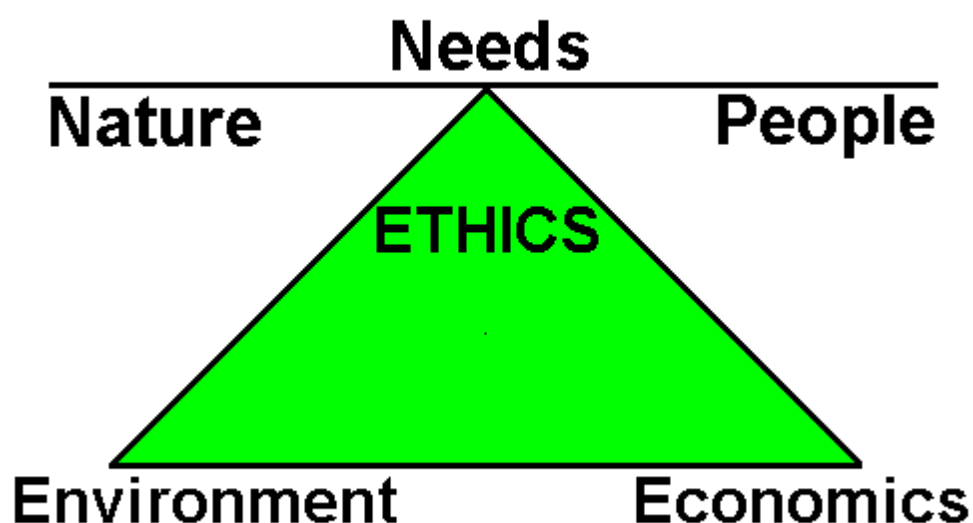
The Organisational Structure of ACAP as outlined in the
Conservation Area Management Regulations of 2053 (1996).

Source: Bajracharya (2002:25)

Appendix 2 Part 2

Guiding Principles of the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation

KMTNC's mission of promoting, managing and conserving nature in all its diversity in Nepal is supported by the following guiding principles:



- Always ensuring a balance between human needs and the environment to guarantee long-term sustainability
- Always seeking maximum community participation in which the local people are recognised as both principal actors and beneficiaries
- Always linking economic, environmental and ethical factors in conservation activities
- Always managing operations based on sound economic principles. Always aiming for quality in all activities

Source: King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (2006b)

Appendix 2 Part 3

Goal and Objectives of ACAP

Goal:

To achieve sustained balance between nature conservation and socio-economic improvement in the Annapurna Conservation Area thereby assist King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation in achieving its goal.

Objectives:

- Conserve the natural resources of Annapurna Conservation Area for the benefit of the present and future generation.
- Bring sustainable social and economic development to the local people.
- Develop tourism in such a way that it will have minimum negative impact on the natural, socio-cultural and economic environments.

Source: King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (2006b).

APPENDIX THREE

Major Trekking Areas and Respective Visitors

Appendix 3

Major Trekking Areas and Respective Visitors

Year	Everest		Helambu and Langtang		Annapurna		Controlled Area		Others	Total	
	No.	Change %	No.	Change %	No.	Change %	No.	Change %	No.	No.	Change %
1998	22,826		10,952		65,587		3,277		10,002	112,644	
1999	26,788	17.4	8,612	-21.4	67,371	2.7	4,135	26.2	1,054	107,960	-4.2
2000	26,683	-0.4	10,917	26.8	76,398	13.4	3,760	-9.1	1,022	118,780	10.0
2001	22,029	-17.4	9,148	-16.2	65,313	-14.5	3,354	-10.8	984	100,828	-15.1
2002	13,982	-36.5	4,798	-47.6	38,277	-41.4	1,979	-43.4	243	59,279	-41.2
2003	18,812	34.5	3,119	-35.0	40,668	6.2	2,365	19.5	757	65,721	10.9
2004	20,051	6.6	3,020	-3.2	42,347	4.1	3,223	36.3	801	69,442	5.7

Major Trekking Areas and Respective Visitors

Source: Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation (Nepal), in Dhakal (2005:6).

APPENDIX FOUR

PLATES

Plate A:
Ghorepani village

Plate B:
Poon Hill

Plates C and D:
Tatopani Trail

Plates E and F
Tatopani Landslide

Plate G:
Radio Tower remains

Appendix 4: Plates A and B

Plate A: Ghorepani village

Plate B: Poon Hill

(Authors photos)



Plate A (above)
Ghorepani Village after snowfall.

Plate B (below)
Poon Hill Observation Tower and trekkers.



Appendix 4: Plates C and D

Tatopani Trail

(Plate C: source unknown; Plate D: authors photo)

Plate C (left)

Tatopani village main trail, taken approximately 1985-1990.

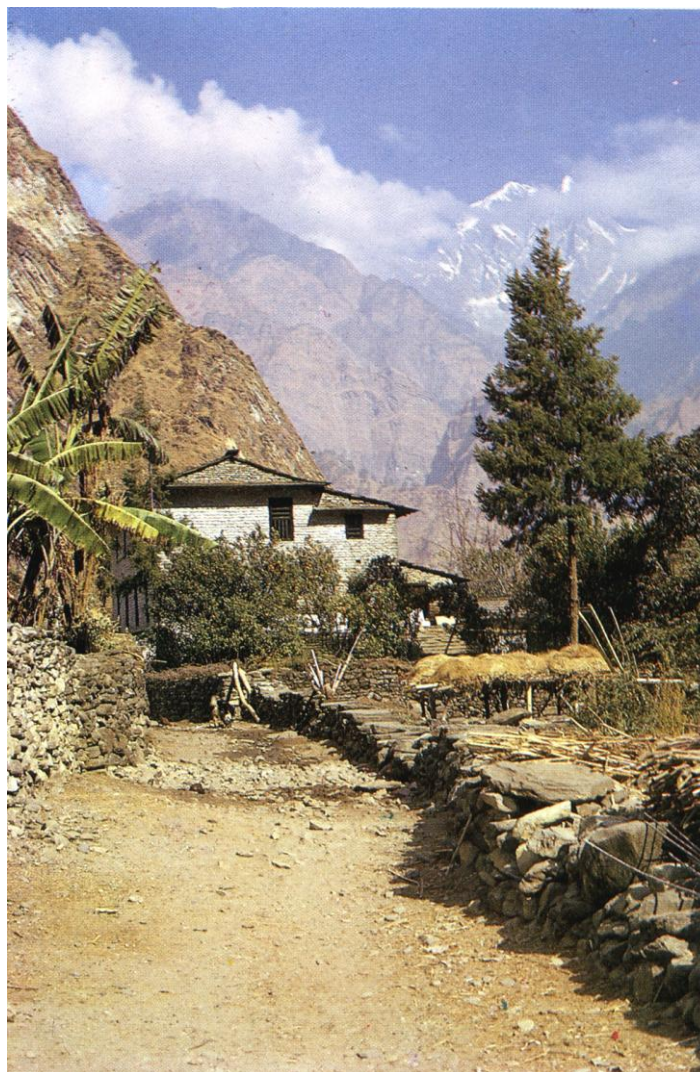
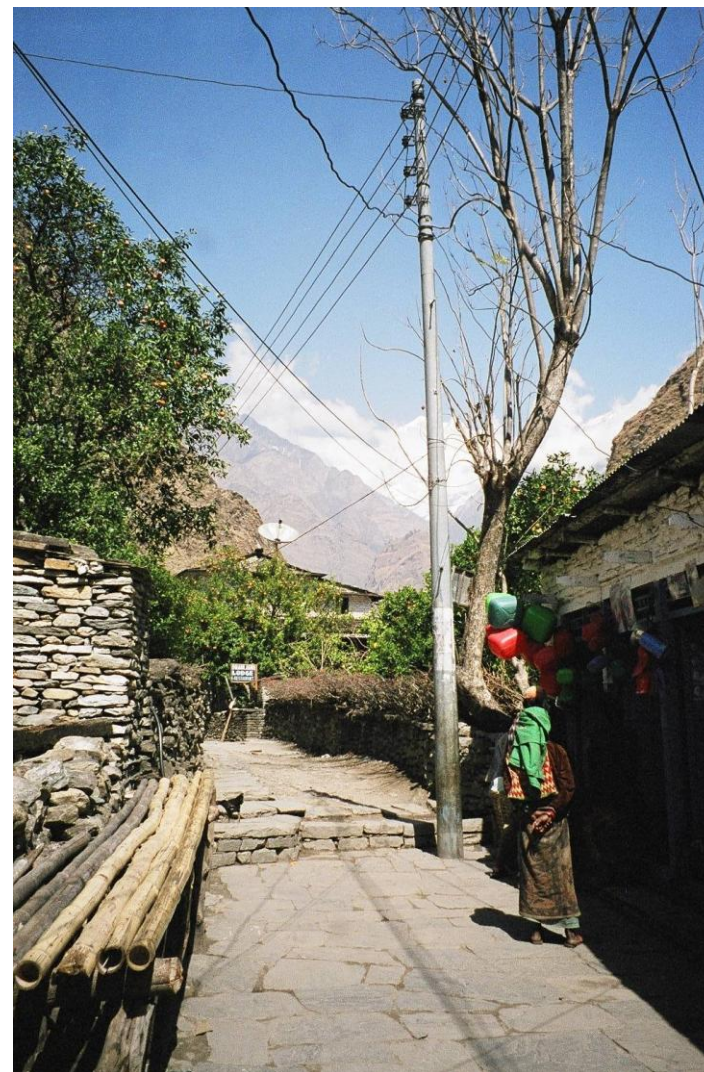


Plate D (right)

Tatopani village main trail, taken from approximately the same point (with a different focal length) in February 2002.



Appendix 4: Plates E and F

Tatopani Landslide

(Author's photos)



Plate E (above)
Tatopani landslide and river
blockage from south of the
village, opposite side of the river.



Plate F (right)
Tatopani landslide from
main trail in the village
looking south.

Appendix 4: Plate G

Radio Tower remains

(Authors photos)



Plate G

Remains of the radio communications tower near the Poon Hill observation tower. It was blown up by Maoists forces after a gun battle with government troops approximately two months before this photo was taken. Trekkers can be seen nearby at the foot of the observation tower.

APPENDIX FIVE

Principle Actors/Stakeholders Within The Fieldwork Area

Appendix 5

Principle Actors/Stakeholders Within The Fieldwork Area

OVERVIEW

Following the overview presented in Section 1.3.5, the stakeholders identified for the purpose of this study could perhaps best be described as the ‘persons, groups, or organisations directly affected by, or contributing to notions of sustainable development and tourism in the wards of Ghorepani and Tatopani of Myagdi, Nepal’.

Although there are a considerable number of groups who could claim to be directly and indirectly affected by in tourism in the area¹¹⁵, this research focused on those groups with social agency such that they could directly act on and influence outcomes. It is acknowledged that this discounted some key groups such as porters and residents. However this study was not a study of the impacts of tourism on a host community. Rather it was an analysis of how tourism worked on and through the two wards, and as such, the operators behind such workings were the key concern. Therefore the four broad stakeholder groups identified were the principal management agency (ACAP), the lodge owners, the trekkers, and guides. The following paragraphs provide a brief contextual summation and justification of each of these groupings.

Local Management Agencies

Although the villages of Tatopani and Ghorepani both fall under the Myagdi District jurisdiction, the agencies involved in realising attempts at sustainable development through tourism differ between the two villages. In Ghorepani,

¹¹⁵ For example Mule drivers, Tibetan traders, Indian pilgrims, various government sector workers, porters for tourism and other commerce, residents of nearby villages, etc.

ACAP is the principal management authority, with local authorities and a variety of ACAP inspired committees and sub-committees at work in the area. Tatopani is juxtaposed to the area administered by ACAP, rather than within it, and hence it is not managed by ACAP, but rather by local authorities.

ACAP policies for the area are determined by an ACAP management committee, in consultation with the Nepal Tourism Board and the relevant government Ministry (e.g. Forestry, or Tourism and Civil Aviation). Area policy is then passed on to the district ACAP Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC). The CAMC with responsibility for the ACAP policies in Ghorepani is based in the ACAP district headquarters of Ghandruk (a village of the Gurung ethnic group). Each sector office of ACAP has its own core programme with all sector offices on the tourist trail.

ACAP initiatives in the Ghorepani area are primarily concerned with attempts at achieving the sustainability of the present tourism industry. These attempts focus principally around the management of tourism and its impacts on the natural environment¹¹⁶ and improved tourism infrastructure¹¹⁷. Other areas of ACAP activity in the Ghorepani area at the time of the research included the building of a new ACAP office in the village, the establishment of a Magar (ethnic group) Museum for tourists in the ACAP office, and (upon the recommendation of members of the LMC) efforts to establish craft-making amongst the local women's group in an attempt to create further tourism related business opportunity.

Thus, in the Ghorepani area, ACAP policy is disseminated through the field office of Ghandruk, (ACAP's field headquarters) via a Conservation Area Management Committee, to sub-committees of Women's Development, Tourism Management and Forest Management. These subcommittees (in the form of their local officers)

¹¹⁶ E.g. combating the problem of firewood usage with the introduction of technology and agro-forestry techniques, introduction of improved waste management techniques.

¹¹⁷ E.g. trails and signposting.

theoretically¹¹⁸ approach the local Lodge Management Committee with an idea; however it is notionally up to the Lodge Management Committee to take the initiative. Stevens (1997:239) claims that ACAP staff “act as advisors and liaisons between villagers, government agencies, and international conservation and development agencies...” and “they do not make or enforce policies and regulations”. Yet Heinen and Mehta offer a different analysis, arguing that “the officers of ACAP, as opposed to CDCs or CAMCs, have been responsible for the types and locations of many projects done in the region”, and suggesting that appraisals of ACAP possessing a bottom-up management structure are unwarranted (1999:26).

The local body initiatives at sustainable development through tourism within the area of Ghorepani hence revolve around the local Lodge Management Committee. This committee, with a chairman and a secretary, comprises all of the lodge owners or managers in the village. Although the Sikha-based Village Development Committee is in theory the overseeing authority of the Ghorepani Lodge Management Committee, in reality the Ghorepani LMC is fairly autonomous and the VDC is often bypassed, depending upon the issue.

The Lodge Management Committee consists of owners or managers of the lodges within Ghorepani. It is the principal decision-making local authority for tourism and development projects in the area. The LMC’s principal concerns are the regulation of tourism and industry practice within the area, and the representation of the lodge owners’ interests and tourism –related development projects within the village. Decisions on pricing, lodge accommodation provision, and other matters related to the regulation of local industry practice as well as development projects within the village (such as the building of waste-management facilities) theoretically take place at LMC meetings, which are attended by local members of ACAP.

¹¹⁸ See Heinen and Mehta, 1999:25.

Such decisions are made upon the advice of ACAP and discussion within the committee. The LMC is also involved in delegating labour for development projects (e.g. the building of a ditch for a sewerage pipe in the village). The Women's Group is also a principal group concerned with development projects in the area. The projects the Women's group undertake are usually those which have been suggested by the resident ACAP Women's Development Officer or as advised by the LMC. These projects include reforestation, waste management – (the building of toilets for trekkers on Poon Hill, and the provision of waste bins), and assistance in building the local ACAP offices. A final direct contribution to the development of the area in relation to tourism has been the grant of 50 000 rupees by the Nepal Tourism Board to build a recycling centre in the village.

The village of Tatopani is not in the ACAP jurisdiction, and hence does not have the management influence of ACAP. It also has a total of 5 lodges, compared to Ghorepani's 27. These lodges, and much of the land in Tatopani, are owned by members of the Thakali ethnic group, most of whom are related. The Tatopani area Village Development Committee is based in Buhrung, a Magar village which is not on the tourist trail. Hence the principal authorities charged with tourism-related development in the area were the five lodge owners. Development projects related to tourism in the village area include the village hot-springs, a principal attraction of the area, where 30% of the profits go to the local school, and the building of a Sustainable Development Community Centre by an external benefactor. The purpose of this centre was to encourage sustainable building and farming, as well as increasing the knowledge capital of the area.

In the Tatopani area, the Village Development Committee is theoretically charged with responsibility for development projects in the area, however this committee is based in the village of Bhurung, away from the trekking trail and the village of Tatopani and hence removed from the tourism industry. There was a conscious decision on the part of the Tatopani Lodge owners to support Bhurung as the VDC centre, as they were wary of repercussions of having all the economic as well as political power centred upon the village of Tatopani and possibly amongst

their minority caste – see below (Personal Communication, 2001). However this has meant that the VDC is constrained by its lack of financial capital, and is perceived as suffering from a lack of knowledge capital and indecision by the lodge owners of Tatopani. Hence the vast majority of development decisions are carried out in the village of Tatopani by an informal lodge management committee comprising the five lodge owners of the village.

Lodge owners

The principal providers of food and accommodation in the Ghorepani and Tatopani areas are the lodge owners. The building of a lodge is financially impossible for the vast majority of Nepalis. This means the lodges in the ACA area are almost always owned and run by the other three main contributors to the area financially - the Tibetan exiles in the far north, the historically rich Thakali's in the north and west corridor, and the ex- Ghurka Magar and Gurungs in the Southern areas of the ACA. As an example, in the village of Tatopani, all four main lodges are owned by Thakali with connections to the historic salt trade; in the village of Ghorepani the lodges are all owned by Magars or their partners. Of the 25 lodges operating in Ghorepani at the time of the research 20 were started with money directly from Ghurka payments, others were begun from money which was indirectly connected to employment for the Ghurkas (e.g. having served previously in the Ghurkas, some of the soldiers go on to work as policemen in Singapore or security guards in Hong Kong etc. - and continue sending remittances). Although the reduction in intake of these three services in recent times has been lessening their impact, the economic legacy of previous recruitment is clear.

The lodges are usually staffed by the lodge owners or their immediate families, with sometimes a staff member (or a couple of staff members etc. - depending on size) from outside the ACA or from another village employed, usually as a chef and/or cleaner etc. The success of the lodge is determined by a number of key factors. These include:

- the price of accommodation and meals
- the location of the lodge (if it is in one of the principal villages and rest stops - which are also recommended by the guidebooks and guides)
- the advice of guides or porters (they are more likely to select a lodge in which they do not have to pay for food and/or accommodation, and/or get free drinks. They also are more inclined to chose one where they have been before and are accepted by the owner - see below)
- the guidebooks and/or word of mouth (These two are often related - one trekker goes to a lodge recommended by their guidebook and enjoys the night- and so recommends the same lodge to other trekkers)
- the size of the lodge and the services offered by it

All of these factors mean that most villages have some very successful lodges, and some not as successful - e.g. in Ghorepani, of the 25 lodges, 5 lodges would conduct approximately 60% of the business.

Many of the lodge owners also have residences in Pokhara, and the vast majority of them send their children to private schools in Pokhara (either as boarders or as day pupils looked after by relatives - Wells and Brandon, 1992, and personal observations). Trips to Pokhara for shopping and supplies etc. are reasonably common for many of the lodge owners and their families. Although much of the literature attributes clearly defined religious observance to each distinct ethnic group, in practice there is considerable syncretism, principally between the Hindu and Buddhist beliefs.

As Section 1.2.2 noted, the village of Ghorepani consisted of “a high pasture with three cowsheds in 1975” (Acharya, 1999:45). Consequently the lodge owners and their families of the 27 lodges (25 of which were in operation at the time of the research) are originally from outside the area. Almost all the lodge owners in Ghorepani come from Khibang (see Appendix 1 Map 3) where many maintain a second home which is rented out. The lodge owners of Ghorepani are all from the Pun sept (*thar*) of the Magar tribe (*jat*) or ethnic group¹¹⁹ (with the husband of one being a Tibetan) and all from the same extended family. Consequently the majority of lodge owners in Ghorepani are either first or second cousins with each other (with some brothers and sisters).

Similarly, the lodge owners of Tatopani are all from the same ethnic group, with four of them related including a brother and sister. Both the Magars and Thakali are from the Tibeto – Burman ethnic lineage (Shrestha, Singh and Pradhan, 1975). Unlike the Magars of Ghorepani, the Thakali have a considerable history of residence in Tatopani – the Thakali have been traders and inn keepers (for other traders) along the Kali Gandaki corridor for centuries (Thomas 1996). Their role

¹¹⁹ See Gautam and Thapa-Magar (1994).

in the historic salt trade resulted in the development of considerable business acumen and reserves of wealth and property amongst the Thakali ethnic group. However the village is a lot more multi-cultural than Ghorepani, with Magar, and Gurung residents and visitors to the bazaar common (Thomas, 1996).

The differences in circumstances between the lodge owners of the two wards as outlined above impacted directly on the results of this research. Hence in the following chapters where results are specific to the lodge owners of one ward this ward is clearly identified.

Guides

Gurung, Simmons, and Devlin (1996:118) found that “Nepalese trekking guides are predominantly young (80 per cent younger than 35 years) and almost exclusively male (98 per cent)” They also noted that “the guides are almost exclusively Nepali”(ibid). However they failed to note that often the guides, (including the vast majority operating in the ACA) are not indigenous to the area they are operating in as is the case with porters also.¹²⁰ During the fieldwork period the research did not encounter a single guide hired prior to a trek commencing who was indigenous to the ACA area.

The political unrest and the associated decline in visitor numbers have undoubtedly affected the numbers employed in the industry. Pramrod Shrestha, secretary of the Trekking Agencies’ Association of Nepal (TAAN), estimates that the years from 2000 to 2005 witnessed a drop from 8500 to 2855 in the number of people employed by trekking agencies (Ramchandra, 2005). Parajuli estimates his company provided employment for 50 guides per day in previous peak seasons (ibid, 2006). Whilst this last figure may be exaggerated, guides in Nepal whom are not opportunists (see below) often work for a company that may have up to 40-50 other guides on its books, although not all simultaneously employed. Thus

¹²⁰ See Pasha (2001) Himalayan Explorers Connection (2005) and Barnett (2000) for example.

it is imperative for the guide to get a good report from his clients at the end of the trek. In addition there is also there is more chance of a tip if the client is satisfied.

Most guides operating within the ACA during the fieldwork phase could be generally classified into one of three groupings of guides; those from the sherpa ethnic grouping of eastern Nepal, those who were higher caste Hindu guides residing in Kathmandu, and those who were opportunists.

The Sherpa guides were generally slightly older than other guides. They had frequently began their careers as porters and had been assisted into the tourism industry by relatives. Sherpa guides had two principal advantages over many other guides operating in the ACA. Firstly they were better equipped to handle the mountainous conditions as they were mostly all from the mountainous Solu Khumbu area, (although many reside in Kathmandu now). Secondly they were able to exploit the widespread reputation and images associated with the Sherpa name - due to the climbing exploits associated with their ethnic group¹²¹.

Although the caste system has theoretically and legally been abolished in Nepal, it retains considerable influence. Higher caste Hindus, many of them relatively young and from the Kathmandu area, made up a considerable proportion of the guides. Many of these guides were younger, and not actually from mountainous areas, with little experience in them. They had not worked as porters, however they were advantaged by their good English and thus were more confident and found it easier to talk to trekkers. These guides usually gained guiding positions due to their English abilities. They were usually comparatively well educated and sometimes university students. However they did not always share the same relationship in both wards of the research area with lodge owners as the Sherpa guides, due to perceived differences in culture and caste.

The third general category of guides during the fieldwork phase was opportunists. These were not career guides but rather guides by opportunity. Such guides

¹²¹ E.g. the Sherpa name is now used as a brand name on clothing in Kathmandu.

would perhaps constitute a reason why Gurung Simmons, and Devlin (1996:118) observed that “guides are... relatively inexperienced, with two-thirds of the sample having fewer than six years field experience” and noted that only 50.4% of the guides reported they were full-time. These guides had been in a position where they had met trekkers (or frequently friends of theirs had met trekkers) in the main centres - usually Kathmandu or Pokhara. They put themselves forward as guides, or their name was put forward by other friends as guides, when often they had (initially) not even been to the area, but rather their principal qualification was the Nepali language.

These ‘guides’ would find their way by asking directions in Nepali and by asking other guides advice in lodges at nights. The trekkers were often unaware, as they did not understand what was being said in Nepali, and the status of the ‘guide’ was usually not made known by the other guides for fear of bringing disrepute. Because these guides were in a position to interact with the trekkers in the main centres in the first place, they often shared a lot of characteristics with the above general category, often being higher caste Hindus from the main centres, but not usually with the same status as those who had been given guiding positions.

Salazar (2005:642) identifies the key role that guides play in “actively help(ing) to (re)construct, folklorize, ethnicize and exoticize the local, “authentic” distinctiveness and uniqueness” of a destination. He also identifies their key role as agents both implementing and subject to ‘glocalisation’ processes through their social relationships. Guides thus play a role which, while not formally, economically, or politically as powerfully as the other actors examined in this section and study, is socially just as influential.

Yet, as Section 7.1 notes, the role played by guides in the fieldwork area during this study was curbed particularly by economic forces but additionally by other forces. For example, the relationship between a guide and his/her client was determined by the following imperatives, amongst others:

- The need to keep their client satisfied at all times: a satisfied client provided a better chance of a tip.
- Guides may be working for companies with up to 40-50 alternative guides on their books. Thus it was essential for guides to get a complimentary report from his clients at the end of the trek.
- Guides were often younger than their clients (although older guides still adopt such a role to younger trekkers) and frequently of smaller stature (one trekker remarked “It felt like he was my son” of a guide who was a similar age to her).
- The trekkers backgrounds meant they were often confident professionals, or from families or cultures more strident in relationships than their guides.
- English language ability – Sometimes guides were not fully confident in their English ability (the dominant language used), despite the fact that many spoke the language well.
- Perhaps there were additional colonial legacies; whilst Nepal was never colonised, some trekkers may have assumed a more powerful role due to the fact they perceived themselves and their background as more developed/educated/civilised.

These factors and others influenced the guides interactions with their clients, and hence influenced outcomes (for example resource usage, trekkers behaviour) upon tourism and development within the area.

Trekkers

Following Banskota and Sharma (1995), trekkers visiting the ACA can be initially segmented into two groups; those on package or group tours (GTs) and Free and Independent Travellers (FITs). Banskota and Sharma estimate that approximately 55% of visitors to the area during their period of research were FITs, and this would appear to be an approximate figure for the visitation observed during the fieldwork period of this research also.

Banskota and Sharma estimated 80 percent of the trekkers during their fieldwork period to be European, with the remainder mostly Asian¹²² (1995:117). This again tallies with estimates in the field of this study. Travers (2004:19) notes that Nepal’s high value markets have traditionally consisted of the United Kingdom, Japan, France, German-speaking Europe, Benelux, Australia and New Zealand, an observation reflected in the results of Holden and Sparrowhawk’s (2002) work.

¹²² The data presented from Banskota and Sharma’s study (1995) are based on a very low sample of 40 and thus open to questions of reliability.

This also appeared accurate when tallied with fieldwork observations; however an additional important market in the ACA at the time of the fieldwork was the Israeli market. Observations, anecdotal evidence, and personal communications all suggested that while this market was low spend, it was high volume. The nationalities above constituted the majority of the 'trekkers' interviewed and observed in the fieldwork period.

While the above estimates and observations were generally in agreement, Banskota and Sharma's (1995) estimates that the large majority of both FIT and GT trekkers were aged between 19 and 35, and that women predominated amongst GT over 51, did not appear accurate during the fieldwork period of this study. Whilst the majority of FITs were undoubtedly within a 19-35 year age group, the majority of GTs were older than 35 and women did not appear to significantly predominate in this category. Furthermore, Gurung and DeCoursey's (1994) estimates that on a group trek in the Annapurna region a group of 12 trekkers embarks with approximately 50 support staff additionally did not appear accurate for the period covered by the fieldwork of this research. In this case the number of support staff embarking on such a trip could be estimated at approximately half that number.

The Sagarmartha (Mt Everest) area treks are more popular with GT because of the increased prices associated with the major Annapurna treks, due to flight tickets, the longer time required, making it more expensive also.

The Free and Independent Trekkers' two main methods of trekking through the area were independently with a guide and or porter/s, and independently without. Those hiring guides or porters frequently did so before entering the area (again these guides or porters were usually not from the area), and usually did this through an agency - both of which resulted in the profits of the employment staying outside the area (see above). An additional reason for the comparatively small amount of money spent in the area is the fact that many of the travellers (not on package tours) are budget travellers (backpacks are the luggage of necessity in

the area), a significant percentage of whom are taking extended time off work, travelling to many countries, and/or who have travelled to India, thus they are much more budget and money conscious than other types of tourist.

Whilst Free and Independent Trekkers were liable for all expenses incurred, Group trekkers usually had no compulsory expenses whilst in the area. However they did spend money on souvenirs and associated goods (e.g. camera film) and sometimes snacks. Past research does not provide data on the average number of visitor nights spent in each of the two wards under investigation. However the attractions of Poon Hill and the hot springs at Tatopani meant estimates in the field were that trekkers average stay in Ghorepani would be between one and one and a half nights, with Tatopani slightly more and closer to one and a half nights. Appendix 5 lists figures for visitor nights in the region generally.

In a 1999 study, Holden and Sparrowhawk's interviews of 156 trekkers in Ghorepani and Tatopani indicated the trekkers were generally young, well-educated with a high-level of concern over environmental issues who were motivated by the enjoyment of nature and feeling close to and learning about it (2002:444). Trekkers motivations for visiting the area are also examined (to a lesser extent) in other studies¹²³ and were not the focus of this research. However, as later chapters will explore, the themes of mass tourism and ecotourism, and the differing requirements and expectations of trekkers were significant ones.

Observations suggested overcrowding of trekkers was not particularly prevalent during the time of the fieldwork period in comparison to previous years. Most lodges had spare capacity at all times due to the drop in tourism figures reported in Section 1.1.2. However a study simultaneous to the fieldwork found over a third of trekkers perceived there to be overcrowding in Annapurna at the time of the fieldwork (Holden and Ewen, 2004). This brings to mind Urry's (2000:246) claims that

¹²³See Holden and Sparrowhawk 2002 and Holden and Ewen, 2004; see also Hepburn 2002 for a useful Nepali perception of tourists.

One important distinction has been drawn between the romantic and the collective tourist gaze. The former involves a solitudinous and lengthy gaze upon aspects of nature such as mountains, lakes, valleys, deserts and sunsets, which are treated as objects of awe and reverence. Other people are viewed as intrusive, as a solitary and contemplative gaze is sought.

This would appear particularly apt when the mountain/s in question are amongst the highest and most scenic in the world. Themes of overcrowding of trekkers (and hence ruination of individuals “solitudinous and lengthy gaze”) were becoming common before the recent downturn in numbers due to the unstable political situation. Swarbrooke (1999:321) provides a useful example of such writings at a time when trekkers were visiting the area in peak numbers:

Often the phenomenon of ecotourism has grown so that it has more in common with the worst aspects of mass market tourism. Trekking in Nepal, another form of ecotourism, started out as an almost spiritual quest in the 1960's by those seeking inspiration from the Nepalese culture... Now projects costing millions of dollars are being undertaken to put right the results of ecotourism which simply became too big for its boots...

Such writings would perhaps suggest that the Annapurna area was in a state of crossover between “a few adventurous trekkers and a large number of nature-loving ecotourists or mass backpackers” (to paraphrase Butcher, 2003:43)¹²⁴. Nevertheless, Bhattarai, Conway and Shrestha (2005) note that regardless of the type of tourist, it is their contribution in aggregate terms, and more specifically where they contribute (rural mountain economies¹²⁵) and for how long (see Weaver, 1998:142) that is significant.

¹²⁴ This is supported by Page and Dowling's (2002) identification of Nepal as a key destination for ecotourism operators and Hull (2004:14) who notes the change in characteristics of the independent traveller.

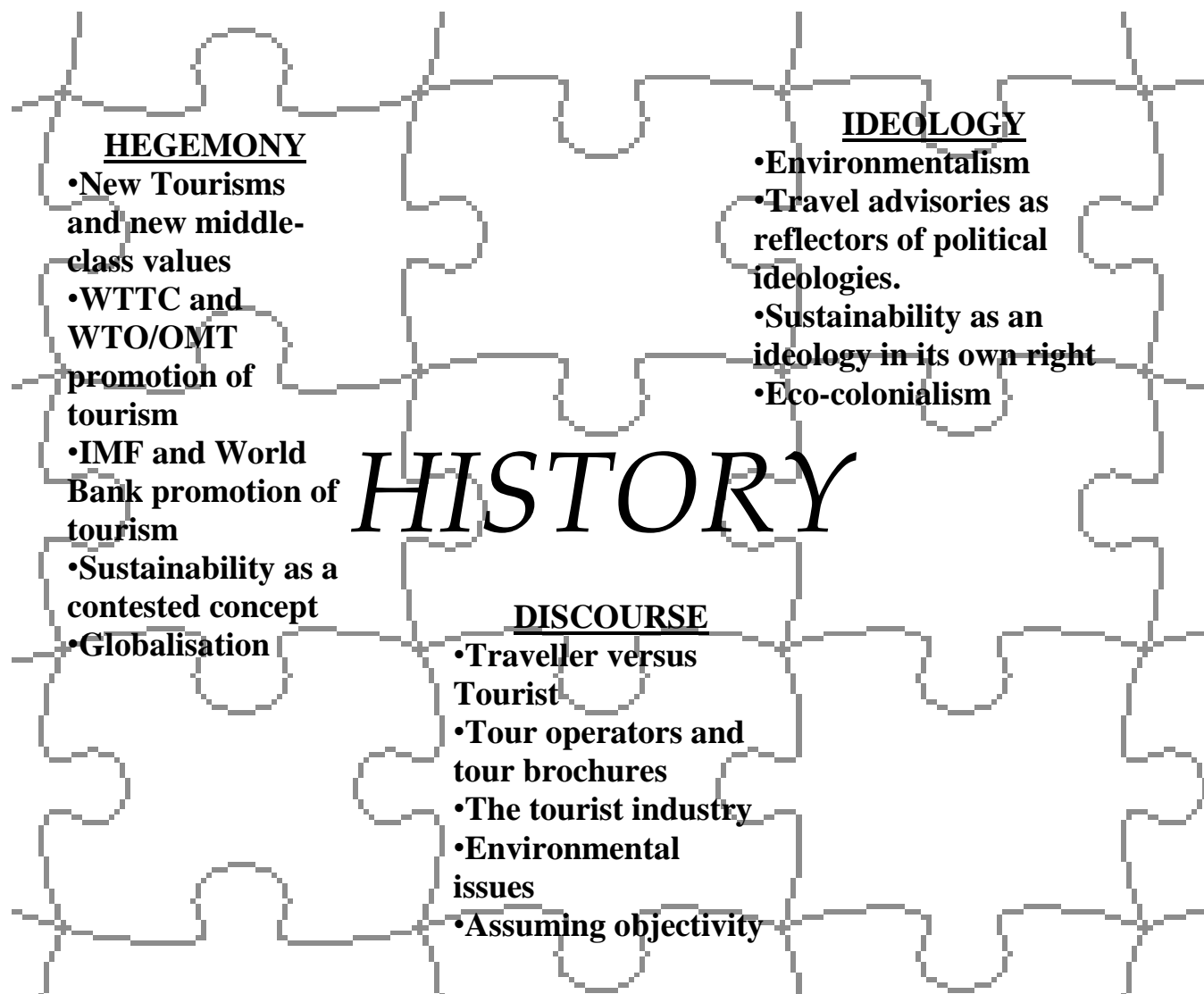
¹²⁵ Although Nepal (2000b:664) cites estimates that “only 6% of tourism expenditure is in rural areas”.

APPENDIX SIX

Tourism's 'Power Jigsaw' With History Addendum

Appendix 6

Tourism's 'Power Jigsaw' with 'History' addendum



Tourism's 'Power Jigsaw' with 'History' addendum

Source: Adapted from Mowforth and Munt (2003:45).

APPENDIX SEVEN

Potential Contributions The Utilisation Of An Interpretive Paradigm Can Make To Evaluative Research

Appendix 7

Potential Contributions The Utilisation Of An Interpretive Paradigm Can Make To Evaluative Research

Enabling the research to identify and uncover different definitions/conceptualisations of the relationship between sustainable development and tourism within the area and how it is best studied. For example, the use of personal experience stories, semi or unstructured interviews, observations, and thick descriptions of lived experiences can enable the researcher to compare and contrast the perspectives of various stakeholders and stakeholder groups.

Allowing the research to locate and uncover the assumptions that are held by various stakeholding groups – assumptions that are often belied by the facts of experience, and demonstrate them to be correct or incorrect.

Enabling the research to identify strategic points of intervention into social situations, i.e. in the implementation of policies and practices of sustainable development and tourism, thus making possible the evaluation and possible improvement of the services of agencies and programs.

Facilitating the suggestion of alternative moral viewpoints from which the issues/problems surrounding sustainable development and tourism within the area can be interpreted and assessed. This in turn promotes the assessment of these issues from the point of view of those most directly affected (rather than those involved in their creation only through current hegemonic realities).

Enabling the exposure of the limits of statistics and statistical evaluations (and thus the limitations of a positivistic, quantitative approach) through the use of the qualitative materials preferred by an interpretive approach. The emphasis of this approach on the uniqueness of each life holds up the individual case as the

measure of the effectiveness of the policies and practices implemented. This is particularly important in an area such as that under study whereby the relationship between both structure and agency and the local and global is much more acute.

Source: Adapted from Denzin, (2001:2) and Becker (1966:23-28).

APPENDIX EIGHT

Summary Table Of Habermas' Theory Of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Appendix 8

Summary Table Of Habermas’ Theory Of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Methodological Paradigm	Scientific Positivism	Interpretive methods	Critical Theory
Human inquiry motivation	Technical	Practical	Emancipative
Purpose/Goal	Control and Management	Understanding	Liberation from falsehood
Assumption	Separation of fact and values - concentration on facts, supposedly value free research	Difficult nature of “facts” and importance of relativism	Unification of facts and values
View of Reality (ontology)	One quantifiable reality exists	One/Multiple realities exist which can not always be comprehended	Critical realist – wrong (ideologically structured)-reality presently exists
View of the nature of Knowledge/justification	Objectivity is presumed	Objectivity remains an ideal	Interactive/Subjectivist – values immediate inquiry which reflects values of actors
View of how above views are interpreted in order for research to proceed (Methodology)	Experimental, manipulative, verification of hypothesis	Interventionist – uses modified methods emphasising critical multiplism in more natural settings	Dialogic and dialectical, transformative seeking the elimination of false consciousness and the facilitation of a transformed world
Preferred Method	Primarily Quantitative	Qualitative and/or quantitative	Qualitative

Source: Adapted from Hollinshead, 1991, Habermas 1972:308-317, Tribe, 2004:55 and Guba and Lincoln, 1994:109).

APPENDIX NINE

Emergent Themes: Example of Coding Tables

Appendix 9

Emergent Themes: Example of Coding Tables

Emergent Themes

The following is a brief synopsis of the emergent themes from one of the key actors groups (Trekksers). The coding framework utilised reflects the various elements in the field, plus the various elements involved in the theoretical study of tourism and development – eg tourism’s social, natural, cultural and political contexts. The eample of trekksers only has been provided due to their volume.

Table 1: Trekksers Coding Schedule Part 1

Codes (Stage 1)	Issues Perceived and Observed	Themes Identified (Stage 2)
Time Bond Contribution	Brevity Transience Relevance Restricted Focused ahead No histories No Futures No Hardships Sanitation (of Impacts) Limited accountability Positive economic benefits Change as technical Development as non-western Changing typologies Tourism as principal force	Trekksers are transient and gain a “Snapshot” only Little local contextual knowledges gained, despite perceptions to the contrary Present needs and requirements priority Visit as defined by ACA, not village Trekksers as removed/absolved from hardship of the area and not subjected to recourse or compensation over impacts Tourism as perceived to be impacting through contexts but not individual trekksers Tourism as increasing standard of living Trekksers changing typologies – directly impact upon the area environmentally and socio-economically and luxury in a subsistence economy – viewed with fatalism

Remedy Priority	Perceptions Guidebooks as perceptions Tourism Importance Modernisation Tourism Impacts Development Trekkers as uninformed Acknowledged lack of baselines Romantic views Remedial measures Reductionisms Problems Solutions Technical Western Practical	Perceptions as based on guidebooks but not acknowledged as such Trekkers – tourism as sole and major external force on the area Modernisation as a force unrelated to tourism Development as infrastructure and modernisation negative - romanticism Trekkers perceive tourism beneficial to the area economically, harmful to the natural environment Trekkers as unaware of contextual backgrounds/histories complexities Acknowledgement of lack of knowledge of quantitative baseline Majority world problems as easily remediable – due to ignorance/lack of education Trekkers answers to problems resource issues western and technical Problems reduced to standalone components judged in isolation Pollution by locals due to ignorance, Education of locals as priority
Powers (conceptualisation of) Insurgency	Perceived Power Actual Power Political awareness Administrative Political impacts Sides Good Bad Impacts Non risk Benefits	Tourism perceived as powerful force for good Trekkers – most powerful actor due to cultural and economic factors Lack of knowledge of ACAP and its functions – only regulatory Lack of awareness of political processes or activities Local political agency as local council functions – eg rubbish bin functions Political situation as beneficial –quiet/solitudinal Political situation as transport disruptions (bandh) Maoist encounters as adventures / tales to be told
Cultural Conceptualisations Hegemonies	Tourism impacts Preservation Respect India Modernisation Visuals	Tourism as destroying the environment or culture, instead of preserving it Nepal as civilised compared to India Tourism as destroying the culture Modernisation as destroying the culture Trekkers view of locals – romantic plus ignorant Trekkers - cultural assumption of power

	Dance show Authenticity Romanticism	Trekkers – local culture as romanticism, simple, stress free, clean living
Economic Conceptualisations Economic Processes	Cost Perceptions of trekkers Trekkers perceptions Multiplier Typologies Behaviours	Independent Trekkers –area as expensive Locals on trail - Trekkers as good due principally to economics Trekkers - tourism increases standard of living Changing typologies responsible for economic pressures Unaware of local economies Actions as breaking codes Actions as causing economic hardship
Natural Env. Conceptualisations Resource Issues	Key Issue Knowledge Experience Perceptions Impacts Actions Problems Remedies Responsibilities Locals Change	Natural environment as focus Natural environment impacts as visual Guidebooks as impact determiners Impacts as not meeting previous perceptions Impacts as standalone/disparate Impacts as direct Remedies as straightforward Impacts as westernised Removal of responsibilities Removal from resource issues Tourism as force of destruction Indirect impacts unnoticed/unperceived
Stakeholder Relationships Roles / Connections Conflicts Social Conceptualisations	Guides ACAP Lodge owners Friendly Interaction /Lack of Trustworthiness Solitude Peaceful	Guides as surrogate sons, friends Importance of “friendly” lodge owners Trust as trust in guidebooks Superficial temporary “friendships” / interactions Trekkers as powerbase dominated/prioritised interrelationships Subjugation of locals Trekkers as target of mockery Trekkers aspirations for a solitudinal experience

	Experience Fatalistic Power Perceptions Irreverence/hostility Values imposition Social Conflicts Economics	Trekkers and Lodge owners limited interaction understanding/comprehension Trekkers as putting values on locals but not realities Trekkers as viewed through lens of fatalism Tourism industry as responsible for social conflicts but not involved in them Trekkers as removed from local society Locals as carefree, cute, stress-free, (romanticised)
Motivations Rationales Behavioural Codes Agency of Empowerment Requirements Influences	Experience Priorities Individual behaviour Tourist types Needs/wants Actors behaviour Preferences Social environment Expectations Guidebooks Motivations Value Product Responsibilities Acceptable vs non-acceptable Cultural factors	Trekkers as desiring “Holiday”, rather than an “experience” Economic prioritising factor - trekkers travelling from India Trekkers dissonances as “Moral off-loads” Tourist Typology Change and Priority/Action Change Trekkers wants justified as needs: majority world wants conceptualised as minority world needs Nepal as alternative reality – actions not acceptable at home Guidebooks as behaviour determinants providing contextual knowledge/experience Highlight natural environmental, but focus personal requirements and economic necessities Change and development as unappreciated unless non-visible comfort Removal from hardship

Table 2: Trekkers Coding Schedule Part 2

Themes as Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trekkers are transient and gain a “Snapshot” only 2. Little local contextual knowledges gained, despite perceptions to the contrary 3. Present needs and requirements priority 4. Visit as defined by ACA, not village 5. Trekkers as removed/absolved from hardship of the area and not subjected to recourse or compensation over impacts 6. Tourism as perceived to be impacting through contexts but not individual trekkers 7. Tourism as increasing standard of living 8. Trekkers changing typologies – directly impact upon the area environmentally and socio-economically and luxury in a subsistence economy – viewed with fatalism 9. Perceptions as based on guidebooks but not acknowledged as such 10. Trekkers – tourism as sole and major external force on the area 11. Modernisation as a force unrelated to tourism 12. Development as infrastructure and modernisation negative - romanticism 13. Trekkers perceive tourism beneficial to the area economically, harmful to the natural environment 14. Trekkers as unaware of contextual backgrounds/histories complexities 15. Acknowledgement of lack of knowledge of quantitative baseline 16. Majority world problems as easily remediable – due to ignorance/lack of education 	<p>Villages as not registering in long term consciousness</p> <p>Stake and ownership of area</p> <p>Tourism as perceived stakeholder</p> <p>Romanticising area and own impacts</p> <p>Development as technical and non-infrastructural</p>	<p>Trekkers are not stakeholders in area</p> <p>Trekkers perceived as separate to industry</p> <p>Trekkers as anti-development</p> <p>Personal negative influences not considered</p> <p>Influences, processes perceived as Impacts</p> <p>Impacts as isolated variables</p>

17. Trekkers answers to problems resource issues western and technical 18. Problems reduced to standalone components judged in isolation 19. Pollution by locals due to ignorance, 20. Education of locals as priority 21. Tourism perceived as powerful force for good 22. Trekkers – most powerful actor due to cultural and economic factors 23. Lack of knowledge of ACAP and its functions – only regulatory 24. Lack of awareness of political processes or activities 25. Local political agency as local council functions – eg rubbish bin functions 26. Political situation as beneficial –quiet/solitudinal 27. Political situation as transport disruptions (bandh) 28. Maoist encounters as adventures / tales to be told 29. Tourism as “destroying” the environment or culture, instead of preserving it 30. Nepal as civilised compared to India 31. Tourism as destroying the culture 32. Modernisation as destroying the culture 33. Trekkers view of locals – romantic plus ignorant 34. Trekkers - cultural assumption of power 35. Trekkers – local culture as romanticism, simple, stress free, clean living 36. Independent Trekkers –area as expensive 37. Locals on trail - Trekkers as good due principally to economics 38. Trekkers - tourism increases standard of living 39. Changing typologies responsible for economic	Negative impacts as easily fixed through education Trekkers as political neutral Political failures in local government provision Trekkers self-perceptions as adventurers /experience Tourism as destroying romanticism Trekkers as colonials Tourism as economic force for good Trekkers as ignorant/need for economic	Education as answer Irrelevance of local politics Trekkers as adopting persona of alternative typologies Trekkers as colonials but positive, whilst tourism as colonising and destroying romanticism -bad
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<p>pressures</p> <p>40. Unaware of local economies</p> <p>41. Actions as breaking codes</p> <p>42. Actions as causing economic hardship</p> <p>43. Natural environment as focus</p> <p>44. Natural environment impacts as visual</p> <p>45. Guidebooks as impact determiners</p> <p>46. Impacts as not meeting previous perceptions</p> <p>47. Impacts as standalone/disparate</p> <p>48. Impacts as direct</p> <p>49. Remedies as straightforward</p> <p>50. Impacts as westernised</p> <p>51. Removal of responsibilities</p> <p>52. Removal from resource issues</p> <p>53. Tourism as force of destruction</p> <p>54. Indirect impacts unnoticed/unperceived</p> <p>55. Guides as surrogate sons, friends</p> <p>56. Importance of “friendly” lodge owners</p> <p>57. Trust as trust in guidebooks</p> <p>58. Superficial temporary “friendships” / interactions</p> <p>59. Trekkers as powerbase dominated/prioritised interrelationships</p> <p>60. Subjugation of locals</p> <p>61. Trekkers as target of mockery</p> <p>62. Trekkers aspirations for a solitudinal experience</p> <p>63. Trekkers and Lodge owners limited interaction understanding/comprehension</p> <p>64. Trekkers as putting values on locals but not realities</p> <p>65. Trekkers as viewed through lens of fatalism</p> <p>66. Tourism industry as responsible for social conflicts but not involved in them</p> <p>67. Trekkers as removed from local society</p>	<p>education</p> <p>Trekkers as generating negative economic pressures</p> <p>Natural environment as pivotal to trekkers</p> <p>Natural environment as harmed by visual impacts</p> <p>Natural Environment Impacts as not determined and assessed by others</p> <p>Trekkers as having social demands</p> <p>Trekkers as non-social subjugator</p> <p>Trekkers role as begrudged but fate</p> <p>Local society romanticised but not entered</p>	<p>Trekkers as central but uneducated economic force</p> <p>Natural Environment as trekker priority but interpreted positivisitically and externally</p> <p>Trekkers as prime social power</p> <p>Trekkers as no stake in social environment</p>
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APPENDIX TEN

Codes Of Conduct Examples

Basic Tourist Guide “Code of Conduct”

1. Always take care over your personal appearance and grooming
2. Show good manners on all occasions
3. Remain calm in difficult circumstances
4. Maintain a sense of humour
5. Remember that your behaviour contributes to your country's image overseas
6. Obey the laws, regulations, customs and traditions of your country and encourage visitors to do the same
7. Avoid making negative statements or judgements about other countries, their beliefs, customs or politics and refrain from discussing controversial subjects
8. Do not denigrate your country, its traditions, culture or leadership
9. Give equal attention to all the participants, not only to the young, attractive, wealthy or dominant visitors.
10. Answer questions with care, honesty and politeness
11. Do not give mis-leading or untrue information
12. Avoid discussing your personal problems with the tour participants
13. Do not become over familiar with tour members
14. Avoid recommending people or places of doubtful reputation
15. Avoid accompanying visitors to restricted areas and to places of which respectable people disapprove
16. Never ask for tips or gifts
17. Avoid compelling tour participants to shop at business which pay a commission while neglecting the tour sight-seeing programme

Source: Personal Communication, original source unknown, 2001. Appeared 2006 as “Code of Conduct of the Local Guide” in Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (2006:23).

ACAP “Minimum Impact Code”

BE A GUEST!

The Minimum Impact Code

Awareness and responsibility are the first thing to take on your trek. Your example affects the locals' attitude toward their culture and environment. Therefore, please apply these rules not only to yourself, but also make them a condition of your trekking staff. Remind other visitors of the importance of respecting the environment.

CONSERVE THE FOREST

- Don't light campfires: Cook with kerosene, and take sufficient warm clothing.
- Choose lodges that use alternatives to wood for cooking and heating. To save fuel, order the same meal for all members of a group.

STOP POLLUTION

- Carry out what you carry in.
- Buy only what won't pollute, or carry it out. Purify water yourself instead of buying it bottled. Return batteries to your home country for proper disposal.
- Use toilets wherever possible. In the wild, stay at least 50m away from water sources, and bury your waste.

PROTECT WILDLIFE

- Don't disturb wildlife.
- Don't hurt or remove animals and plants.
- Don't buy items made from wildlife parts.

RESPECT PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- Adopt local custom: Speak Nepali and local language to the best of your ability. Don't wear revealing clothes. Save caresses for private moments.
- Respect privacy. Ask before photographing people or religious sites. Don't enter houses uninvited.
- Leave antiques where they belong.
- Discourage begging and encourage fair dealing.

Keep your eyes, ear and mind open: not only to learn from your hosts, but also to encourage right behavior. Consult ACAP staff, brochures and guide book for more detail on how to be a good guest.

Source: The version presented is that of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (2001), which was the most accessible at the time of the research (although it was in limited circulation). However it should be noted that there are different variations of the “Minimum Impact Code” in circulation, including a version on the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation's website and another which was devised in collaboration with the Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP).

ADDITIONAL ACAP GUIDELINES

The material listed below also features in the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (2001) brochure, which some trekkers had access to through ACAP offices and some shops and/or lodges on the trail. Although it is not listed as part of the “Minimum Impact Code”, it is presented as it contains other key relevant material – particularly the information regarding the fixing of prices and menus within the area.

ON TREK

To avoid the sort of surprise that may just be annoying, but also deadly, prepare yourself thoroughly before you start. Some hints:

TREK SAFELY

- Never trek alone. Hire a guide if you can't find a companion.
- Become informed about high altitude sickness
- Carry a good medicine kit and any drugs you need
- Watch where you're walking. Don't step backward blindly when you are taking photos.
- Time your trek generously. Taking rests is not a sign of weakness

ACAP IN THE AREA

The project operates seven regional offices and several information centres and checkpoints. Our staff is happy to answer your questions about localities, lodging and the work we do. Where two-way radios or phones are available, we can assist in arranging rescue operations if necessary.

LODGES

ACAP has established local Tourism Management Sub-Committee that fix the prices and basic menus. Therefore don't bargain. Encourage environment-friendly management, local design and style, and shorter menus with more local specialities.

KEEP TO THE RULES

- To enter the ACA you need a valid entry permit from our counters at Pokhara lakeside or Thamel, Kathmandu. Get special permits for some designated areas (from the immigration department) and for trekking peak expeditions (from the Nepal Mountaineering Association).
- Hunting is prohibited. Fishing permits are issued by the local Conservation Area Management Committees (ask at your lodge). The collection of scientific specimens must be approved by ACAP.
- Mountainbiking is controlled.
- Documentary filming requires a special permit from ACAP.

Register at our checkpoints along the route. Your cooperation allows us to monitor the flow of visitors, and increases your chances of rescue in case you need help.

Follow the minimum impact code. If you come with an agency, be sure they make right preparations for safety, legality and environment-friendliness.

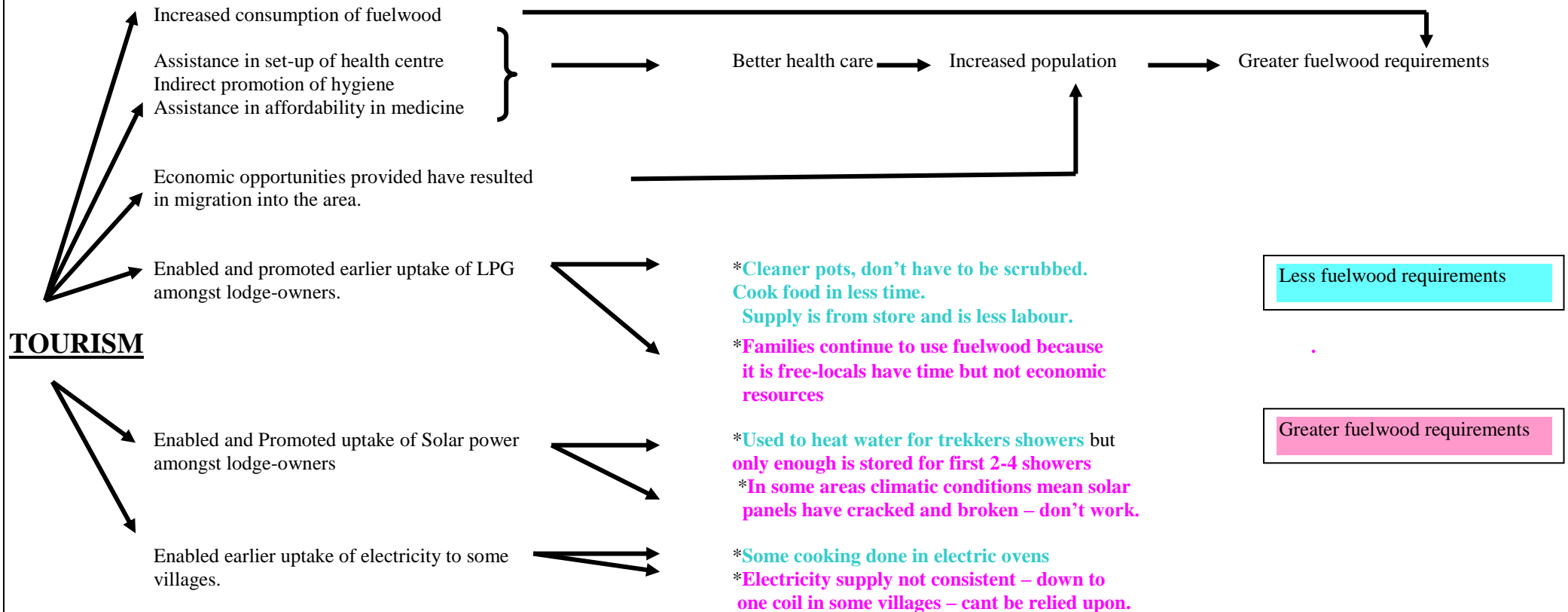
Source: Annapurna Conservation Area Project (2001).

APPENDIX ELEVEN

Tourism and Resource Usage in Tatopani

Appendix 10

Tourism and Resource Usage in Tatopani



Some Connections Between Tourism and Resource Usage in Tatopani

Source: author.

APPENDIX TWELVE

Cycle of Tourism Competition within Ghorepani

Appendix 12

Tourism Cycle of Competition in Ghorepani

Source: author

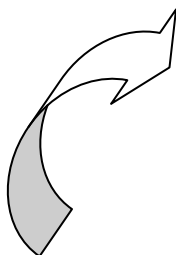
STAGE 1

Lodge Management Committees fixed prices, bed capacity and menus in lodges



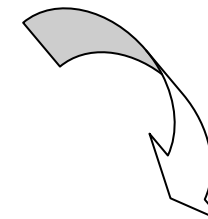
STAGE 2

Wealthier lodge owners with more initial capital building lodges significantly better than others, expanding capacity, and hiring external, more-talented chefs. These factors are attracting the attention of guidebook authors, who recommend improved lodges to readers, who in turn disseminate these recommendations



STAGE 4

Owners of older lodges not upgraded forced to concede lower prices through surreptitious discounts. Market domination of upgraded lodges gives them more powerful economic position from which to offer such discounts, thus can undercut the older lodges, forcing greater discounts from older lodges



STAGE 3

Additional capital generated from additional trekkers attracted to wealthier lodges used to offer more inducements to guides, e.g. free drinks, meals, accommodation
In turn increased guide patronage results in increased trekking patronage

