

An approach to more integrated planning and management of tourism in natural areas: a case study of the Catlins in New Zealand's wild south east.

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Abstract

Natural areas attract considerable tourism growth, with increasing public concern about managing the effects of tourism on the natural areas and their host communities. The focus of this research is development of a more integrated approach to planning and managing natural areas for tourism and related activities in New Zealand, adopting a coordinated application of tools rather than the common focus on single tools to solve part of a complex problem. These tools include methodologies, frameworks, and responses to issues that arise in the contexts of integrated planning and management, including social, political and cultural contexts. The Catlins case study is one of four action-research studies used to develop and extend the integrated approach. The Catlins, encompassing an area in south-east New Zealand, has natural values including indigenous forests, a wild and varied coastline and marine wildlife. The case study analysed the strengths and weaknesses of particular tools, and practical aspects of capacity building relating to use of these tools to help implement a community strategic tourism plan across several small communities. Six sets of tools broadly inform the recognition and setting of limits to tourism growth and activity; processes around community participation in strategic planning; social, biophysical and cumulative impact assessment; valuation and allocation of natural resources for tourism; land-use and tourism planning; and marketing and interpretation to attract and direct visitors, modify their behaviour and enhance their experience. Together, the tools provide the basis for building community, industry and agency capacity to manage natural areas in a more integrated manner for tourism.

Keywords: natural area tourism; management strategies; community planning

1 Introduction

1.1 The research programme background and objectives

Natural areas attract considerable tourism growth; while at the same time there is increasing public concern about conservation and the environment, and managing the effects of tourism (Newsome et al., 2002:1-3). This case study is part of the development of an integrated approach to planning and managing natural areas for tourism and related activities in New Zealand. The research objectives are to evaluate existing approaches to planning and managing tourism and related developments in natural areas, define an integrated approach for application in multi-stakeholder contexts (with a particular focus on Maori¹ stakeholders), and pilot, evaluate and refine the approach.

The research programme is contributing to the national strategic research objective of developing a “dynamic tourism industry which is environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable”. It helps to provide direction for integration of these four principle components of sustainability, including recognition of a finite capacity for some activities at some sites; the competing requirements of tourism and outdoor recreation activities; ways of addressing cultural and amenity values for all sectors of society; and the need to monitor progress towards sustainability.

Key end-user groups are participating in the research - the tourism industry, government agencies, professional associations and host communities. Their participation occurs through a Reference Group, the inclusion of a range of research team clients from the tourism sector as active participants in the project, close interface with professional practitioners and other researchers, and the full-time involvement of a Maori researcher working closely with an *iwi* (tribal) organisation.

An integrated approach requires coordinated application of management tools, rather than the common focus on single tools to solve part of a complex problem. To aid implementation of an integrated approach the research team has developed a *kete* (basket) of practical management tools. These tools include methodologies, frameworks, and responses to issues that arise in the context of integrated planning with information about their individual and collective usefulness for application in particular sorts of natural areas, development contexts and management problems, and social, political and cultural contexts. They are drawn from a range of disciplines, including economics, risk assessment, landscape architecture, ecology, tourism planning, regional and resource planning, community development, public participation, leisure and recreation management, law, and impact assessment. Capacity building with up-skilling of all of those involved in the industry is required to improve understanding of the available tools and where they might be applied (Warren et al., 2003).

The objectives of four action-research case studies conducted as part of the research was to:

- test elements of the conceptual framework developed over the first two years of the research, and assess the ability of particular tools to meet the needs of specific planning and management problems

¹ New Zealand indigenous people

- identify elements of capacity building in particular agencies and communities, including barriers to and opportunities for capacity building that supports an integrated approach to planning and managing tourism in and around natural areas
- use the information gained to develop the next level or iteration of the integrated framework.

1.2 The Catlins case study

The Catlins case study focuses on implementation of a community-based strategic plan, known as the Catlins Tourism Strategy (the Strategy), for tourism in the area (Lovelock et al, 2004). Of particular interest is the role of community-based strategic planning in sustainable tourism management for an area with extensive natural assets, including wildlife and small, dispersed, host communities. The research examines the opportunities for, and barriers to, implementing a community-based strategic plan for tourism; considers specific tools that might be used to assist in implementing the strategic plan; and examines links between community strategic planning and the wider strategic planning processes of central and local government agencies.

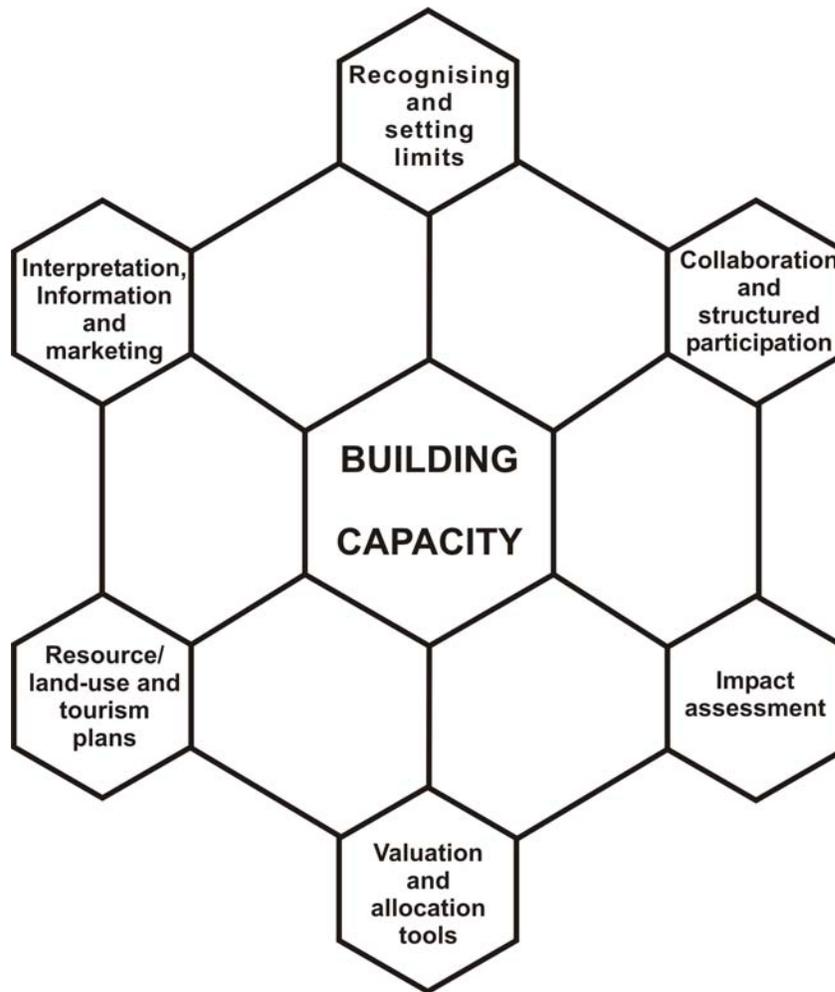
The approach adopted for the Catlins case study was as follows:

- **Scoping** - review of the Strategy, interviews and discussions with the Strategy authors and with key people and relevant organisations in the community strategic planning process, review of tourism development in the Catlins, and review of other related documents.
- **Exploring issues around implementation of the plan** - interviews with key people in and around the process of strategic planning.
- **Analysis** - detailed review of the strategic plan to assess opportunities to develop and apply particular tools, identifying potential linkages and inconsistencies relating to different jurisdictional responsibilities and tools.
- **Access to, and utilisation of, implementation tools** - meeting with key agencies to discuss elements of the tool kit.
- **Application monitoring** - bringing to the attention of the implementation committee particular tools/approaches that might assist in the implementation of particular recommendations in the Strategy, and monitoring application of particular tools.
- **Review, evaluation and feedback** - reviewing issues identified from the Catlins case study for development of a more widely applicable integrated framework and information about specific tools in that framework.

2 An integrating framework

An essential aspect of the research programme was to develop a framework to incorporate relevant tools and demonstrate the linkages between them. The approach adopted was reflected in a hexagonal diagram linking the high-level categories of tools (Figure 1). The model is used to describe the overall integrated approach, as a means of organising information about specific tools and structuring the findings of the individual case studies, including the Catlins case study described in this paper.

Figure 1. An integrating framework



The six sets of tools are broadly those that inform:

- **Recognising and setting** limits to tourism growth and activity, either on an area basis or at particular sites, including recreational specialisation, the recreation opportunities spectrum and limits of acceptable change.
- **Collaboration and structured participation**, including community visioning and community-based strategic planning.
- **Impact assessment** of the social, biophysical and cumulative impacts of tourism.
- **Valuation and allocation** of the natural resources that tourism is based on.
- **Resource, land-use and tourism plans** that make up the legislative and planning context through natural-area planning and management.
- **Interpretation, visitor information and marketing** or de-marketing to attract and direct visitors to an area, modify their behaviour when they get there, and enhance their experience.

Applied together, the tools provide the basis for building the capacity of community, industry and agency to manage natural areas in a more integrated way for tourism and related activities.

3 The Catlins community-based strategic plan

3.1 The Catlins area

The Catlins² is an area of the South Eastern tip of the South Island, New Zealand. The area has many natural values. There are over 25,000 ha of indigenous forest protected in the Catlins Forest Park although this area is not contiguous, being split by farming and forestry in major valleys. There are also a number of scenic water falls and walks of varying length. The coastline is wild and varied, with sheltered inlets and estuaries, sandy beaches and rugged promontories. Wildlife is a prominent resource along the coast, including marine mammals and penguins. There is a petrified forest at Curio Bay. Storm watching and big-wave surfing are emerging activities.

The Catlins comprise the eastern part of the Southern Scenic Route from Milford Sound to Dunedin. Paving of the highway through the southern Catlins was completed in 2004-5 and this driving route is now likely to be a catalyst for rapid tourism development. Small settlements are dotted along the highway.

3.2 Tourism in the Catlins

As part of developing of the Strategy, Otago University researchers conducted a visitor survey in the Catlins in early 2003³. Characteristics included:

- international visitors were highly represented in younger age groups (20s) and older age groups, while domestic visitors were predominantly older age groups
- in most cases the time spent in the Catlins was a small proportion of the overall trip
- most international visitors were in the Catlins for the first time, but many domestic visitors were making repeat visits.

The main reasons for visiting the Catlins are the coastal scenery and wildlife, in particular penguins, dolphins and sea lions. Track counters show a small number of sites receive most visitors. This is consistent with the fact that about 25% of visitors do not stay overnight, but pass through the Catlins in a single day, or visit only one point.

The tourism sector in the Catlins area is characterised by a large number of small and often part-time operators. Accommodation is mainly catered for by farm and home stays and B&Bs, a number of which have operated for several years. Downturns in farming in the 1980s spawned the original 'farm stay' businesses. Restaurants and food providers are more difficult to find. Owaka in the north is the largest settlement and has a supermarket, a pharmacy and a small number of craft/souvenir shops. There are no banking facilities through the Catlins and only one ATM. Internet connections are slow and facilities are hard to find; there is no cellular phone coverage and no public telephones.

² See www.catlins.co.nz, www.southlanddc.govt.nz, www.southland.org.nz, www.southernscenicroute.co.nz, www.catlins-ecotours.co.nz

³ The Strategy notes that there is no sound data on visitor numbers for the Catlins.

While the number of visitors to the Catlins is increasing, and the recent paving of the road is expected to provide further impetus to this trend, the length of the season is still limited with the majority of visitors coming between October and April. Over time the season will probably lengthen, but at present it is difficult to plan investment around the short summer season and low annual number of visitors.

Other basic requirements to support the tourism industry include good roading, reliable communications, public toilets, fire and emergency services, and police. The Catlins is deficient in many of these areas and the lack of reliable telecommunications has implications for the provision of emergency services. Infrastructure is a particular focus of the Strategy.

3.3 Development of the community based strategy

The decision to commission a community-based strategic plan for tourism management was taken when local individuals and organisations realised that tourism related activities were developing in a piecemeal and inconsistent manner. Recognising that the upgrade of the road was going to result in a significant increase in the number of tourists, Tourism Southland and the Clutha District Council initiated a meeting of interested parties representing both the southern and northern ends of the Catlins and elected a working party to lead development of the Strategy. Issues that provided impetus for developing the Strategy included:

- multiple jurisdictions between the Department of Conservation (DoC), regional councils, district councils, regional tourism offices (RTOs), five *runanga* (tribal committees) and many small communities
- difficulties in getting ratepayer support for tourism promotion
- *ad hoc* development of infrastructure and services, such as rubbish disposal
- isolation and emergency services, with many road accidents
- poor telecommunications
- many small businesses, few with business plans
- loss of rural youth and need to create employment
- the Catlins is seen as a route rather than a destination.

The working party, which had representatives from a wide range of locations and interests, including community and tourism interests, local and central government agencies, prepared a brief for development of a tourism strategy for the Catlins, subsequently undertaken by staff of the Department of Tourism at Otago University. Some of the activities they undertook included a visitor survey, a resident's survey, a Catlins perception study (non visitors), an inventory of activities and a business survey. In addition, the researchers conducted interviews with key stakeholders and liaised with the working party. The draft strategy was published in late 2003 and finalised in mid 2004.

The Strategy was presented to a public meeting in the Catlins where an election was held for six members of the implementation committee, which has been registered as a Trust, named *Tourism Catlins*. The Trust has taken recommendations from the Strategy and reprioritised them, recognising as a key criterion the importance that the community see some of the recommendations are implemented soon.

4 Application of the integrating framework

To implement the strategic planning process, the Catlins communities, tourism interests, DoC and local councils will require the capacity to undertake an integrated approach. To date, implementation of the Strategy has involved a limited number of tools. The Strategy itself was an exercise in structured community participation and a substantive effort at community-based tourism planning. The process of implementation will need to incorporate and integrate further tools, as would be expected from an integrated framework. This section discusses application of the components of the integrating framework (Figure 1), illustrating from the Catlin's experience.

4.1 Recognising and setting limits

Visitor numbers to the Catlins have increased significantly in recent years and this growth is expected to continue. It is too early to determine the new trend in terms of number and type of visitors, however, there is a general expectation that numbers of visitors will increase. In particular, it is likely that international visitors will increase, as well as numbers of motorists, campervans and buses on the road.

Increased numbers of visitors are expected to put pressure on the environment, host communities and all infrastructure in the area.. However, another effect of the road paving is likely to be that more people travelling through the area without stopping overnight, so pressure on accommodation through increased demand may not escalate at the same rate as total visitor numbers.

Future management strategies require the establishment of a goal for overall visitor numbers to the Catlins, by season and by visitor type. Then for specific resources and sites there is a need to establish optimum numbers (physical and social carrying capacity) with a particular focus on the carrying capacity of fragile wildlife resources.

The Strategy is the first attempt to consider the impacts of visitor numbers in the Catlins area. There is evidence that at times physical limits are exceeded, for example at hides to view wildlife and the capacity of waste disposal systems. There is, however, no obvious way of setting limits to visitor numbers in these circumstances, other than by limiting the size of the supporting infrastructure. This central issue is discussed further below in relation to other dimensions of an integrated approach.

4.2 Collaboration and structured participation

Structured participation is a key part of an integrated approach to planning and managing tourism in and around natural areas. In the Catlins, structured participation was an integral part of the planning process. Techniques used in formulation of the Strategy included formation of a working party, involvement of the representative local councils, involvement of other key stakeholders including stakeholder interviews, visitor and resident surveys, iwi consultation, community workshops, public meetings and submissions (the Strategy, p.13). The Strategy therefore represents an example of structured participation both in its formulation and subsequent implementation.

In the Catlins there is social and geographical fragmentation at the community level, and difficult issues to resolve, particularly issues of economic development verses conservation. There are also identifiable community interests expressed as local identity and solidarity, and collective efforts to solve local problems - key elements of community identified by Wilkinson (1986).

The Strategy represents an innovative and participatory approach by key stakeholders. In its design and implementation the Strategy has benefited from considerable time and resources from the local communities, the two local councils and their development arms, and staff from the University of Otago. The issues that arise in the structured participation that drove the Strategy are likely to arise in many rural community contexts. They are exaggerated in this case by the ambitious effort to build a collective effort over fragmented communities and jurisdictions. There are particular issues around developing a shared vision early in the community-based process.

The process of structured participation in a tourism strategy requires initial and ongoing support by the local councils or other administrative bodies with responsibilities for the area. The process also requires a “champion” or champions who take a particular interest in the strategy process. It is not necessary, however, for this person or people to be the same throughout, from the early stages through implementation. In the Catlins there seems to have been a loss of momentum at times for a variety of reasons.

4.3 Impact assessment

Impacts are evident at sites throughout the Catlins as reflected in the findings of the Strategy and the interviews and observations undertaken for this case study. Impacts include both bio-physical and social impacts at the site level. Examples of impacts at the site level include visual effects of buildings and tourism infrastructure, parking congestion and waste, including toilet waste and rubbish that is poorly disposed by visitors. There are indications of cumulative effects, with key indicators being total visitor numbers, number and type of vehicles including camper vans and buses, number of tourism operators, number of tourism related businesses, landscape changes, and changes in habitat and specific species numbers.

Local conflicts over tourism are reflected in differing views about the direction of tourism development and polarisation around issues such as coastal subdivisions and a marine reserve proposal. There is no formal data available on the impacts of tourism on host communities in the Catlins, although there is anecdotal evidence for both adverse and beneficial impacts.

Assessment of impacts at specific sites is based in the processes of the Resource Management Act⁴ (RMA) for resource consents and the Conservation Act and associated policy for concession applications⁵. The Strategy (p. 50) recommends a coordinated approach to environmental research and monitoring, with Tourism Catlins playing a linking role between research providers and the identification of monitoring needs. However,

⁴ See <http://www.mfe.govt.nz>

⁵ <http://www.doc.govt.nz/About-DOC/Concessions/index.asp>

while the area's tourism organisation undoubtedly has an important role to play in applying the tools of impact assessment, there are potentially conflicts of interest between roles such as tourism promotion and resource protection. There can also be conflicts of interests to manage for individual members of the organisation, who, being active in the sector, are likely to apply for resource consents and concessions for their own activities. As locals they might also be affected by particular proposals.

Operators and developers tend to see the resource management and concession management processes as "red tape" until such time as there is a development they don't want in their area. Organisations such as the local and regional councils and DoC therefore have an important role applying processes consistently and ensuring businesses and the community are well informed of the necessary requirements and available guidelines.

Impact assessment should encompass a continuing process for assessing the environmental (including social and cultural) implications of specific tourism development proposals, and for monitoring the effects of change at particular sites and over the Catlins as a whole, including cumulative effects. An integrated approach to tourism planning and management requires more specific application of impact assessment, including social and economic impact assessment, initially at the strategic level, and then around applications by tourism operators and for other related activities. To date there has been a piecemeal and incomplete approach with a lack of integration of impact assessment tools, and of impact assessment in general with other tools. Most importantly, the basis for assessment of cumulative effects over time should be established by those involved.

4.4 Valuation and allocation tools

The issues around the application of valuation and allocation tools in the Catlins area relate to their ability to generate revenue, matching the fee to the service, and freeloading. Many of the visitor sites in the Catlins are on public land, including conservation land, beaches, and estuaries. By statute DoC is not able to charge directly for access to land that it manages. The Strategy suggested development of an Ecopass as a mechanism for raising awareness of environmental issues for the Catlins, and also as a means of raising revenue that might be used for a range of protection mechanisms. The proposed mechanism is for visitors to purchase a card either before, or as they arrive in the Catlins. As they visit each site they would receive a stamp. From the visitor's perspective the card acts as a souvenir of their visit that incorporates the 'feel good' factor of having contributed to environmental protection.

Businesses operating on DoC managed land are required to obtain a concession which is an official authorisation to operate in an area managed by the Department. It may be in the form of a lease, licence, permit or easement. Concessions are required for accommodation facilities, water, air or land transport services, commercial education or instruction activities, guiding (including fishing, hunting, tramping, walking, kayaking/canoeing) and services such as shops, tearooms, restaurants, garages, or hire services. The process for obtaining a concession includes a description of the environmental effects of the proposed activity and how any adverse effects will be managed.

A number of operators in the Catlins hold concessions for particular activities such as fishing and hunting trips, guided walks, kayaking and related activities. Of concern is that

some operators are known to be acting illegally (the Strategy, p51). There are also private operators who offer visits to penguin sites on private property as well as the public sites.

Persons operating commercial activities associated with marine mammals, taking boat trips to view dolphin or sea lions, are required to obtain marine mammal permits from DoC. The Catlins area is viewed as a key marine mammal tourism site. So DoC is in the process of developing a marine mammal tourism site plan for the area to ensure long term protection of marine mammals and management of tourist activities and mammal interactions.

Establishing ways of managing visitor numbers and visitor activity through mechanisms such as concessions, entrance fees, parking fees and road tolls is an exploratory or learning exercise in progress, with operators and agencies having to explore visitors' willingness to pay for particular types of experience. Visitors to the Catlins represent a wide spectrum of the market, and operators need to identify their target sector and set their fees accordingly.

4.5 Resource/land use and tourism plans

To be effective, a community tourism strategy needs to integrate with a variety of land-use (local and regional) and tourism (district and regional) plans. Furthermore, with a strategy based around wildlife, coastal, and other natural resources, conservation planning also has an important contextual role. This relationship between land-use and conservation planning is acknowledged in the Strategy in several places.

Residents, tourism operators and land developers have expressed frustration and concern with the land-use planning process, about resource consents given, consents "held up" and the general direction of coastal development. These land-use planning issues reflect wider community debates about tourism and coastal development versus conservation of natural values and landscapes (values that lie at the heart of the tourism attractions of the Catlins).

Land-use planning in the Catlins takes place under the RMA through the two district and two regional councils. However, there has been considerable impetus towards tourism development since preparation of the necessary district and regional plans in the early 1990s. Furthermore, as has happened elsewhere in New Zealand, there is also considerable recent interest in purchasing and developing coastal land, including subdivisions of rural land into sections for housing and holiday homes.

The development of structure plans is one response that councils can initiate in response to these sorts of issues. A structure plan provides an opportunity for community consultation, to consider issues around landscapes, natural values, heritage and social-economic wellbeing, to help shape the direction of development in the face of rapid, unanticipated change and related consent proposals. Structure plans would usually result in variations to district plans in a coordinated approach rather than on an *ad hoc* basis.

A proposal to create a marine reserve at Nugget Point in the Catlins has created considerable controversy for the nearby communities. Under the Marine Reserves Act (1991) DoC creates reserves that are essentially 'no take' areas for both commercial and recreational fishing. Protection of marine mammals is another controversial topic, especially protection of Hector's Dolphin, the smallest in New Zealand and the rarest in the world. The population of this dolphin off the south coast may also be genetically distinct.

These dolphins are particularly threatened by set nets but there are also concerns about disruption from tourist viewing from boats and swimming with them. So conservationists advocate a marine mammal sanctuary for the South Catlins coast (Forest and Bird, 2005).

DoC has a comprehensive visitor management strategy. The “Visitor Strategy will guide and inform all the department’s planning and management relating to visitor services”. In addition, the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 sets out a framework for the tourism industry’s future. Developed in 2001, it is based on welcoming visitors while at the same time protecting the environment and achieving objectives of sustainable tourism development. A number of organisations contribute to the overall policy framework for tourism including the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Industry Association of New Zealand. At the regional level, a range of tourism plans and tourism strategies have been prepared. Most focus tightly on their own area, necessitating a more general regional approach and mechanisms for integration of tourism plans that link into local areas such as the Catlins.

Overall, there is a range of policy and plans in existence that encompass land use planning, conservation planning, community plans and tourism plans, all of which have importance to tourism activity in general, and to tourism management in terms of natural areas. However, there is little obvious overall integration, and no obvious mechanism for this to occur. While there are some exceptions, in general planning is dictated by legislative hierarchies rather than co-operative interactions between agencies and levels. Effective implementation of the Catlins Strategy will require the community to undertake the difficult role of integrating the various plans themselves, ensuring that all aspects are adequately addressed, and reconciling areas where there is a potential for overlap or conflict.

4.6 Interpretation, visitor information and marketing

As identified in the early phases of the research programme (Warren et al., 2004), the provision of information about an area’s special cultural, natural and other qualities and/or appropriate behaviour and activities, is an important management tool in an integrated approach. Generally known as interpretation, there are a number of objectives for the use of interpretation in visitor management (Ham and Weiler, 2003; Newsome et al., 2002:239-247):

- to provide in-depth information about an area that will attract visitors in the first place, or get them to plan a longer visit, including the use of information to attract particular types of visitor
- to enhance visitor enjoyment of an area or site, or interaction, through greater knowledge or awareness and increased safety
- to provide information (such as visitor codes) that changes visitor behaviour as part of management of tourism assets and risks - either by conveying messages about limits to behaviour such as rules, fees, permits, bans, fines, etc, or by seeking to reduce inappropriate behaviour and increase appropriate behaviour
- to increase visitor knowledge, understanding and respect for the environment, heritage, culture or property
- to increase visitor knowledge of a management organisation or agency including participation in their management plans.

Some of the more common tools used in the Catlins are signs, information boards and posters; displays and exhibits; talks and guided tours; pamphlets and brochures; tourist newspapers and websites. Plus there are less formal, verbal, methods such as interaction with an operator, shopkeepers, an honorary ranger and local personalities.

The Strategy has a strategic objective “To match the visitor with the Catlins tourism product through appropriate marketing and promotion”. However, market analysis was beyond the scope of the Strategy (p107). Visitor marketing has potential to target certain tourists and so limit numbers, rather than simply aim to increase overall visitor numbers. However, this approach would require a combination of:

- detailed information on visitor characteristics and behaviour, including expenditure
- analysis and strategic agreement on limits to tourist numbers
- an understanding of economic and social yields derived from different tourist types.

Our interviews with visitors February-April 2005 found heavy use of guide books, brochures and word of mouth by overseas visitors deciding to go to the Catlins. Interviews also indicated that these means of marketing, particularly guide books and brochures, are important as the first set of information that visitors see relating to specific behaviour around natural attractions of the Catlins, including wildlife.

Visitor codes are a form of interpretation usually written as lists of rules or expectations aimed to encourage appropriate visitor behaviour or attitudes, and to enhance the visitor experience by protecting the environment and visitors. They range from informal codes, as adopted by a group of operators among themselves, to formal as adopted by an agency, professional organisation or community organisation. Some are written to explain general principles for low-impact visitor behaviour, while others are designed for specific areas or sites. Usually compliance is voluntary and dependent on the visitor’s knowledge, ability or inclination to comply with the code.

The Strategy defined a need for an area-specific care code and Tourism Catlins later produced the Catlins Care Code as an A4 laminated sheet and distributed it through their district. It covers driving behaviour, use of public toilets, wildlife, livestock and property etiquette and freedom camping. However, in addition to the messages conveyed by the Code to visitors, it was apparent that through local people writing the Code and distributing it widely there was an important effect in raising local awareness of sustainable tourism and impacts on the host community.

Interviews also indicated the importance of personal information from operators and other knowledgeable people, in a tourist area where visitor numbers are low and many tourists can be categorised as eco-tourist or explorer types. Interpretation that helps protect wildlife from abusive behaviour ultimately protects the visitor experience, keeping wildlife accessible. Overall the sum of the interpretation available has the potential to shift visitor attitudes and behaviour by increasing self awareness and self regulation towards new norms, building and reinforcing messages about appropriate behaviour.

5 Building capacity - industry, community, agency

Capacity building is central to the integrated approach and requires the capability to accomplish tasks as well as the capacity to do so. Capability denotes the ability of individuals and groups to use tools and undertake particular tasks within an integrated approach, with the requisite knowledge, technical skills and experience. Capacity denotes all the components required to undertake an integrated approach to planning and managing tourism. It could include sufficient people with the capability to do the tasks involved, a knowledge and training base, financial and staffing resources and support services, infrastructure, policies and procedures, and mechanisms for industry, community and agency to work in a coordinated way.

The Catlins case study identified issues for capacity building at a number of levels to enable an integrated approach to planning and managing tourism to develop. The capacity building needs to include management agencies such as DoC and the two district councils, industry and its organisations and operators, including local promotions groups, the respective regional tourism organisations, and the host communities. In particular, DoC has demonstrated development in internal capacity and capability in many aspects of the tools making up an integrated approach (Sutton, 2004), such as policies, procedures, standards and guidelines with associated staff development.

The Strategy would not have been possible without the University of Otago input. Their expertise across a range of tools is evident in the Strategy. This input included their professional staff time, student resources and, most importantly, the commitment and passion to see the Strategy through to completion. Implementation of the Strategy will require ongoing commitment of resources - money, equipment, and person power, including:

- expertise - skilled people who most importantly can draw on comparative experience, what other people have done
- agency support - particularly from DoC and the two local councils
- industry support - from the operators with commitment to achieve outcomes, and coordinated input from the various tourism organisations
- leadership - most importantly to assist the community to develop a shared vision of the Strategy and what it can achieve.

The Strategy contains a list of recommendations and priorities that provide a process for the area to progress knowing the responsibilities of the different agencies and requirements for supporting implementation. These aspects need continual review by Tourism Catlins and ongoing interaction with the agencies to ensure that they maintain their involvement and are reminded of their responsibilities. At the same time, the agencies need to undertake to review their own capacity in relation to the action points that emerge from implementation of the Strategy. Thus implementation of the Strategy requires a strong partnership between agencies and the community.

From time to time the vision of the Strategy will need revisiting to ensure on-going commitment. At present it is not clear how this will occur - who will facilitate, and who will review and update the data.

A more proactive role by central government agencies would include support for capacity and capability building. Successful implementation of capacity building processes around the six sets of tools requires clear goals and objectives with achievable and measurable steps and actions. Allocation of tasks and responsibilities, with follow up and review, will require leadership from particular individuals and organisations. However, the onus is now on the community organisation, Tourism Catlins, who do not have the necessary support and resources to maintain an integrated approach, and are more likely to have to deal with issues on an individual basis as time and resources permit.

6 Conclusion

The Catlins case study is one of four action-research studies as part of the research programme. The purpose of the Catlins case study was to examine the opportunities for and barriers to implementing a community-based strategic plan for tourism, and specific tools that might be used in implementing the community strategic plan through an integrated approach. Previous phases of the research indicated that in addition to the specific tool of community-based strategic planning, there are a large number of tools that are also relevant to achieving the stated goals of the Catlins communities. The case study found that these tools have to be applied in an integrated approach supported by capacity building, rather than in an *ad hoc* manner. Interaction between work on the case study and development of the integrated approach and associated *ketes* of practical tools provided valuable improvements to both. The case study provided a practical context for applying and testing the approach and also insights into the realities of applying an integrated approach.

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