Four of TRSM’s research endeavors that are making an impact on tourism research, education and demand across the continent.

These reports were included as part of the University of Florida Center for African Studies Annual Research Report, 2010. To read the full report or to learn more about the center and its activities, please visit: www.africa.ufl.edu

Transforming community-based natural resource management education in Southern Africa

Brian Child, Grenville Barnes, Sandra Russo, Brijesh Thapa

The objective of this project is to bring together scholars and practitioners into a community of practice to develop curricular materials to support community-based natural resource management (CBNRM). This will enable southern African education institutions to provide training at several levels: undergraduate, graduate, and short courses for practitioners and policy-makers.

Southern Africa is leading a new conservation paradigm called the “Sustainable Use Approach.” Moving away from fortress preservation, the essence of this approach is that if wild resources are valuable and if local people own and can benefit from them, then there is a high likelihood that these resources will create jobs and economic growth and will therefore be conserved by the people living with them. There has been a considerable investment in this approach by national governments, donor agencies and local people.

The project brings this knowledge network together with scholars, and particularly young scholars from African institutions, to document this knowledge and set it out in a format that can be used for educating students at many levels.

The first step was to hold two workshops in Pretoria and Kruger to strengthen and broaden this community of practice, to ascertain educational needs in the region, and outline the materials needed to match these needs. The priority is now to write four textbooks that each form the basis of a separate course, with the intention that each course can be used for participants ranging from field practitioners to university students and high level officials. The first book, “Foundations of CBNRM,” will be a general text. The second book will bring together principles and lessons relating to the economic management of wild resources, tourism, and livelihoods. The third book introduces the complexities of governance of local communities. The fourth book emphasizes pedagogical approaches, including participatory learning, action research and collaborative adaptive management and technology development.

In spring 2011, the team plans to bring young faculty from key partners - University of Botswana, Sokoine Agricultural University in Tanzania, the Polytechnic of Namibia, and at least two other partners - to UF to co-teach “Foundations of CBNRM.” These visiting faculty members will test the draft textbook, adapt it to local circumstances by developing teaching manuals, and will provide a two-week summer course for practitioners in southern Africa as part of their training. This project is a
natural outcome of the interdisciplinary research that a number of UF students conduct on CBNRM in Africa.

**Partnership to Strengthen Teaching, Research, and Faculty Development in Tourism Management in South Africa**

*Brijesh Thapa, Sandra Russo, Lori Pennington-Gray*

South Africa is the dominant tourism market on the African continent. Tourism is a very important industry for the economy, which has largely focused on the core products such as parks, wildlife, nature and culture. In the last two decades, the product mix has been diversified to incorporate marine and coastal areas, rural communities and townships, events, urban centers, and meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions.

The market is largely comprised of visitors from Africa and the Middle East, but the government expects to increase international arrivals to 10 million. Given the projected increases in visitors, there is potential to expand this sector to generate more income, employment and other benefits.

However, tourism growth is dependent on a number of factors; notably, developing a trained and skilled labor force. Capacity building and institutional development through training is a key component for the vitality and sustainability of the tourism industry in South Africa. In order to address this major need, the University of Florida and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in Tshwane, South Africa, have formulated a partnership to strengthen its teaching, research, service and faculty development initiatives in tourism management over three years. The partnership will focus on addressing curriculum at the bachelor degree level, developing vocational and executive training programs, establishing a Center for Sustainable Tourism, conducting research and providing faculty development through an exchange program, partnerships and collaboration.

Currently, the majority of the objectives for the first two years have been met. In addition, various spin-off research projects have been conducted.

The project team has been formulated based on their respective backgrounds, knowledge and expertise from within and outside UF, which will be instrumental in accomplishing the objectives and strengthening the partnership between UF and TUT. This project is led by Brijesh Thapa, Director of UF’s Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute, along with Sandra Russo (UF International Center) and Lori Pennington-Gray (Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management).
Zambia Tourism Demand Survey

Brijesh Thapa, Brian Child, Patricia Mupeta, Gregory Parent

Zambia has distinctive tourism resources: unique natural features, beautiful landscapes, historical and cultural attractions, places of ethnographic interest, and excellent recreational opportunities that need to be sustainably developed and promoted. However, it also faces immense competition for tourists from other destinations in eastern and southern African countries with better tourism infrastructure and international brand name recognition. For Zambia to realize its potential, it must diversify its current tourism product beyond its traditional hubs.

In addition to the negative environmental impacts due to high concentration of visitors in a few destinations, it is paramount for visitor dispersal to other regions to provide a diverse mix of tourism opportunities, thereby enhancing the countrywide product and distributing economic benefit to regional and local economies. However, visitors are only likely to visit new regions if the destinations have quality setting attributes, attractions, and suitable infrastructure.

One of the destinations that is currently underdeveloped but has the capacity to substantially increase its international, regional and domestic visitors is Kafue National Park (KNP). KNP is the second largest national park in Africa.

In order to further develop, package and promote the park and its surrounding regions, it is important to assess the viability of tourism growth from a supply and demand perspective. Currently, tourism has not reached its potential but is a major tool to promote and strengthen sustained economic growth and poverty reduction in the greater KNP area.

The purpose of this project is to conduct a survey of current visitors to Zambia with respect to demand assessment for the greater KNP area. Although there have been a few studies that have assessed nature-based tourism from a demand and supply perspective, they have all been based on a countrywide standpoint. This study proposes to examine demand based on current visitors that have visited the KNP area and/or those that have visited other national parks. Visitors will encompass international, regional and domestic tourists.

This study will provide baseline information needed to position the region relative to other regions in the country. The study will also analyze determinants of demand to aid policy makers and the tourism industry and to improve the identification of potential new markets, as well as provide and improve the tourism opportunities that play a key role in a tourist’s choice in his or her trip selection. Additionally, it will assist in the development of comprehensive marketing strategies to showcase the greater KNP region.

The project team has been formulated based on their respective backgrounds, knowledge and expertise. This project is led by Brijesh Thapa, Director of UF’s Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute. In addition, the team consists of Brian Child (Geography/CAS), Patricia Mupeta (Natural Resources and Environment) and Gregory Parent (Geography).
Since the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, there has been a shift in conventional thinking about the various impacts that the Games have on host countries—with the primary focus now on the legacies of mega sporting events. While some attention is still given to economic and infrastructural legacies, a growing body of research shows that the long-term outcomes may be primarily social, with contributions to the social infrastructure at both the local and national levels. For the 2010 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, the South African government has a developmental agenda, part of which is predicated on “nation building.” Sport has long been associated with building national spirit and generating patriotism.

Understanding the social legacies of a mega-event necessitates a focus on the residents of a nation. In particular, there is a need in such a study for a longitudinal approach, particularly to assess the change in the residents’ perceptions associated with a mega-sports event. This research has multiple phases with the primary goal of identifying the social legacies (e.g., identity, social capital, and tourism associated with the 2010 FIFA World Cup.)

Data were collected three months prior to the event in mid June 2010, with a follow-up conducted in January 2011. The sample consisted of residents from five host cities: Pretoria, Nelspruit, Polokwane, Johannesburg and Rustenburg. Within this context, the host cities attracted an abundance of visitors and created impressions in tourists’ minds about the South African tourism product.

Given the importance of the event for the South African tourism brand, an additional objective was to evaluate destination and event image perceptions and tourism behaviors of spectators in order to assess the impact of such an event in a country’s tourism development. Data were collected during the World Cup to provide a major source of information about visitor profiles, market segmentation, perceptions and experiences.

This project is conducted in partnership between the University of Florida (UF) and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in Pretoria, South Africa. The team from the HHP Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management at UF is led by Brijesh Thapa, Director of UF’s Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute along with Matthew Walker, Kyriaki Kaplanidou, and Heather Gibson. The TUT team is led by Sue Geldenhuys and Willie Coetzee.