

Tourist attractions capping visitor numbers: Case study of Manyeleti Nature Reserve, Bushbuckridge Nature Reserve, Mariepskop Nature Reserve and Injaka Dam

MISG2024

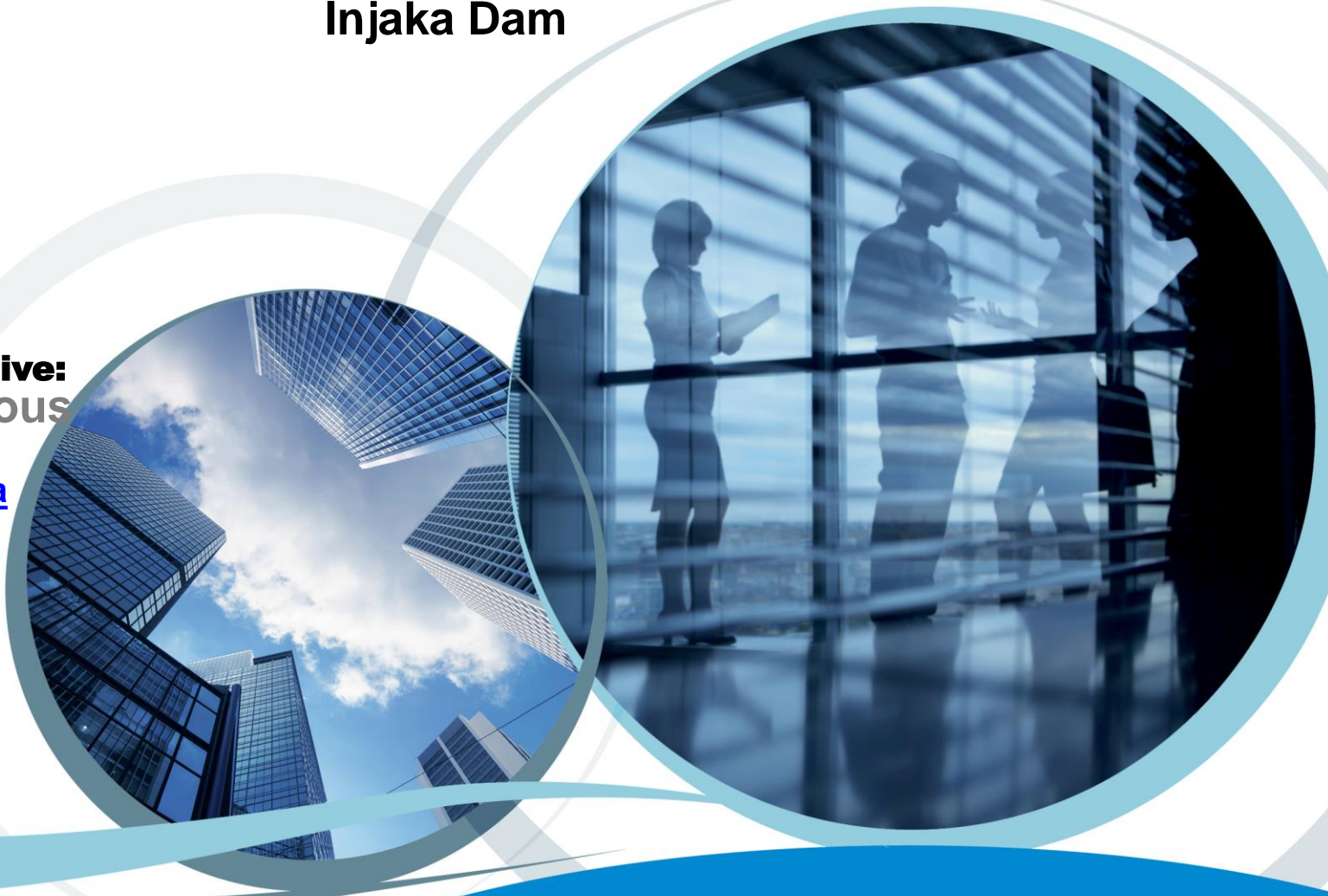
Tourism Sector

**Industry
Attraction**

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Date:
15 January 2024

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INTRODUCTION

- Some tourist attractions were abundant / deserted in a way.
- Those tourist attractions have the potential to realise its sustainable development while practicing responsible tourism in its daily operation activities and generate a healthy revenue.
- **Tourism development** in South Africa is guided by the key principles of Responsible Tourism stipulated in the 1996 White Paper.
- Over and above, sustainable tourism is key (curbe overtourism).

KEY CONCEPT

- Over Tourism / Mass tourism

How does these three concepts talks to over tourism?

- Sustainable Tourism
- Sustainable Development
- Responsible Tourism

INTRODUCTION

- **Revitalisation:** if it done correctly, continuing tourism growth will be realized & eventually result in increased visitation to some destinations / tourist attractions.
- Mass-tourism /Over-tourism takes place.
- Goodwin (2017) views over-tourism as a new term that describes “ destinations where hosts or guests, locals or visitors, feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the area or the quality of the experience has deteriorated unacceptably”.

BACKGROUND

- As part of revitalisation of tourist attractions, determining the number of visitors that should be welcomed per day (capping visitor numbers) is one of the key measures to put in place.
- The assumption is that, once the attraction revitalisation process is complete, through marketing the attraction could attract more tourists due to its unique offerings.

Background

- This success will financially improve when the site manager/s are able to **directly & correctly** charge visitors.
- Public-owned attractions such as Manyeleti Nature Reserve, Bushbuckridge Nature Reserve, etc. will be expected to implement **user-pay strategies** which will require appropriate regulatory framework and the ability to **physically restrict access** to those willing to pay for the experience such as barriers to entry (Morgan & Lok, 1999:1-2).

BACKGROUND

- It is vital for natural attractions to sustain the physical or ecological impact of visitors.
- The issue for managers surrounds the number of visitors that can be accommodated before the experience provided by the attraction is compromised.
- This challenge can be resolved through determining the attraction's social carrying capacity (**SCC**) taking social comfort level (**SCL**) into account.
- However, the challenge of managing tourism sustainably for residents, tourists and day visitors has been recognised.
- Hence, there is a radical change in the perceptions of local people to tourism, and in many destinations a tipping point has been reached and mass tourism has become a local political issue.
- The lack of responsible tourism practice often results in visitors and guests experiencing the deterioration concurrently and rebel against it (Goodwin, 2017).

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

- A study by Spalding and Parrett (2019) mangroves (recreation activities) tourist attraction has not received much attention although it provides a high-value, low impact use of the important ecosystems.
- It is noted that the location of Mangroves has placed this tourist attraction in the way of development regardless of some areas of mangroves have been lost in recent decades due to aquaculture, agriculture and urban expansion. In our case in South Africa **land invasion** is also a key contributor to this challenge.

CASE STUDIES: Great location & Unique offerings

➤ **Manyeleti Nature Reserve**

- ❖ Manyeleti: meaning 'place of stars' in the local language - Shangaan
- ❖ It is sharing fenceless borders with the Kruger National Park, Sabi Sands and the Timbavati Game Reserve.
- ❖ It is +-23 750 hectares.

➤ **Mariepskop Nature Reserve**

- ❖ - It is located along Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, Acornhoek West.
- ❖ - It is +- 13000 hectares

➤ **Bushbuckridge Nature Reserve**

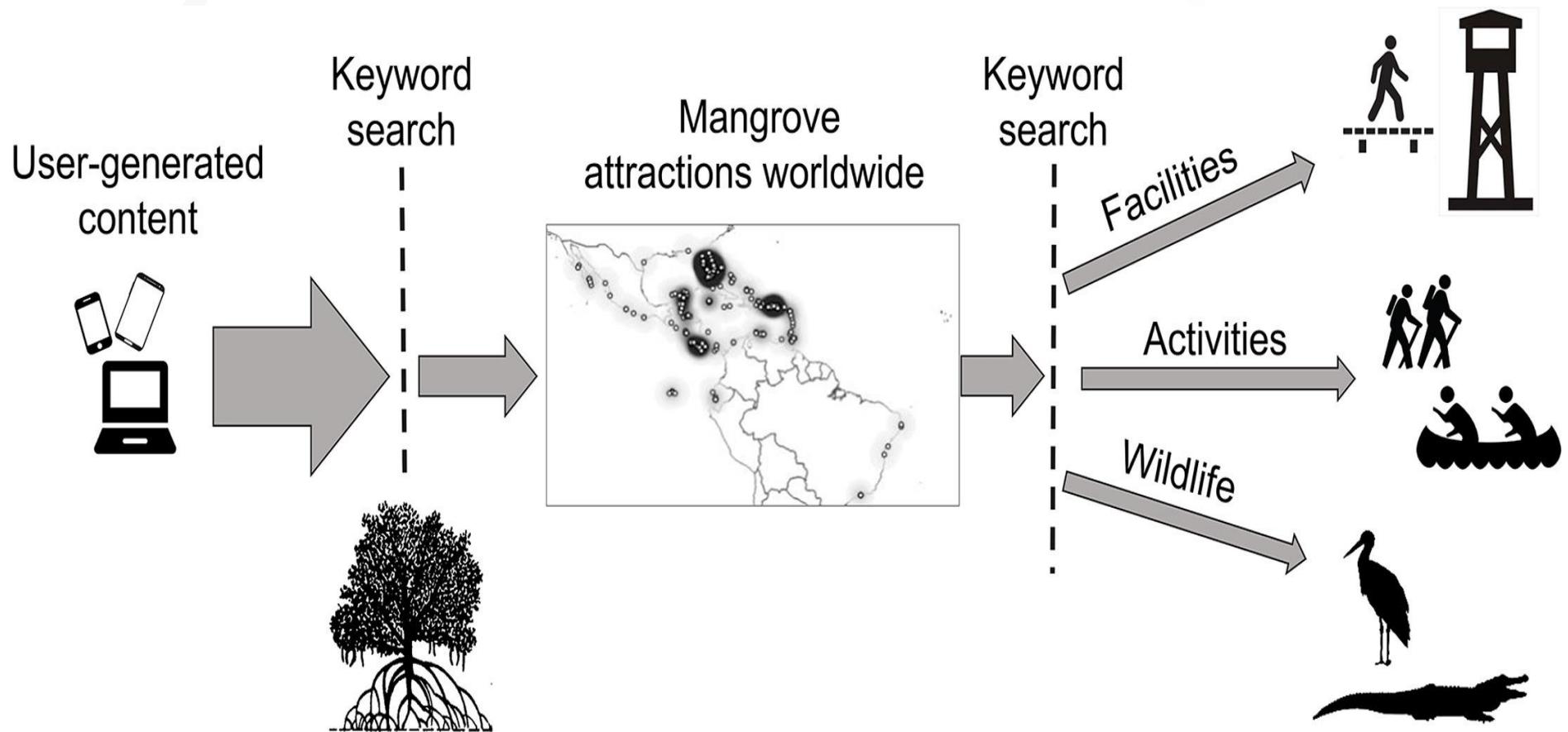
- ❖ - It is located in Bushbuckridge opposite Injaka Dam.
- ❖ - It is +- 7000 hectares.

➤ **Injaka Dam**

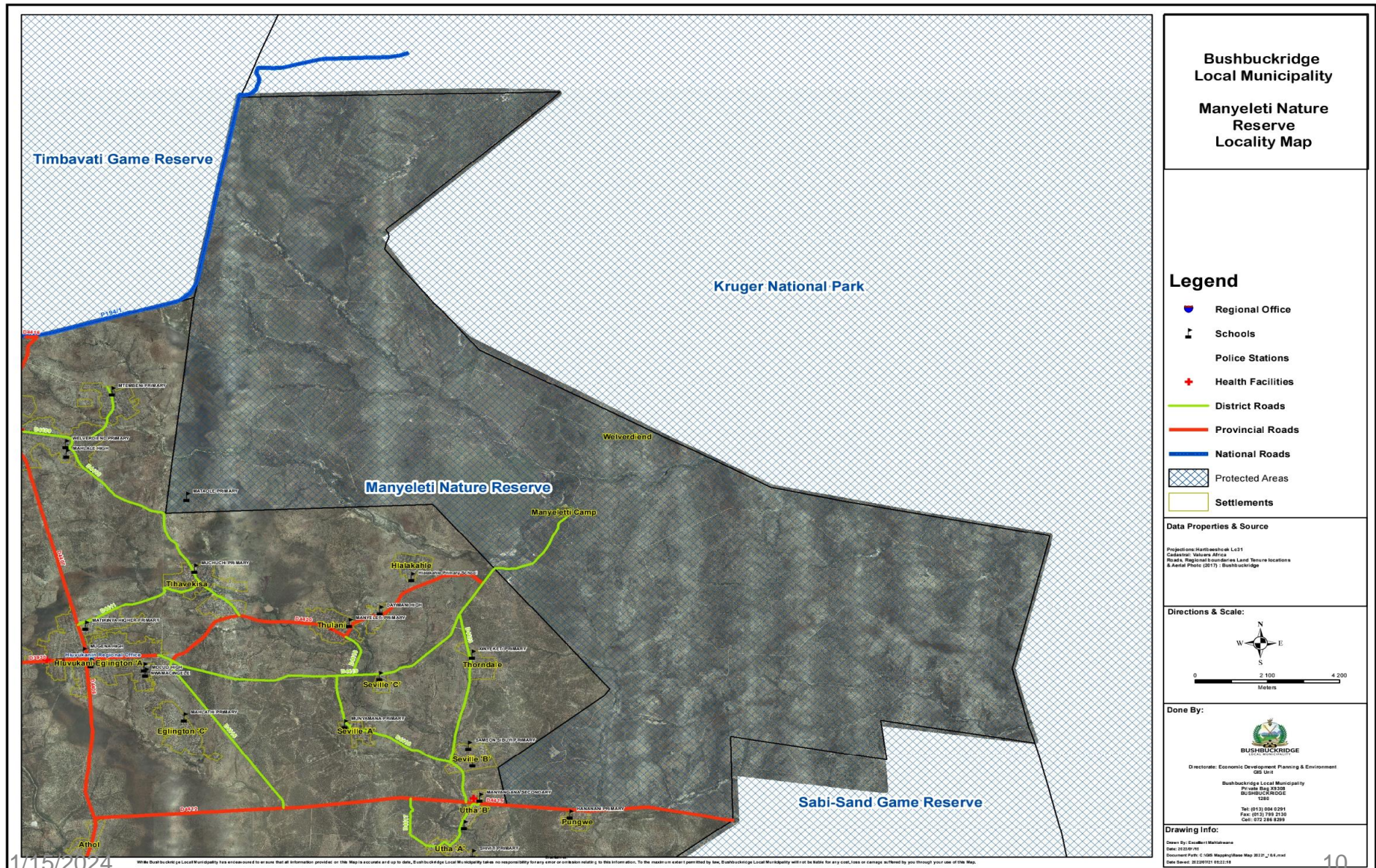
- ❖ It is located in Bushbuckridge opposite Bushbuckridge Nature Reserve.

- ❖ - Hectares (to be confirmed)

Mangroves



Manyeleti Nature Reserve



Bushbuckridge Nature Reserve



Mariepiskop Conservation Area



Injaka Dam



BENEFITS OF CAPPING VISITOR NUMBERS FOR A TOURIST ATTRACTION

- Ensure nature conservation and preservation (Responsible Tourism);
- Manage overcrowding;
- Increase visitor experience;
- Assist with visitor data collection (statistics);
- Determine projection of revenue per day /monthly/yearly;
- Staffing per activity (justify for increase if required);
- Present an informed justification to increase the entry fee (conservation fee, tourism /community levy) and determine a specific entry fee for each category (Internationals vs Regionals vs Nationals vs locals vs custodians);
- To support an argument to acquire/procure certain infrastructure /facilities of certain standards (meeting the standards as stipulated by the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) and South African Grading Council and other regulating bodies;
- Influence decision making on the type of system / technology to be adopted for the site;
- Provide a perspective on the attraction marketing strategy, new product/service development and existing product/service enhancement including community involvement.

PROBLEM TO INVESTIGATE

- The objective of the project is to develop a viable mathematical model to determine the social carrying capacity of a tourist attraction to mitigate the negative impact of over-tourism while providing a high-quality experience for visitors.
- The model should consider the available infrastructure, activities, natural and cultural resources, and accommodation.
- The tourist attractions in consideration are Manyeleti Nature Reserve, Mariepskop Nature Reserve, Bushburckrigde Nature Reserve, and Injaka Dam.
- The capacity will assist management to determine the number of visitors that they can welcome each day.
- It is understood that only overnight visitor's numbers are capped based on available accommodation on the site.
- The Study Group is asked to develop further a simple model proposed at MISG 2023 to determine the carrying capacity by simulating the visitor flow of a given tourist attraction.
- The model is derived from traffic flow problems and principles of advection-reaction-diffusion equations.

CONCLUSION

- Mass-tourism and Over-tourism are the opposite of Responsible Tourism which is about using tourism to make better places to live in and better places to visit.
- Tourist attractions capping visitors numbers could result to Sustainable Tourism Development and Responsible Tourism (increase visitor experience + positive perceptions of local people to tourism).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Bushbuckridge Local Municipality
- Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA)
- Key informants: Mr Nyembe & Mr Modipane
- Project Moderators: Dr Sejeso & Dr Simelane
- University of South Africa _ CEMS
- University of the Witwatersrand _ MISG24
- School of Computer Science & Applied Mathematics (CSAM)
- CoE Mathematical and Statistical Sciences

Ngiyabonga!
Na khensa!
Ke a leboga!
Thank you !!

