

PN-ACM-394

SAVEM Institutional Contract

Community Support for Ecotourism and Marketing Report

Written by:

François Odendaal

**Submitted to
United States Agency for International Development
Contract #623-0110-C-00-1040-00**

**Submitted by
Tropical Research and Development, Inc.
Gainesville, Florida, USA**

October 1996

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1-1
1.1	How to Read this Report	1-1
1.2	The Context of the Study	1-1
1.3	Interested and Affected Parties	1-3
1.4	Geographical Areas Examined	1-3
1.5	The General Context of the Four Main Players in the SOW	1-4
1.6	Finding the Golden Formula	1-5
2.0	BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES	2-1
2.1	Why Communities Must be Involved	2-1
2.2	Discussions with Park Management	2-1
2.3	Attitude of the Communities	2-2
2.3.1	The Communities at Isalo	2-3
2.3.2	Ranohira: Traditional Village or Tourist Village?	2-5
2.3.3	The Communities at Ranomafana	2-6
2.3.4	The Communities of Andasibe	2-7
2.4	Community Profiling as Part of ANGAP's GIS Database	2-7
3.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To undertake a situational analysis of the ecotourism facilities, products and services currently being offered by the communities neighboring Isalo, Ranomafana, and Andasibe	3-1
3.1	The Importance of Facilities	3-1
3.2	The Hotels in the Three Areas	3-1
3.2.1	The Hotels in Ranohira	3-1
3.2.2	The Hotels in Ranomafana	3-4
3.2.3	The Hotels in Andasibe	3-4
3.2.4	Obtaining Tourist Feedback	3-5
3.2.5	To Build or Not to Build	3-6
3.3	The Importance of Services	3-6
3.4	The Guide Services in the Three Parks	3-7
3.4.1	The Guides at Isalo	3-7
3.4.2	The Guides at Ranomafana	3-9
3.4.3	The Guides at Andasibe	3-10
3.5	Essential Support Services	3-11
3.6	Other Services	3-11
4.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To design a survey to obtain a profile of the tourists presently	

	visiting the national parks and assess their attitude towards the facilities and services presently being offered by both ANGAP and the local communities	4-1
4.1	Introduction	4-1
4.2	The Independent Traveler	4-1
4.3	The Mainstream Tourist	4-2
4.4	The Luxury Tourist	4-2
4.5	The Nature Tourist	4-2
4.6	The Adventure Tourists	4-3
4.7	A Bigger Slice of the Cake: Under- and Unexploited Markets	4-3
4.8	Learning from the Client	4-6
5.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To design a survey to assess the standard of travel agents and tour operators in Madagascar and assess their attitude to the facilities and services being offered by ANGAP and the local communities	5-1
5.1	The Importance of the Private Sector	5-1
5.2	Feedback from the Private Sector	5-1
5.3	Building a Better Relationship with the Private Sector	5-3
5.4	Assessment of the Standard of Tour Operators	5-4
5.5	The Private Sector Outside Madagascar	5-5
5.6	The Need for Guidelines	5-6
6.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To identify future ecotourism opportunities (direct and spin-off) that local communities could potentially exploit	6-1
6.1	The Potential for New Facilities and Services	6-1
6.1.1	A Community Campground	6-1
6.1.2	Cultural Tourism	6-2
6.1.3	Music Shows	6-2
6.1.4	Specialized Circuits	6-2
6.1.5	Fruit and Vegetable Farming	6-3
6.1.6	Arts and Crafts	6-3
6.1.7	Peripheral Zone Circuits	6-4
7.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To identify the obstacles currently limiting the improvement of standards and the expansion of the range of ecotourism facilities, products, and services provided by local communities (e.g., finance, skills, awareness of opportunities, land tenure, ability to manage small businesses, legislation)	7-1
7.1	Ecotourism as a Tool for Development	7-1
7.2	The Lack of Start-Up Capital for Small Entrepreneurs	7-1
7.3	The Problem of Communication	7-1
7.4	Tourist Information Needs	7-2

7.5	Private Sector Information Needs	7-3
7.6	The Need for Acceptable Facilities	7-4
	7.6.1 Facilities Inside the Park	7-4
	7.6.2 Facilities Outside the Parks	7-5
7.7	The Need for Acceptable Services	7-5
7.8	The Need for a Constructive Relationship between the Private Sector and Communities	7-5
7.9	The Need for Designing National and Regional Ecotourism Circuits	7-5
7.10	The Need for a Marine Component in the National Park System	7-6
7.11	Anticipated Future Obstacles	7-6
7.12	List of Current Obstacles	7-7
8.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To provide ANGAP with recommendations on how to improve standards and expand the range of ecotourism facilities, products, and services provided by local communities	8-1
	8.1 Toward a Solution to the Guide Problem	8-1
	8.1.1 Clarifying the Guides' Position in the System	8-1
	8.1.2 Guide Training	8-2
9.0	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To provide a policy framework for reconciling ANGAP's financial sustainability strategies and private sector involvement policies with the objective of encouraging communities to benefit from their direct participation in ecotourism opportunities	9-1
	9.1 ANGAP's Financial Sustainability Strategy	9-2
	9.1.1 List of Potential Avenues of Income for ANGAP	9-7
10.0	THE ROAD AHEAD	9-10
	10.1 Recommended Actions	9-10
	10.2 Development, Conservation and Environmental Education	9-10
	10.2.1 The Education of Children	9-10
	10.2.2 The Involvement of Local Musicians	9-12
	10.2.3 A Catalog of Folklore About the Environment	9-12
	10.2.4 The Education of the Guides	9-13
	10.2.5 The Education of General ANGAP Staff	9-13
	10.2.6 The Education of the Broader Malagasy public	9-14
	10.2.7 The Education of Tourists	9-14
	10.2.8 The Education of Decision-Makers	9-14

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
NGO	nongovernment organization
ONE	National Office for the Environment
SOW	scope of work
TR&D	Tropical Research and Development, Inc.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Community Support for Ecotourism and Marketing mission was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Madagascar under the Association Nationale pour la Gestion des Aires Protégées (ANGAP) Institutional Strengthening Contract, Contract #623-0110-C-00-1041-00. The purpose of this consultancy was to provide ANGAP with a policy and procedure for empowering and facilitating the communities around Isalo, Ranomafana, and Andasibe to (1) improve and set standards for the ecotourism facilities, products, and services; and (2) ensure that ANGAP's financial sustainability strategies and policies on private sector involvement in ecolodges do not risk accusations of exposing local communities to unfair competition. François Odendaal provided ANGAP with technical assistance for 30 days in June and July 1996.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the members of staff of ANGAP and the staff of Tropical Research and Development, Inc. (TR&D) in Antananarive and Gainesville, who supported me during this study. I am also deeply grateful to hundreds of members of the communities surrounding the parks and the private sector inside and outside Madagascar, who assisted me enthusiastically during the course of the study. They are simply too numerous to mention individually.

François Odendaal
Antananarive
August, 1996

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID Sustainable Approaches for Viable Environmental Management (SAVEM) program's goal is to establish sustainable, natural ecosystems in areas of Madagascar where biodiversity is threatened. Its purpose is to identify and establish sustainable systems (including institutions, methods, and behaviors) for managing protected areas and their peripheral zones.

Through an institutional contract to Tropical Research and Development USAID has provided ongoing technical assistance and financial support for the National Association for the Management of Protected Areas (ANGAP), the national park service of Madagascar.

Dr. François Odendaal has provided the following recommendations for ANGAP's efforts to develop community support for ecotourism activities.

1. Define ANGAP's vision clearly and unambiguously. List the organization's potential roles and identify the appropriate balance between them.
2. Convey ANGAP's vision. Phase one: information and an image communicated to all interested and affected parties. Focus specifically on short-term communication needs through a brief video, a flyer with the same message, and three posters. Each poster will focus on an aspect of ANGAP's activities: as a protector of biodiversity and manager of the parks, as a positive force in community development, and as a facilitator in tourism development. Phase two: produce a longer video to show specific ANGAP activities, and a publication that outlines ANGAP's mission and explains its structure and functions. The publication should review the organization's accomplishments thus far and its future program.
3. Initiate and maintain regular contact with other organizations and government departments concerned with tourism development. ANGAP should review tourism development and marketing plans that have been drawn up by other organizations, so that it can avoid repetition, confusion, overlap, and conflict.
4. Conduct specific ecotourism studies for the Masoala Peninsula, Ankarana, and Montagne d'Ambre *before* June next year to obtain a thorough understanding of each new addition to the national park system by the time ANGAP takes over. These studies should include the private sector, the mechanics of the ICDP/ANGAP transition, the communities in the peripheral zone, and a regional approach.
5. Devise an exchange system to promote the regular sharing of ideas and solutions among the various staff working in the three parks. Invite park directors to meet twice a year to

discuss problems and a list of potential solutions for their parks.

6. Establish a community profiling and audit system to catalog community needs: education, medicine, nutrition, economics, family planning. Use well-established methods of soliciting this information from the communities themselves. Use the system to examine each ANGAP activity to determine the extent of community involvement. What are the current roles played by ANGAP staff? Which of those roles can be fulfilled by community members? How can communities be involved in the monitoring of tourists? How can community members be trained to perform tasks currently designated to outsiders?

Integrate the profile into ANGAP's existing GIS system to provide easy access to dynamic data that are useful for park management and developing neighboring communities. Assure that monitoring will be a systematic activity and that communities receive regular feedback.

7. Assist hotel owners in areas around priority parks in visiting hotels in other areas. As park staff can learn from one another, so can hotel owners. Integrate the study trip with a well-advertised seminar that covers the general expectations of visitors from abroad and provides simple solutions that will improve hotel and restaurant quality. Invite a representative of the Maison du Tourisme to accompany ANGAP staff and the hoteliers.
8. Commission technical assistance to provide guidelines for developing infrastructure in areas near national parks. Much can be learned from studying case studies and guidelines from elsewhere.
9. Make a bed count of all the hotels in the three areas. The development officer for each park can do this in a day. Determine an occupancy rate (incidence of usage) for the different parts of the season. These data could be presented in a popular style or a newsletter for public consumption.
10. Draw up unambiguous rules to govern contractual agreements between guides and tourists, so that conflict and misunderstanding can be avoided. Input should be obtained from guides, tourists, and operators. Results of this work should be monitored so adjustments can be made if necessary.
11. Draw up ecotourism guidelines to govern the conduct of guides and ecotourists in the protected areas. This needs to be a serious and collaborative process, using established techniques for drawing up guidelines so they will be meaningful. Guidelines from ecotourism destinations elsewhere in the world cannot simply be superimposed on these areas.

12. Create a one-page flyer for each of the areas listing facilities and essential services. These would include a list of the hotels; restaurants; and information on public transport options, medical facilities, and the guide association. This one-page flyer can be given to tourists when they pay their entry fees, can be mailed out by embassies or made available in airports.
13. Include the option for diversification and specialization in the guide training program (see Section 8.0). Identify specific talents in individual guides. Compile a current list of researchers working in protected areas. Extend an invitation to researchers to use guides as assistants-in-training so that knowledge can be transferred. Assist in developing a small library of field guide books for each guide association.
14. Investigate *and test* the adventure tourism potential of the parks and surrounding areas before they are made known through articles in specialized magazines and newsletters.
15. Approach the private sector, both travel operators and hotel owners, to enlist their involvement in monitoring tourist requirements and experiences. Ask hoteliers to hand out the questionnaire in Section 4.0 to clients near the end of their stay. The exercise should be pulsed in four periods each year: December and January, March and April, June and July, and September and October. ANGAP can gather and store data in a database for analysis with a simple computer program.
16. Determine how to build better relations with the private sector. This plan has to focus on the immediate future and suggest actions for the medium- and long-term scenario.
17. Design a comprehensive plan for international marketing of the national park system through travel magazines, travel brokers, travel shows, etc. Present a clear philosophy, a clear set of goals, and a step-by-step approach on how these goals can be achieved in a certain timeframe.
18. Develop comprehensive guidelines for operations in areas under ANGAP's control as soon as possible. Developing guidelines for the individual parks should be a collaborative process among communities, the private sector, and ANGAP and should be a systematic process following established techniques. Strive to put guidelines in place by the start of 1997.
19. Ensure that all category A protected areas have campgrounds by the end of December 1997. This process will involve the following steps: (1) conduct a simple marketing analysis on the need for such campgrounds so that they are appropriately placed; (2) draw up a blueprint for the facility which that an appropriate consultant and key operators in the

- private sector review; (3) draft a collaborative agreement with communities that spells out their duties and benefits; (4) construct the campsites and setting up a simple management regime for each one.
20. Investigate the feasibility of opening a cultural village in Isalo and Andasibe. The study would involve a simple market analysis; costing exercise; and a system of checks and balances, including the screening of clients, that will strive to limit cultural erosion and increase benefit to the included communities.
 21. Compose a list of musicians in the areas neighboring the parks, and investigate the possibility of involving them as tourism attractions. This can be done in conjunction with the private sector, or as part of an environmental education campaign (Section 10.0).
 22. Draw up a list of potential specialized tour circuits, and identify key individuals who can assist in developing this concept. For instance, botany tours are a growing activity, and Madagascar's national parks are an ideal venue for these tours. One South African company already offers botany tours in Madagascar. ANGAP can create a list of botanical curiosities in the Category A parks and make this list available to botanical clubs in other countries. As guardians of the national parks, ANGAP has the opportunity to disseminate such information to potential users. A botanical tour is only one example of specialized tours.
 23. Instigate a system whereby local communities will grow vegetables for the tourism market. This will involve a small analysis of the market, done by approaching hotel owners and discussing their needs with them. Follow up by providing appropriate agricultural assistance to assist communities to cultivate these products.
 24. Conduct a one week feasibility study on the potential tour circuit *before* its installation. The study should include: (1) an estimate of the number of tourists that will use the circuit; (2) specific products and services that can be developed for this particular circuit; (3) an overall cost analysis. When the study is finished and the circuit is in place, an ecotourism trial run should be conducted to identify problems and find ways to solve them.
 25. Act as a facilitator between commercial banks and community entrepreneurs to ensure that small loans at moderate rates are granted for start up capital to develop ecotourism facilities, services and products. Act as a facilitator between Tany Meva, NGOs and community entrepreneurs to grant small loans at moderate interest rates.

26. Offer travel agents, tourist operators, and tourist service providers a tourist reservation service via ANGAP's radio communications network with the parks.
27. Develop an institutional capacity to meet the growing demand for information from tourists and other stakeholders in the industry. Devise a short-term and long-term strategy for a tourism information campaign, as well as install a permanent communication mechanism to disseminate relevant information to a variety of users. Increase communications stall size and capacity.
28. Increase institutional capacity to provide the information the private sector needs to improve and extend its range of facilities/products/services.
29. Take relevant ANGAP staff to appropriate selected out-of-the-way parks in other countries, where problems about park facilities have already been solved. Such parks include an array of provincial and municipal parks. Category A parks should construct the following facilities before the end of 1997: campgrounds and picnic sites with flush toilets, showers with hot and cold water, and cooking facilities. A user-friendly information/reception center *geared toward tourists* should also be considered an essential facility.
30. Develop an information package consisting of a video, basic pictures, and guidelines for small entrepreneurs interested in providing tourism facilities in the areas neighboring the parks. Offer simple extension services to the private sector, to include taking promising entrepreneurs to see examples of facilities and building sites, providing hands on technical advice for establishing toilet facilities, supplying water and electricity. ANGAP could compile and hand out manuals on the technical specifications for the building of essential services.
31. Explain the advantages of local community/private sector collaboration, with guidelines and examples of how this could be achieved.
32. Commission a consultant to design ecotourism circuits that make practical sense and promote maximum overall ecological insight into Madagascar. Present these circuits in a marketable form of booklets, videos, or flyers.
33. Promote the immediate inclusion of a marine park into the ANGAP system. Consider both the properly delineated ones on the Masoala Peninsula and also community parks and educational reserves without official status.
34. Conduct a study of the expected negative influences of tourism growth on the protected

42. Develop an educational program for all park directors and ANGAP head office staff to broaden their knowledge of basic ecological phenomena and the many sides of ecotourism development. I recommend a course comprised of 10 lectures of 2.5 hours each with compulsory and suggested reading that can be bound for the convenience of ANGAP staff and made available beforehand to them. This course can be given over a period of 5 weeks, with two lectures per week.
43. Investigate all the environmental education possibilities discussed previously. ANGAP subsequently must design a broad environmental education program that must include a specific action plan to be put into operation as soon as possible.
44. Investigate the possibility of ANGAP as an agent for introducing environmental workshops aimed at decision makers, particularly in conjunction with the National Office for the Environment (ONE).

- areas and the communities surrounding them. These include obvious issues such as the availability of firewood and water and the cultural erosion so commonly displayed by traditional communities coming into contact with western-style development and consumerism too quickly. Discuss how these influences can be mitigated in the short-, medium-, and long-term.
35. Make an educational film to convey the position and roles of the park management, guides, local communities, tourists, and the private sector to all interested and affected parties. This film should be shown widely in all communities near parks.
 36. Devise and implement a comprehensive, professional guide training system as soon as possible. Design a curriculum for guides, write training materials such as manuals, make in-house training films under the guidance of a training specialist, and establish a small corps of qualified and experienced trainers who can visit the different parks.
 37. Develop guidelines for options such as granting concessions, other special operating rights, and park management by outside interests.
 38. Investigate the film potential of ANGAP's parks. Develop a pricing policy for charging film makers. Make it easy for film makers to acquire permission. Keep fees reasonable.
 39. Investigate the possibility of establishing an experimental rest camp that serves the park staff and local communities and provides certain essential services and facilities to tourists. Park managers should be given the chance to view a model rest camp while on their visit to South Africa. It is suggested that an experimental rest camp be put up in the northern part of Isalo, and its progress monitored. This project should start immediately because the outcome of such an experiment will influence many of ANGAP's future actions.
 40. Conduct a meeting with private sector, government, and ANGAP representatives to discuss the advantages of working together. Set some goals. Meeting participants will then design a program for the first year to achieve these goals. An outside party should convene the different representatives to avoid any possible favoritism. The role for convening the parties possibly belongs to the Minister of Tourism.
 41. Draw up a comprehensive plan for children's environmental education. This plan must spell out a target audience and philosophy, list specific goals, and include a step-by-step approach as to how these goals will be achieved.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 How to Read this Report

Section 1.0 defines the context of the study. The second section provides details of the specific communities surrounding the parks and other role players listed in the scope of work (SOW). Sections 3.0 through 10.0 address each specific objective listed in the SOW. Recommended actions are presented in all sections of the report. The Executive Summary contains all of the recommended actions, and Annex 1 contains the SOW.

1.2 The Context of the Study

The current study is meaningless unless it finds a place in the overall planning and vision of ANGAP as an organization. ANGAP has now reached a stage in its evolution that calls for its vision to be solidified. Finding out precisely who and what ANGAP is, and defining the organizations role very clearly, are now a priorities of the highest order. Studies such as this one need to relate holistically to an established ANGAP vision or they cannot achieve their aims. Defining a vision means that many aspects of ANGAP will have to be balanced in relation to each other. For instance, Madagascar is currently emphasizing tourism development. ANGAP undoubtedly has a role to play in this regard because tourism brings in money that can be applied to the park system maintenance and the sustenance of local communities. However, ANGAP has many other aspects, such as protecting biodiversity and some of Madagascar's truly spectacular areas. ANGAP will also directly contribute to the protection of indigenous cultures that surround its parks. Such protection is sorely needed as history has shown us that unplanned tourism development destroys the structures and values of local communities.

Widely divergent views exist within the organization on where the emphasis of the organization should lie and how its various activities should be balanced.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 1: Define ANGAP's vision clearly and unambiguously, including listing all the organization's potential roles and finding the appropriate balance between them. This process can involve an independent professional. The product, a workshop, will be the end of a process that will include thorough communication between the consultant and key individuals in ANGAP, interaction between the consultant and ANGAP staff with outside experts in park systems, and interaction with representatives from relevant funding agencies.

Once the ANGAP vision is clearly established, its image has to be made available to communities, the private sector, the national and international tourism market, and the conservation community at large. Many communities are not aware of ANGAP or how the organization relates to them. This can be rectified by a simple film of about 15 minutes made available in the dialects in those

communities that surround the parks. A film in community members' own dialect will help break the impression that ANGAP is an imposition on their lives from the capital and will foster a feeling of collaboration with the organization.

Madagascar's private sector is confused about precisely what ANGAP's role is and how this fits into the tourism industry. Many members of the public have not even heard of ANGAP. Much needs to be done to introduce ANGAP as an organization, and the various parks, to the tourism market. A certain level of generic marketing is called for, perhaps in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism and the Maison du Tourisme, as well as specific marketing of individual parks and tourism circuits. A great opportunity would have been the ASSISES meeting in October, the first international tourism meeting in Madagascar, but as the current report was being finalized, ANGAP has not been granted a stand at the meeting.

Members of the international conservation community can be a powerful supporter of ANGAP over the years to come. However, they will need to be assured that other organizational activities will not weaken ANGAP's role as a protector of biodiversity. A publication thoroughly explaining what ANGAP is and what it does should be produced. This publication should put forth a perspective that will encourage support from the international conservation community. It must be written and produced in a style that will inspire confidence from the general as well as sophisticated reader. It is imperative that ANGAP develop an unambiguous vision and communicate this vision clearly to the various interest groups relating to the organization, including the international community. Any failure to do so will weaken ANGAP's position when dealing with other players such as the private sector, which is notorious for manipulating national park systems for financial gain.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 2: Convey ANGAP's vision by means of a corporate image communicated to all interested and affected parties, including the public. This can best be achieved through a program consisting of two phases. Phase one will focus specifically on short-term communication needs and will consist of a short corporate video, a flyer with the same message, and three posters. Each poster will focus on an aspect of ANGAP's activities: as a protector of biodiversity and manager of the parks, as a positive force in community development, and as a facilitator in tourism development. Phase two will consist of a comprehensive corporate video, which will show specific ANGAP activities, and a publication that outlines ANGAP's mission and explains its structure and functions. The publication must also review of the organization's accomplishments thus far and its future program. Madagascar television is planning several nature shows, and ANGAP can use these shows to dispel certain notions and promote others.

The current study also needs to find a place in an overall tourism master plan for Madagascar, many parts of which may fall outside the gambit of ANGAP. Madagascar as a country must have

an overall tourism master plan, which usually falls under the Department of Tourism. Such a master plan is currently under construction, and it should take into account the divergent philosophies and roles of the many parties directly or indirectly concerned with tourism. From ANGAP's point of view, ANGAP needs to know where it fits into the overall master plan and how it interfaces with the relevant government departments such as Eaux et Forêts, the Maison du Tourisme, the National Office for the Environment (ONE), and several nongovernment organizations (NGOs) that are drawing up tourism plans for territories currently under their control but which will be transferred to ANGAP's control in the near future.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 3: Contact other organizations and government departments concerned with tourism development. For example, ONE's Mr. Zimmerman and ANGAP's Mr. Collinson meet regularly. ANGAP must review all tourism development and marketing plans that have been drawn up by other organizations, so that the organization can avoid repetition, overlap, conflict, and a waste of time and money.

1.3 Interested and Affected Parties

The SOW (Annex 1) was mostly concerned with four of the main players: (1) ANGAP, (2) communities associated with the parks, (3) tourists that visit the parks, and (4) business private sector (the community and private sector overlap because the border between communities and the private sector is not always clear). In a broader sense, the purpose of the study was to find certain guidelines for developing responsible and sustainable tourism. To achieve this aim, the various players have to be put in proper context to one another, particularly with respect to ANGAP, and ways have to be explored in which collaboration among them mutually benefits all players.

The four players are not the only interested and affected parties. The success or failure of the budding tourism industry will affect all Malagasies in some way or another. The international conservation community and development agencies are also stakeholders, by way of donating funds and technical help. All the other government departments and agencies and NGOs involved in conservation and/or development are stakeholders. The breadth and diversity of stakeholders in conservation and tourism development form another reason for solidifying ANGAP's vision and clarifying its relationship to other stakeholders.

1.4 Geographical Areas Examined

This study required a total of 30 days in June and July 1996. Three areas (Isalo, Ranomafana, Andasibe) targeted by ANGAP for development as priority parks were considered. Five nights were spent at Isalo, four nights at Ranomafana, and three nights at Andasibe. The remainder of the time was spent in Antananarivo. Although many insights gained from the study will also apply

to other protected areas, it must be remembered that each protected area in Madagascar has been isolated from other such areas for some time and therefore will require separate solutions for its unique problems. This study therefore will not suffice for Ankarana or Montagne d'Ambre. Studies similar to this one should be conducted as soon as possible at other parks targeted for inclusion into the ANGAP system. The earlier the question of tourism and communities is addressed for each new protected area coming under ANGAP's control, the easier it will be to avoid problems later. This is particularly important for parks where some confusion already exists in the communities, such as on the Masoala Peninsula.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 4: Conduct specific ecotourism studies for the Masoala Peninsula, Ankarana, and Montagne d'Ambre *before* June next year to obtain a thorough understanding of each new addition to the national park system by the time ANGAP takes over. These studies must include the private sector, the mechanics of the Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP)/ANGAP transition, the communities in the peripheral zone, and a regional approach. These studies must be commissioned *before the end of the year, or earlier*, because good consultants are scarce and usually overbooked. It is a mistake to view parks as natural socio-geographic entities. For instance, in the case of Ankarana, the Prince of Ankarana's authority is important, and his reign and interests extend far beyond the borders of the park. Also, from an ecotourism point of view, the park needs to be viewed as an integral part of an axis (in the case of Ankarana, this axis will involve Ambanzana, the Mitsio archipelago, Antsiranana, and Montagne d'Ambre).

1.5 The General Context of the Four Main Players in the SOW

Without tourists there can be no tourism industry. Tourists have many countries in the world to choose from for their next holiday, and when they discover a good destination, they tell their friends about it. Therefore, the Malagasy tourism industry must be competitive in relation to other countries. It is not always easy to convey to insular societies the importance of being competitive on a world market. Madagascar is currently offering low-quality tourism for high prices, a dangerous situation for expanding the market. Certain parts of South Africa are currently experiencing a similar problem: the decrease in tourism numbers compared to the recent past is being attributed to a decrease in value to the tourist and an increase in cost. Studies have shown that 75% of visiting tourists, and 70% of visiting businessmen, have been influenced by word of mouth advertising (*A Survey of South Africa's International Tourism Market*, 1996, Satour Report). In 1993, tourism became the number one earner of foreign exchange in Madagascar, so the positive effect of a growing tourism industry will stretch far beyond the protected areas.

The park system must provide a grid of well-managed parks and basic acceptable infrastructure that will form the foundation for the growing tourism industry. An effective park system represents a major boost for that part of the private sector involved in ecotourism and encourages

many possibilities for symbiotic relationships among the private sector, local communities, and the park system.

The private sector benefits from a good park system, and, in return, it brings tourists to the park who pay their entrance fees. However, potential for conflict abounds, for example, when the park system is poorly run, when the private sector undertakes development projects that may infringe on the integrity of the park system, or when the private sector does not adhere to regulations governing the use of parks.

The communities surrounding the park are a critical part of the picture. Without their support, the park cannot work. The potential for a mutually advantageous relationship exists between the communities and the park: the park can provide additional income to communities, and communities can be an attraction in themselves. They can also provide guide services or assist in park management. The local communities can benefit the private sector in various ways, but there also exists potential for conflict.

1.6 Finding the Golden Formula

There is no golden formula for sustainable ecotourism development, only hard work and constant monitoring. Communities should be involved in monitoring because they have the largest interest in the situation and know the area best. Local people in Masoala are willing to be involved in long-term monitoring. Regular feedback should be given to all the players. Education of all the main players should be a priority, because tourism is a sophisticated and ever-evolving industry. The following sections identify many of the obstacles standing in the way of a flourishing tourism industry in Madagascar and provide guidelines for future actions. Some topics will require further study. ANGAP has an enormous task ahead of itself, one for which it is under-staffed. Therefore, ANGAP must be thorough, not only in its research, but also in planning and executing programs.

The SOW did not require an analysis of ANGAP as an organization. However, because ANGAP is severely under-staffed for the task of running a national park system, the composition and number of staff should be evaluated in terms of the nature and size of the task that lies ahead. This evaluation can probably be done in-house. An organization in charge of a national park system needs to have at least one in-house eco-sociologist and one resident biologist. Any other approach will cause old and new problems to surface later.

2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

2.1 Why Communities Must be Involved

National parks and other protected areas need the full support of the neighboring communities to succeed. This is particularly true for the developing world. Without community support, no protected area can serve its purpose, and massive conflict is likely to result between local communities and those who impose a protected area on them. Examples of this failure exist the world over of this failure, with a recent one in Madagascar. Local government and communities blocked the inauguration of Parc Masoala because the idea behind the park was not clear to local communities on the Masoala Peninsula. ANGAP should now be particularly careful about public perception in terms of ANGAP's association with Projet Masoala. Unless ANGAP wants to inherit a problematic situation by June next year, work with the communities has to start immediately, and perhaps independently from Projet Masoala. On the other hand, the potential for synergistic relationships is great when local communities support a protected area and its management. Park management systems that do not take local communities into account are no longer acceptable to the international conservation community, which means some losses at the marketplace.

2.2 Discussions with Park Management

The enthusiasm of the staff in all three parks is impressive. In the course of the study, I interacted with a large variety of staff and ICDP personnel. Mr. Charles Rakotondrainibe, the park manager of Isalo, has a sophisticated attitude towards local communities. After a mere 3 months on the job, Mrs. Delina Mara (Development and Education) appears to have a thorough understanding of the town of Ranohira and effectively networks with all the main players, from schools to religious groups to local government to NGOs. Mr. Mamy Ramanantsoa (Ecotourism) has a promising attitude to communities and ecotourism development and will benefit greatly by a visit to other priority parks and Southern African community parks and from reading ecotourism material. All park managers should obtain a copy of *Ecotourism: A Guide for Planners and Managers* (Lindberg and Hawkins, 1993), because it contains helpful hints and suggestions. I have already ordered three copies for ANGAP.

I discussed many aspects of ecotourism development with Mr. Ramanantsoa, who would gain enormously by partaking in a short crash course on ecotourism development that consists of several lectures, discussion groups, and a moderate amount of selected reading materials (see the section on education). A one-week course in ecotourism development should be devised for relevant ANGAP staff. This course can be a summarized version of the masters course in Ecotourism Development that is offered at Connecticut State University. It could cover many

aspects of ecotourism: background, case studies, and various aspects of development, and should consist of lectures, selected readings and discussion groups.

The Director of Ranomafana, who is being replaced by a senior staff member of Projet Masoala, was at the Sambava meeting. I received a good introduction to Ranomafana by talking with Mr. Florent Ravoavy on various occasions, with Mrs. Henriette Razanamahefa, with Scot and Lynn Grenfell, and by reading Scot Grenfell's management plan for Ranomafana.

At Andasibe, we met with the park director, Mr. Herizoana Randriamanatenaso, as well as ANGAP staff (Mr. Faly, Mr. Jose, Miss Olga) and the staff of VITA. The ICDP director was out of town. The Andasibe visit was too short to obtain a full review of ANGAP/ICDP/NGO activities in the area. However, many activities were prominently displayed in the foyer in a problem/potential solution/required action format, and I discussed various aspects with staff members.

The staff of the three parks have a wealth of ideas. Key staff members should be given the chance to visit other priority parks in Madagascar to exchange perspectives and techniques with their counterparts. Although the parks differ ecologically and sociologically, they share many management problems.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 5: Devise an exchange system to promote the regular sharing of ideas and solutions among the various staff working in the three parks. The park directors should meet twice a year to draw up a list that will include all their parks' problems and a list of potential solutions. Some problems have been solved in one or two of the parks, but not in every one. The directors should then design a roster to ensure that the relevant staff from one park where a solution is still being sought will go for a study visit to a park where progress has been made. This systematic exchange system does not only apply to trouble-shooting but also to proactive developments. For instance, Mr. Ramanantsoa Mamy should visit Ranomafana to discuss the community campground with relevant personnel before embarking on a similar project at Ranohira. He and Mrs. Delina Mara can also learn a great deal from Mr. Ravoavy regarding environmental education techniques for children.

2.3 Attitude of the Communities

What communities surround the parks? In the broadest sense, the neighboring communities include everyone who lives near the parks and whose lives can conceivably be affected by the parks. This report narrows the focus to those society members who clearly do not belong to the part of the private sector that consists of travel agents, tour operators, or hotels owned by outside interests. Even so, the distinction between the communities and the private sector was often blurred. For instance, I first viewed the guides as fully-fledged members of the local community,

which holds true for most of them. However, many guides have strong entrepreneurial qualities and behave like members of the private sector involved in tourism. This type of blurring is not uncommon in transitional societies. Many community members still lead traditional lives, but others may be shop owners, teachers, schoolchildren, or students. Also, a considerable number of migrants from elsewhere inhabit all three localities, but some migrants have been there for decades and have become part of the local community.

2.3.1 The Communities at Isalo

At Isalo, I met with leaders from a variety of local community structures, ranging from the *ray aman-dreny* at Ranohira-Bas, the *ray aman-dreny lonaka* at Ranohira, and the president of CDI, the committee distributing 50% of the park entrance fees, to various other people such as doctors, teachers, guides, hotel owners, members of remote villages, artists, and school children.

The attitude of the community toward the park was generally good, but several important points surfaced:

- The *ray aman-dreny lonaka* was concerned about conflict that can arise between the growing number of tourists to the park and the community, because tourists are unaware of traditions regarding *fasana*, or tombs of the Bara people in the park. These customs can be described in a short exhibit in the interpretation center. There are simple rules such as not to point your finger at a tomb, and certain places might be off-limits to outsiders. It is important that ANGAP incorporate such information in tourist literature and stress the importance of following the rules. This will illustrate ANGAP's good will toward the communities and will decrease the chances of cultural misunderstanding between insensitive tourists and communities. Tourists generally respect local traditions if they are properly guided.
- Previous ICDP and NGO projects appear to have left the impression on local communities that these projects are all talk and that little comes from promises made by outsiders. I met with the *ray aman-dreny* of Ranohira-Bas and eight other community members. They indicated that their view of ANGAP was not negative, but they were adopting a wait-and-see attitude. The *ray aman-dreny* made it clear that the community is willing to go step by step with ANGAP, not so fast that promises are broken, but fast enough for results to be noticeable. He expressed faith that the relationship can be good in the future.

In the past, the villagers were able to hunt in the area that is now a park. Since they have given up that right, they want to see some benefit from the park. Their first priority is to have a school with a house for a teacher. Several houses

available in the village, including the house of the evacuated Peace Corps volunteers. The next level of priority included a request for a water pump, which should be solar-operated, and a medical clinic. Solar water pumps are available for the African market, with manual overrides for standard electrical power supplies, and even hand-operated mechanisms.

If the park is seriously interested in the community needs, it will facilitate the installation of medical doctors that are willing to visit the remote areas. Many parks in the developing world are taking note of the medical needs of neighboring communities. A recent visit to the Kalahari Gemsbok Park in South Africa provided a glimpse of a system of visiting doctors to the communities being put in place. At the very least, ANGAP staff responsible for community involvement should liaise with organizations such as APROPO, which runs a combination of medical services and family planning in rural areas.

The *ray aman-dreny* may be happy if there will be a teacher next year, and the next request be met the year after. It is important that this meeting be followed up again, and that a system is devised that will guarantee frequent and open communication between ANGAP and the communities. One possibility is a two-day workshop with park staff during which a monitoring regime can be worked out. Established techniques are available by which communities can be monitored. The purpose of the workshop will be to ensure that a formal plan is instated to ensure regular interaction with, and the systematic monitoring of communities so that they do not end up being neglected.

Regular feedback is extremely important and tokenism should be avoided at all cost. All participants agreed that, should a problem arise, the community will approach ANGAP staff members openly and without delay. Requests for a meeting should be treated as high priority by ANGAP staff. The *ray aman-dreny* told several interesting stories revolving around the name Ranohira and the geology of the landscape. They appreciated the interest showed in their village and the opportunity to talk to ANGAP representatives who were willing to walk over 20 kilometers to come and see them.

- Many community members are still at a loss with respect to the purpose of the park. They regard the park as merely a tourist trap through which easy money can be obtained. An interpretation center such as the one in Ranomafana is desperately needed at Isalo and the person responsible for education and development should visit Ranomafana. Mr. Florent Ravoavy of Ranomafana should visit Isalo to advise on environmental education for schoolchildren and communities.

- One specific complaint was that tourists have polluted water by bathing with soap. The partitions in the rice fields have also been damaged. Another investigator, a Mr. Martello, has done some work at Ranohira-Bas. If Mr. Martello was an ANGAP consultant, his study and recommendations need to be reviewed to ensure no empty promises were made that may negatively affect the communities' confidence in the park system.

Various current projects were discussed with Mr. Gabriel Manonjo, the president of the local Development Committee for the Peripheral Zone. The issue of interest on the account was discussed. A policy needs to be worked out regarding the percentage of earnings that need to be set aside for future investment and the percentage that can be applied to immediate projects. Responsible management will encourage the fast growth of the fund so that future projects can rely more strongly on the accumulated interest in the future and be less affected by potential fluctuations of income from entrance fees. The Alexkor Foundation is an example of a fund with good yield. The Alexkor Foundation, in northern Namaqualand, is a community development fund that receives 30% of the bruto earnings of Alexkor Ltd, the biggest diamond mine in the region. Each year, more than 80% of the fund is re-invested so that, in the future, interest earned by the fund will completely fund most projects. The remainder is invested into a wide range of community projects. The high percentage of re-investment into the fund makes it grow quickly, so that earning from interest will eventually be able to fund most, if not all, the projects sponsored by the Alexkor Foundation.

A financial planning expert should thoroughly research fund use, so a policy can be devised by which present expenditure can be balanced most effectively against future earnings through accumulated interests. Such a policy has to be reconciled with community profiling data, which will, for instance, require planners to weigh the expenditure on the most pressing needs in the community against future interests gained from investments. In other words, community profiling data and the predicted size of the fund will influence policy on how the fund is applied now and in the future.

2.3.2 Ranohira: Traditional Village or Tourist Village?

Ranohira is no longer a traditional village and never really was one. The original Ranohira was located where Ranohira-Bas now is. The *ray aman-dreny lonaka* in Ranohira and the *ray aman-dreny* in Ranohira-Bas elaborated on this point. French colonials relocated the village to serve the highway between Toliara and Fianarantsoa. In fact, 80% of the inhabitants are not even Bara but Betsileo and Merina. Much of the activity and infrastructure in town already revolve directly or indirectly around tourism (e.g., five hotels, about ten eating places, a park office, a taxi-brousse stop, a guide association, water supply by donkey cart, small shops). Villagers displayed no resentment toward tourism development from anyone in or near the town. Many

people regarded tourism as a positive presence and accepted it as a fait accompli. Many people are hoping for opportunities in the growing industry. It appears that responsible tourism development will have a positive influence on the town rather than a destructive one (as it might have on traditional communities). It is known that more traditional and remote communities are more easily damaged by ecotourism development. Ranohira is out of the danger zone, provided tourism development is carefully planned with full involvement from the town.

A study should be conducted on how to establish a tourism commission in the town. As many stakeholders as possible should be involved (e.g., Director of the Park, President of the Guide Association, President of the Hotel Association, the various traditional structures, and an outside advisor). The tourism commission should explore avenues that will lead to responsible and sustainable tourism development for Ranohira. It can help to maximize potential gains while discouraging over-investment and inappropriate development.

2.3.3 The Communities at Ranomafana

Our perspective was broadened by a long discussion with the *ampanjaka*, the mayor, various hotel owners, guides, community members, doctors, and a team from APROPO, the Malagasy NGO, were working in the area.

The discussion with the *ampanjaka* brought up several interesting points:

- The 50% share of the money from the park is not enough. He would like to see this figure closer to 80%. We explained to him that park management, maintenance, and tourism marketing cost money, and that 50% was not simply an arbitrary figure. It was agreed that we would take the suggestion to the head office and that ANGAP will give some account to the local communities as to what the organization does with the 50% that it keeps. This might be a good opportunity for ANGAP and the community to interact and for ANGAP to show to the local community how important it is that all parties work together to achieve their common goals.
- Because of potential misunderstanding between ANGAP and community members about what ANGAP does with 50% of the park fees, it might be a good idea to have an annual community day involving ANGAP and traditional structures to explain how the money accrued by the park is spent. Such a day will also provide ample opportunity for entertainment and educational events.
- Tourists may not respect various *fady* in the region because they are ignorant of them. As suggested for Isalo, a survey has to be made of *fady* in the region so that

tourists can be given certain guidelines, if necessary. Off-limit areas should be considered to absolutely avoid conflict.

- A generally positive attitude toward ANGAP was expressed, and cultivating vegetables and educating children was discussed.

2.3.4 The Communities of Andasibe

Due to the short duration of the visit, emphasis was placed on talking with guides (on a one-to-one basis and with a group of nine guides) and discussing communities with ANGAP and ICDP staff, rather than visit the neighboring communities (other than the one in Andasibe). We also had conversations with shop owners and park guards. At a meeting held by the Ministry of Tourism, we met the police Commissioner of Moramanga, members of local government, and several other key local figures.

2.4 Community Profiling as Part of ANGAP's GIS Database

ANGAP has much to be done regarding communities. The communities cannot be placated by occasional visits to the villages so ANGAP staff can have a polite conversation with the elders. Interaction with communities must be far more pervasive than currently exists. Local communities can be involved in many ways, and their involvement will increase with time because communities are constantly developing as a result of increased exposure to the outside world and better education. Management costs can be reduced by using local communities in various capacities. An increasing trend in new parks worldwide is to include one or more community members in the management team.

The communities surrounding the parks are diverse in their make-up, in a constant state of change, and fast-growing. They must be constantly monitored in terms of absolute numbers, distribution, demography, pressing needs, development requirements, and their collective expectations and aspirations. Evaluating such information is an integral part of planning and change. Social auditing provides decision makers with the information needed to make choices. For instance, the fund controlled by the development committee must be applied in context with frequently changing community needs.

A complete community profiling and audit system needs to be set up. This will be an evolving process that will require the current allocation of one staff member for development in each park and a full-time socio-ecologist in the head office, responsible for coordinating community profiling and social auditing in the peripheral zones. The issue of communities and their involvement cannot be dealt with once and for all with a few required actions, but rather will be a continuing process for which the following recommended action is only a start.

ANGAP has a sophisticated GIS system at its disposal. Therefore, community data should be incorporated into this GIS system. A variety of community auditing and profiling techniques are available, along with computer programs for storing and analyzing data. The person responsible for GIS can be trained in one week on how to incorporate community profiling data into the existing GIS database, so the community profile can be updated frequently.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 6: Establish a community profiling and audit system. Many tools are available for social profiling (e.g., *Community Profiling. Auditing social needs*, by Hawtin, Hughes and Percy-Smith, 1994, and *Implementing Change in Communities. A Collaborative Process*, by Archer, Kelly, and Bisch, 1984). This profiling and audit system should incorporate all matters related to the communities in the peripheral zone. It must catalog *all* community needs ranging from educational, to medical, to nutritional, to economical, to the need for family planning. ANGAP must resist the temptation to list community needs as ANGAP sees them, *but must use well-established methods* of soliciting this information from the communities themselves. The system must critically examine each ANGAP activity to determine the extent of community involvement. For instance, what are the current roles played by ANGAP staff, and which of those roles can be fulfilled by community members? How can communities be involved in the monitoring of tourists? How can community members be trained to perform tasks currently designated to outsiders? The system will also facilitate the gathering of information mentioned in Section 2.3, such as reservations communities might have about tourism, promises that were made to them in the past, ranking priorities for spending money at various sites in each peripheral zone, the way communities perceive park management, the effectiveness and sustainability of the CDI fund, and so on. Finally, the community profiling and audit system can be integrated into the ANGAP's existing GIS system to provide easy access to dynamic data that are useful for park management and developing neighboring communities. The system will also ensure that monitoring will be a systematic activity and that communities receive feedback regularly.

3.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To undertake a situational analysis of the ecotourism facilities, products and services currently being offered by the communities neighboring Isalo, Ranomafana, and Andasibe

3.1 The Importance of Facilities

The importance of facilities and services cannot be underestimated. Almost all tourists, even the most adventurous, expect a certain level of comfort and quality of service. When these requirements are not met, the word of mouth report back by tourists and friends to travel agents and friends will be unfavorable, severely hampering the industry's growth. Almost all tourists expect certain levels of toilet facilities, cooking hygiene, and cleanliness in their rooms.

The service guides provide in a national park is at least as important as the service provided by cooks and waiters in a restaurant. The guide service profoundly influences the quality of the tourist's experience in the parks. For many tourists it will be the most intimate contact that they will have with the country.

3.2 The Hotels in the Three Areas

3.2.1 The Hotels in Ranohira

I visited all the hotels in Ranohira as well as Le Relais de la Reine. The small hotels all complained of similar problems and constraints:

- There is not enough water. Water is available from 6:30-7:00 am and 5:00-6:00 pm. One hotel occasionally had to use tourists' cars to fetch water. I suggest three potential solutions: (1) make tourists more aware of the scarcity of water in the region (many would be unaware of this and would take long showers in the hot summer), (2) make some boreholes in town (the presence of several fountains and the average rainfall suggest the possibility of ample groundwater in the region), and (3) because the area has plenty of sheet iron roofs and it rains at least a little every month in Isalo, collect rainwater for humans or vegetable gardens.
- Hotel staff would appreciate the chance to attend English classes, because communication with non-French speaking tourists is frequently difficult. They should be given the same access to English lessons as members of the guide association. It is suggested that story/poetry/film evenings be held to create opportunities to interact and practice new language skills in a protected environment.

- The lack of a facility to change money is a major stumbling block. I was approached three times in two days by tourists who needed to exchange money. It is recommended that BTM be approached to install a money-changing facility in town. Tourists have left town on occasion without paying their hotel bills, perhaps because they had insufficient FMG on hand. This problem can temporarily be alleviated by including information on changing facilities for tourists in forthcoming ANGAP literature aimed at the market.
- The availability of fresh vegetables is a problem. Gardening should be encouraged in the local communities as all hotels buy their vegetables in Toliara or Fianarantsoa. Ranohira has rich soil, but again water is a problem. A single borehole with a wind pump can lay the foundation for a community gardening project. There are also opportunities here for toilet runoff to water and nutritionally enrich gardens, as has been shown in many developing countries the world over.
- Communication with the outside world is an enormous problem. Except for Le Relais de la Reine, no other hotel has direct communication with the outside world, which makes booking accommodations difficult, from the hotel and the client's point of view. The small hotels could form a hotel association in town that can share common facilities such as a radio. A small tourism office can also provide this service, or perhaps, for a small fee, the park office can provide this service on a separate frequency.
- Hotel Berny complained about the sensitivity of tourists eating on the verandah and chasing away hungry children who came to watch them. Tourists also need education and this can be accomplished by inserting one or two sentences in ANGAP literature available at the parks.
- Transport remains a big problem. Tourists can take a taxi-brousse to Ranohira but have no transport after their arrival. A simple taxi service, or even a pus-pus service (the landscape is fairly flat) would be promising business enterprises to encourage. ANGAP will also be affected adversely by the transport problem if the current siting of the new interpretation center goes ahead.
- Hot water is a problem for some tourists. The Hotel Orchidee provides a convenient hot water bucket shower, and some owners might be willing to try the well-proven heated drum idea mentioned by Mr. Collinson. It might be useful to build a model at one of the hotels. A better alternative would be to look at solar

heating because wood will soon become a problem in the region. Various models of black shower bags on the market provide sufficient hot water for showers.

- Hotel owners complained about various aspects of the guide services.
- Accommodation is scarce at the height of the season (July to August). A campground run by the community, modeled on the one at Ranomafana, will alleviate the problem. I discussed the idea with park staff and the chairman of the development committee.
- Electricity is a problem because it is available only for a few hours each day. The potential use of solar power in this sunny region should be investigated.

Most of the small hotels share the same problems, and the possibility of a hotel association that can address these problems cooperatively should be explored. The Ranch Hotel, built of local materials, has solved several recurring problems. This hotel has no water problem because it is located near a creek, and the hotel uses solar power for hot water. The hotel also solved the age old problem of unacceptable toilet facilities. The owners are also growing a variety of fruit trees. The German co-owner of the hotel designed the emblem for Isalo park and plays a significant role in managing a small hotel association or tourism office. An association of small hotels can also do their marketing together, for instance, printing a brochure that describes the various hotels and their peculiarities and price ranges, with a contact number in the capital that can have radio contact with the tourism office in Ranohira. Care should be taken that a range of hotels remain available, and that the essential characters of some of them remain preserved, for instance the quaint simplicity of the Hotel les Joyeux Lemuriens.

The upscale Hotel Le Relais de la Reine is self-contained with respect to water supply, electricity, and communication with the outside world. The owners of this hotel directed their comments at ANGAP:

- Guides must be greatly improved,
- ANGAP must develop northern circuits,
- ANGAP must be taken off Piscine Naturelle,
- They are perturbed at the number of studies but the lack of results, and
- ANGAP must monitor hotel construction.

3.2.2 The Hotels in Ranomafana

Except for the friendliness of the waiters, the Hotel Thermale leaves much to be desired. I slept four nights in the hotel which must have been grand in its day. So many obvious improvements can be made that a list would be exhaustive in this report. The cheapest one would be to buy a new cup for the bucket shower to replace the one that is so full of holes that it has become useless. The potential for solar-heated warm showers is great in all the hotels I visited. Such devices can also be installed in camping areas. The Domaine Nature is a lovely hotel but the owners charge extraordinary amounts for drinks so that the visitor can easily feel cheated.

A circular aimed at hotels surrounding the parks might be useful to many owners and managers. This circular can stress the importance of a sustainable industry, describe the basic expectations of international tourists, and make simple practical suggestions on how to improve facilities. A one-page newsletter or sound cassette with the latest news and suggestions might work better than a single circular. Help from other members of the private sector can probably be solicited in improving sub-standard hotels. It is also important that the character of other hotels not be destroyed, particularly when a variety of clients are expected to pass through. The character of the Hotel les Joyeux Lemuriens in Ranohira would undoubtedly be appealing to many tourists of a particular type. It would be counter-productive to replace its bucket showers with plumbing, or the romantic lamps with electrical lighting. A tourist village should have a range of hotels catering to a range of clientele.

3.2.3 The Hotels in Andasibe

I stayed at Hotel Feon' ny ala. All 14 tourists whom I questioned considered the service and facilities at this hotel sufficient. There is hot water, using the heated barrel system referred to earlier; the rooms are clean; the toilets flush; the food is reasonable; and the price is right. During an experimental trial tour, eight tourists and I stayed at Hotel des Orchidees inside the village of Andasibe, and all were satisfied with the service and facilities (Odendaal and Kroese, 1995). On a subsequent trial tour, 16 tourists stayed at Hotel de la Gare, and they were similarly satisfied (Odendaal *et al.*, 1996). The general conclusion is that the hotels in Andasibe are of an acceptable level, although improvements can always be made. I doubt that the quality of service and level of infrastructure of hotel facilities at Andasibe will be the reason why tourists will give bad feedback from their visit to Madagascar. Unfortunately, Andasibe is only one locality, and one single awful hotel experience has the ability to spoil a tourist's entire experience in Madagascar.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 7: Give hotel owners in areas around priority parks a chance to visit hotels in other areas. As park staff can learn from one another, so can hotel owners. ANGAP should organize a 4-day visit of the hoteliers from each of the three areas to go and visit the other two. The study trip should start with a well-advertised seminar that covers the general

expectations of visitors from abroad and provides simple solutions that will improve hotel and restaurant quality. A representative of the Maison du Tourisme should be invited to accompany ANGAP staff and the hoteliers. It is suggested that Eugene Ecot lead this trip because he has already met several of the hoteliers. Furthermore, ANGAP should seek a meeting with the Maison du Tourisme to discuss the issue of hotel quality and develop a common action plan.

I had the chance to visit the new upmarket Vakona Lodge with the delegation from the Ministry of Tourism. This hotel is the equivalent of Hotel Relais de la Reine at Isalo, but, unlike the latter, this new hotel does not blend into the environment. It is surrounded by eucalyptus trees, and the general environment is scarred by the effects of surface mining for graphite (by the same person who owns the hotel). Guidelines must be drawn up as soon as possible for development in protected areas and rehabilitation of environment damaged by industrial activities. Surface mining damage is seldom static, and even after mining has stopped the environment can continue to degrade (Le Roux and Odendaal, 1992). This is particularly true for deserts, where wind action is strong, and tropical areas, where susceptibility of exposed terrain to torrential downpours is high.

I have had several conversations regarding the ecotourism development and environmental guidelines with people from the Law School of the University of Fianarantsoa. The law school will be hosting a symposium on the environment this August, and ANGAP needs to obtain a copy of the proceedings because various topics relevant to protected areas will be covered.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 8: Commission assistance to provide guidelines for developing infrastructure in areas near national parks. This is not new ground, and much can be learned from studying case studies and guidelines from elsewhere. This work can be done in conjunction with the Law School at the University of Fianarantsoa. Other initiatives in this field, such as the study done by Andrew Cooke for KEPEN, need to be researched and incorporated in the ANGAP study. The consultant will be a Malagasy from the University of Fianarantsoa. The environmental law group there has already done work on a variety of legal aspects regarding use of the environment by the private sector.

3.2.4 Obtaining Tourist Feedback

Most hotels that I visited had a visitor's book. The comments column automatically provides some feedback to the hotel owners. Hotels should periodically place a simple comments form on the desk or dressing table for visitors to fill in. The form is about half an A4 in size and typically has a visitor's card appearance with polite phrasing such as:

Thank you for visiting our country and staying at our hotel. To improve our service to you and future clients, we request you to please take a few minutes to write down your comments and suggestions below.

Comment forms are usually far more informative than questionnaires with set questions. The guest feels less like a statistic and has an opportunity to present the problems as he/she sees them and write to his/her heart's content. Hotel managers can be requested to keep these comments forms for later analysis by ANGAP.

3.2.5 To Build or Not to Build

All three areas are short of accommodation in the peak season so that facilities are crowded. Sometimes individuals are inconvenienced but also have the opportunity to make money by accommodating visitors in schools or other public buildings. It is important to manage the rise in tourism now, because negative reactions against the industry can develop when tourists regularly swamp a town. I also witnessed building activity at hotels in each of the three areas. Hotel Orchidee in Ranohira and Hotel des Orchidees in Andasibe are more than doubling their current capacity. However, tourism is very much in the news in Madagascar, and under such circumstances, people may tend to overinvest without establishing the true market potential.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 9: Make a bed count of all the hotels in the three areas. The development officer for each park can do this in a day. An occupancy rate (incidence of usage) can then be determined for the different parts of the season. Hotel owners should then keep a record of how many people they turn away during the peak season. These data, together with tourism figures projection data (Section 4.0) will provide an estimation of the lack of accommodation during the peak season and the occupancy rates during the low season. These data should be written up in a popular style or a newsletter for public consumption.

3.3 The Importance of Services

Tourism is essentially a service industry. Tourists' perception of service will influence the feedback they give in their home countries and the probability of their returning to Madagascar.

The service guides provide in a national park is at least as important as the service provided by cooks and waiters in a restaurant. If the service and the quality of the product is bad, the customers will soon avoid the restaurant and it will get bad reviews in the media. The guide service in particular profoundly influences the quality of the experience of the tourist in the parks. For many tourists, it will be the most intimate contact they will have with the host country.

Support services are essential to the growth of the tourism industry. Without essential services, a town like Ranohira will never develop into an attractive tourist village, but will suffer the fate of any poorly organized towns that are run over by tourists. Some areas of Nosy Be are a good example of the bad effects of tourism on the physical aspects of a town and the society.

3.4 The Guide Services in the Three Parks

The guide system in the three parks developed on an *ad hoc* basis when the parks were declared, and in some cases even earlier. It was a response to the need of visitors to be escorted into unfamiliar terrain and learn whatever they could about the wildlife. As with most *ad hoc* developments, the results are uneven and largely unsatisfactory. Furthermore, it will not be an easy task to get the guide system to a level where it can be a major asset to the national parks and tourists alike.

3.4.1 The Guides at Isalo

Various hotel owners have described the situation as turbulent and virulent. Conflict exists among the members of the Guide Association and between the association and the park management. The guide situation has the characteristics of a time bomb: if not promptly diffused, it has the potential to severely damage the tourism industry and adversely influence the parks' popularity and the benefits to the communities. We witnessed a disciplinary action involving a guide who took unauthorized routes and a fist fight between two guides in the center of town. The situation is potentially dangerous (The guide Bedo was murdered in Andasibe in 1989). We also witnessed a disagreement regarding payment between two guides and a tourist after the service was delivered. The *boky volamena* in Isalo has many comments about guides, including some by tourists who claim that their time at Isalo was spoiled by an unreasonable and dishonest guide. Some tourists cut short hikes because of their guides. Other tourists recommend specific guides to future visitors.

I spoke privately with three guides and went for a walk to the Piscine Naturelle with a fourth guide. In Ranohira, I talked with four other guides who were relaxing over beers after having been with tourists that day. Each guide had a different opinion. One with 7 years' experience felt that one problem is that everyone can become a guide, including teenagers who are primarily after easy money. All four guides would welcome the chance of better training. I also discussed the problem with park staff. Mr. Ramanantsoa is giving himself and the guides until December to solve the problem, or drastic steps will have to be taken that may involve the undoing of the current Guide Association.

Some of the specific issues that surfaced were:

- There are almost fifty guides in Isalo, and most people felt this number is far too high. As in Ranomafana, the history of the guide association is complex. Previously there were two associations, but now there is only one with a president, the park manager, whom most guides apparently respect. However, everyone is

uncertain about who will eventually control the guide association.

- Some tourists resent that they are forced to take a guide along to explore the park, and they view this as a way of cheating them out of their money. They need to be informed about the reasons for this rule; guides are necessary for their own safety as water is scarce, and also having guides is a way for local people to benefit from the park. These points should be brought out clearly in the information available to visitors that arrive at the park offices.
- The prices of guides are too high according to most travel agents and some tourists.
- Many tourists wondered if the prices of guides are, or should be, negotiable.
- It is not clear exactly what services can be expected from guides, and whether their meals are included (some do not like to eat *vazaha* camping food, and sometimes the *vazaha* only have food for themselves).
- It is not clear whether guides should receive a flat rate per day, or whether different circuits carry different prices. In one case, a tourist wanted to combine two circuits without leaving the park first and hence wanted a discount for the combination.
- Guide fees are regularly changing, which makes it difficult for travel agents and tourists to budget their expenses accurately, and impossible for guide books to report accurate prices. Note: Guide books are extremely important to travelers in the developing world. The three most popular ones for Madagascar are Hillary Bradt's book, Marco Turco's book, and the ever-present Lonely Planet.
- Guides complain that they sometimes have not been paid because tourists had too little money and were not able to exchange money in Ranohira.
- One guide mentioned that he felt exploited by the park system, because he cannot operate according to free enterprise principles.
- The strategies guides use to attract tourists are a sore point for several hotel owners, travel agents, and tourists. The guides are likened to vultures waiting for a kill.

- One guide has complained that sometimes they are treated badly or rudely by tourists.
- Some guides expressed the fear that money-hungry teenagers without any training are allowed to become guides, which takes their jobs away from them and frustrates the tourists.

Tourists interviewed at other localities in the country (three at Andasibe, three in Antananarivo) all complained about guide services at Isalo. These complaints included:

- The guide was given money beforehand to pay for food, but clearly bought more than necessary;
- One group complained that they were forced to pay the guide for three days, instead of two, as they started late on a Friday and returned early on a Sunday morning;
- The guides ate most of the food and gave leftovers to the guests;
- The guides pressured people to give them things such as boots, tents and cooking equipment; and
- The guides did not know anything about the plants or animals.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 10: Draw up unambiguous rules to govern contractual agreements between guides and tourists, so that conflict and misunderstanding can be avoided. Input should be obtained from guides, tourists, and operators. The system's feasibility should be monitored so adjustments can be made if necessary.

3.4.2 The Guides at Ranomafana

An equally bad and confusing situation exists at Ranomafana. Here the previous president of the guide association, Mr. Fidy, now operates independently. He has some local support from the town. Scott Grenfell's management plan gives a history of the guide associations. Again, the guide dilemma in Ranomafana is the result of *ad hoc* tourism development. Grenfell listed several of the current problems:

- Guides are unable to communicate in the tourists' language. Certain park staff did not hold out much hope that this could ever be rectified to an acceptable level. Travel agents would prefer to use their own guides. The English lessons currently

being offered by the Peace Corps volunteer are poorly attended, and sometimes not at all. There may be an element of protest involved here, since experiences elsewhere in Madagascar were different.

- Guides rush tourists through the park so they can have the rest of the day off, or to increase the volume and their own earnings.
- Three different guides were seen feeding animals and luring lemurs down so close that they could almost be touched. Guides were yelling back and forth through the forest to tell one another where the action was. Many tourists would be horrified at the attitude of the guides toward the forest and the animals.
- One guide related how he camped with tourists for several days in a remote part of the park and during that time collected over 400 freshwater shrimp in the creeks and cut the legs off more than 200 frogs.
- Certain guides openly convey a negative message about the park and park management to outsiders.
- Some travel agents complained that guides are not trained to convey tourists in a sensitive and acceptable manner.
- Occasionally, open friction arose between certain guides and tourists, but this seems rare.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 11: Draw up ecotourism guidelines to govern the conduct of guides and ecotourists in the protected areas. This needs to be a serious and collaborative process, using established techniques for drawing up guidelines so they will be meaningful. Guidelines from ecotourism destinations elsewhere in the world cannot simply be superimposed on these areas.

3.4.3 The Guides at Andasibe

We discussed the guide situation with various staff members of the Andasibe-Mantadia National Park; the park director, Mr. Herijaona Randriamanantenasoa; the guides themselves; and 11 tourists.

An hour discussion with a group of nine guides revealed that they all wanted training and are all quite aware of the importance of providing a good service. They all wanted English lessons, even though the overall ability to speak English is higher than at the other two parks.

As in Ranomafana, the Peace Corps volunteer reported poor attendance at her English classes. To some extent, the problem comes from how the guides view efforts to train them. English training should be part of a high-quality overall training program that the guides will respect and be willing to pay money to attend.

Conversations with three tourists who have also visited Isalo indicated that the guide service at Andasibe is more satisfactory than at Isalo. I previously went out with two guides and also have the impression that they provide a better service than at the other two parks, especially Isalo. The possibility should be investigated of selecting the best guides for a training course and then recruiting them into a training corps.

In a private discussion, two guides complained bitterly about the attitude of park staff to the guides. The complaints revolved around the right of the guides to use the park without interference from park staff and the attitude of the director, which was described as arrogant. One of the guides complained that the director behaves as if he owns the park, while the guides believed they own some rights to the park on the grounds of traditional use and previously established patterns of use. It certainly is not clear to the guides what mandate the park management really has.

3.5 Essential Support Services

Support services include services that a tourist might use during his/her stay in an area. These would include medical services, shops, restaurants, automobile care, and so on. Ranohira has two doctors, although they are not both there all the time. I visited one of them to discuss medical facilities in the town.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 12: Create a one-page flyer for each of the areas listing facilities and essential services. These would include a list of the hotels; restaurants; and information on public transport options, medical facilities, and the guide association. This one-page flyer can be given to tourists when they pay their entry fees.

3.6 Other Services

Many tourists are interested in more than sightseeing or viewing animals. Cultural activity is a growing interest of tourists, particularly ecotourists. Many people want to learn about, or even interact with local inhabitants of a region. The Malagasy culture as a tourist attraction is completely underexploited. The following table lists some potential cultural services and products that can be offered, the current situation in the three areas, and recommendations for improvements. These recommendations are discussed in more detail in later sections.

RANOHIRA:

	POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES	EXISTING ACTIVITIES	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OR EXPANSION
1	An outlet for curios and handicrafts	None currently, although a few products are available in the park office.	A simple venue can be organized in the central part of town, such as an informal market that operates at known times, such as a Friday. Curios can also be sold at the interpretation center.
2	Cultural events at least partly aimed at tourists	None currently, although a tour operator sometimes organizes for local artists to perform for his tourists.	Music and dance evenings can be organized at a regular venue at known times, as is the case with discotheques in medium-sized towns.
3	Opportunities to learn about the culture	None.	Town and cultural village activities must be developed in the peripheral zone. The west side of the park has enormous potential. A display can be offered in the new interpretation center.

RANOMAFANA:

	POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES	EXISTING ACTIVITIES	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OR EXPANSION
1	An outlet for curios and handicrafts	A cooperative artists' outlet that enjoys moderate success.	The outlet should be moved to a central point in the town. It does not have to be modern like the current one.
2	Cultural events at least partly aimed at tourists	None	Music evenings can be organized at any of the hotels, perhaps at the Hotel Thermal because of its central location.
3	Opportunities to learn about the culture	There is a museum display, and although rather superficial, it is probably the right length.	Tours can be developed in the peripheral zone as well as 'cultural village' activities. The museum is an ideal advertising venue. A list of interesting sights should be made.

ANDASIBE:

	POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES	EXISTING ACTIVITIES	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OR EXPANSION
1	An outlet for curios and handicrafts	None, although a small selection of crafts is available at some of the hotels.	A market that operates at known times should be encouraged in the center of the town
2	Cultural events at least partly aimed at tourists	None	Music evenings can be organized with the Hotel de la Gare as a central and spacious venue
3	Opportunities to learn about the culture	None.	The VITA staff are investigating various 'cultural village' options. A display in the new cultural centre will be useful.

4.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To design a survey to obtain a profile of the tourists presently visiting the national parks and assess their attitude towards the facilities and services presently being offered by both ANGAP and the local communities

4.1 Introduction

The following sections describe some of the many types of tourists. It is important to point out that there is considerable overlap between the types, so that any individual tourist can belong to two or more categories. All types are already represented in Madagascar, and the national parks can provide a service to all of them.

4.2 The Independent Traveler

Independent travelers are usually medium to low-budget travelers who are fairly self-contained and often travel on their own. Their time budget often allows extended journeys that may last more than one month and sometimes several months. Many of them are young people who have just left college or are on a college breaks. Some of them stay in the cheapest the hotels they can find, while others are backpackers who prefer to camp. A surprising number are teachers who take advantage of the long northern hemisphere holidays. In general, certain park and ANGAP head office staff believe that independent travelers are not important because they do not bring a lot of money into the country. This notion should be dispelled immediately for the following reasons:

- They are often the first tourists to visit a new destination, and they tend to travel for longer periods and more intensively than package tourists and therefore get to know the country better than mainstream tourists. Therefore, they are important marketing agents. They tend to be more forgiving than mainstream tourists but, at the same time, have the experience to compare different countries as tourism destinations.
- They bring as much money to the park system and communities as wealthy tourists because they, too, have to pay the entrance fees and they, too, have to be accompanied by a local guide.
- Under certain circumstances, they bring more money to the communities than the rich tourists whose money tends to end up in private hands. For instance, many independent travelers will support a system of community run camping grounds.
- They are often the last tourists to leave the scene when circumstances in a country become difficult. At the height of the Sendero Luminoso reign in Peru, overall

tourism fell by 90%, and the remaining 10% was made up almost entirely of independent travelers.

- Independent travelers have more time to spend, and many of them will be return visitors. Some of them fund themselves by writing articles for magazines, newspapers, and travel newsletters. Some of them will become great enthusiasts for their favorite country and will promote it in many different ways.

4.3 The Mainstream Tourist

Most mainstream tourists travel as package tourists, and almost all are accompanied by an operator. They are probably the easiest group of tourists to control, and, in this regard, the private sector can play an enormous role by adhering to guidelines and agreeing to do customer satisfaction surveys.

4.4 The Luxury Tourist

Luxury tourists also tend to travel as a package tourist, but, in Madagascar, more commonly on tailor-made trips. They tend to visit the best hotels in the country, many of which are in private reserves, or known destinations such as Ile St Marie or Nosy Be. Both Isalo and Andasibe can accommodate luxury tourists with Relais de la Reine and the Hotel Vakona. At Ranomafana, the location of a luxury hotel should be properly regulated and sited beforehand to make sure the village's integrity remains intact.

4.5 The Nature Tourist

Madagascar has long been known as a destination for nature tourists. Many nature tourists specialize in a particular part of nature, such as birds, orchids, or lemurs. The guide training system must build diversification into the services that guides will offer. Luckily, most local guides are familiar with their environment, so that some basic ecological education and the ability to convey their knowledge will go a long way. However, not all guides know their environment. For example, in Masoala, many of the divers currently destroying the remaining sea cucumber populations can be trained to be excellent guides in the marine parks. I met a birdwatching couple from Scotland who were bitterly disappointed when their guide knew nothing about birds at all. Another guide was an excellent bird watcher but did not know the English names of the birds. Guide training should therefore include classes on different groups of animals and plants, and promising students should be given the chance to work with an expert in their field. Two guides in Antsiranana have benefited from working with herpetologist Chris Raxworthy over an extended period, and guides in Andasibe who worked with Ian Sinclair are now birdwatchers in their own right. Instead of paying research fees, researchers can become involved in guide training.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 13: Include the option for diversification and specialization in the guide training program (see Section 8.0). A conscious effort should be made to identify specific talents in individual guides, and a list should be compiled of researchers working in protected areas. An invitation should be extended to researchers to use guides as assistants-in-training so that knowledge can be transferred. A small library of field guide books should be made available to guide associations.

4.6 The Adventure Tourists

This is a growing group, and they include mountaineers, white water rafters, and truly off-the-beaten track travelers. The adventure possibilities for the different protected areas need to be investigated. This work will require a visit to the specific areas involved and preferably a trial run to test the feasibility of the idea. The northern part of Isalo might be suitable for off-the-beaten track tourism (e.g., long-distance hiking and mountain biking). River running or rafting in Ranomafana is particularly attractive. Mantadia might consider an overnight experience in an off-the-beaten track locality (it is easy to do this in rainforests because of the thick growth). Adventure tourists also need guides, porters, etc., and these usually come from the community as they will know the area best. Also, the guide/tourist ratio is usually high (e.g., hiking across the Masoala Peninsula will require porters for food and gear).

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 14: Investigate *and test* the adventure tourism potential of the parks and surrounding areas before they are made known through articles in specialized magazines and newsletters.

4.7 A Bigger Slice of the Cake: Under- and Unexploited Markets

Madagascar finds itself near the beginning of a potential rise in international tourism, and no one has any real idea of the dimensions of this potential rise. Thus, a responsible overall planning strategy for the country as a whole, or for ANGAP specifically does not exist. This major failing may affect all parties involved in establishing new parks and building infrastructures.

I studied the *boky volamena* at Hotel les Joyeux Lemuriens, listed by Bradt (Bradt, 1996. *Guide to Madagascar*, Globe Pequot Press) as the most popular hotel in Ranohira. The numbers for 1995 reflect several trends in the frequency of visitors from different countries (Total $n = 437$).

Nationality	Numbers	Percentage
French	228	52
German	47	11
Swiss	29	7
Malagasy	27	6
Italian	26	6
Austrian	13	3
Other*	67	15

*Tourists from the following 15 countries made up 15% of the total, none of them exceeding 3%: Australia, Belgium, Colombia, Ireland (UK), Israel, Japan, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Reunion (France), South Africa, Spain, Sweden, USA.

Many of the nationalities listed less prominently in this table, including some of those listed under the other category, are well-represented elsewhere in the international travel market. Hence, these countries are likely under-represented in Madagascar. This is not a straightforward calculation as many factors influence the frequency of specific nationalities, such as the relative distances between countries of origin and the tourism destination and cultural parameters (the affinity of erstwhile colonial powers for their previous territories). Although there are traditional reasons in some cases for the frequency trends in the table, the gross under-representation of many countries may be gradually rectified by means of marketing strategies directed to them. Specific techniques for targeting a new group involve generic marketing through magazines, etc., and directed marketing by bringing foreign travel brokers and agents into direct contact with key private operators inside the host country.

ANGAP should analyze available data that can be useful in determining the organization's international marketing strategy. At the very least, a similar study to the pilot one above, should be made at every hotel surrounding the protected areas. The frequency data already exist in the *boky volamena* of each hotel and can be collected easily. Slight shifts are expected from cheap to expensive hotels, as some nations have a larger percentage of backpackers, but these shifts are unlikely to wield a large influence on an international marketing strategy. Many factors influence the shape of frequency curves for international visitors, including the steepness of the slope and the real-number position of the ceiling. However, when properly analyzed in conjunction with known trends from other developing world countries, the visitor frequency data can be most useful in calculating approximate expectations in the rise of tourists numbers through the next 5

years. Such projections are critically important for an international marketing strategy. Frequency data can help identify underexploited markets. When compared with frequency data from countries that are further along the tourism development road, the relative gain from targeting the respective under-exploited nationalities can be evaluated so that marketing costs and effort can be optimized.

Visitor frequency data also form the basis for individual parks' marketing strategies (see section on Ranomafana). It is therefore highly recommended that a system be devised by which visitor data are collected efficiently and that such data be analyzed to answer specific questions. Such a project falls outside the current SOW. The broad aims of the project should be to:

- Predict the growth of tourism in the parks with respect to overall visitor frequency and the different classes of tourists (which may require different types of facilities and have different impacts on the parks and the communities affected by them). In addition to those listed previously, there are also cultural tourists, other specialized tourists, leisure tourists, beach tourists, and international and national tourists.
- Enable the ANGAP marketing manager to effectively and optimally target international markets.
- Enable park management to put in place new routes, activities, and facilities to maximize the length of stay in different parks.

The tourism growth study and marketing project would include three parts:

- Set up a system whereby visitor frequency and other relevant data can be collected and stored appropriately, so the data can be used to answer general and specific questions. This part should be started several months ahead of the second part. For instance, all the relevant data should be collected for the last 5 years before analysis commences. A data gathering system would take several days to put in place at the ANGAP head office in Tana, and it is estimated that a field worker would need 2 weeks to gather the data from the four target parks.
- Set up a data analysis system that can provide specific and general trends with respect to visitor frequency projections according to classes of tourists. It is estimated such a project will require 10 days of researcher time with uninterrupted access to the ANGAP marketing manager and the availability of a computer with relevant software.
- Train the marketing manager on how to use the information to optimize national

45

and international marketing strategies. This part of the project will require considerable research into the national and international market, aimed particularly at finding ways of accessing the international market (through articles and advertisements in trade magazines, a web site on the internet, international travel brokers, and so forth). It will also involve bringing the marketing manager into contact with organizations and individuals, such as authors of travel books and articles. Finally the financial manager will need to be assisted in wording and designing the advertisements and aiming them at the correct targets.

4.8 Learning from the Client

There are two direct ways of soliciting information from tourists. One method is to ask them to fill in a questionnaire (see the section on the private sector). This method has several flaws. Many tourists do not like filling in questionnaires, and therefore the data will be biased. Another problem is that the questions invariably lead the response of the tourists so that certain valuable information may not necessarily surface from the answers. This method does, however, give quantitative data that can be useful in park planning and management (see the section on tourism in Scott Grenfell's management plan for Ranomafana).

An informal method is to talk with tourists who often are willing to divulge their story to any patient and interested listener. I prefer this method to using questionnaires because tourists may share important points that are not in a questionnaire. At Isalo, I talked to 21 tourists of British, French, German, South African, and Swiss descent. A quarter of the tourists felt that they might return to Madagascar sometime in the future (Scott Grenfell's data for Ranomafana shows that only 5 percent of visitors to Ranomafana in 1994 were return visitors). At Ranohira, I spoke to 14 visitors: American, British, French, German, Malagasy and Swiss. I felt a lessened need to focus on tourists because previous studies have been done on the region. The general trends were the same as at Isalo. The number of tourists was too small to make a formal analysis, but the following important matters surfaced:

- Most tourists complained about one or other aspect of facilities, particularly toilet or washing facilities.
- About a quarter of the tourists expressed concern about the lack of park management, several using the Piscine Naturelle as an example. Others expressed concern about the carrying capacity of camping facilities in Isalo: it is obvious that access to water is limited and that wood is too scarce to support a massive growth in tourist numbers. India produces large quantities of biogas from cowdung. This could replace wood and also supply fertilizer for vegetable gardens.

- About half of the tourists thought that better and clearer circuits could be developed within the parks.
- About a third of the tourists expressed an interest in the local communities and thought it would be interesting to visit a village and learn more about the local culture.
- Several tourists complained that Madagascar was not only expensive, but that the system was geared to get as much money possible from tourists, sometimes without providing much in return. Hotel les Joyeux Lemuriens is listed as 12,500 fmg a night in the 1994 issue of Hilary Bradt, but a night now costs 25,000 fmg. Virtually all other expenses have risen over the last few years, including food, transport, guide fees, and so on.
- All tourists of the group who said that they might return in the future indicated that they will visit a different region in Madagascar (e.g., the South and the North). This trend has vast implications for marketing. The most obvious one is to develop circuits on a national scale. The development and testing of circuits should be a major priority on a national scale. I discussed three potential circuits with Roger Collinson: a northeastern, northwestern, and mid-southern circuit. However, many other circuits can be developed, and many of them will include sites and areas that do not fall in the parks themselves, but will make the journey between parks more interesting. The national circuit approach opens further avenues of collaboration between the park system and the private sector and should be considered a priority for developing the national park system. These circuits can be tested by means of trial runs.
- About half of the tourists thought that the quality of the guides was seriously lacking, and all of them thought that they would have benefited from a properly trained guide. About a third of the tourists thought that they were being cheated by being forced to hire an inferior guide to be able to enter the parks.

The figures from the Ranomafana Management Plan indicate that tourism will rise sharply in the next few years. Tourism in 1995 increased by 33% over 1994. On average, tourists stayed in town 1.3 nights. If tourism continues to rise exponentially, which cannot be predicted without a more in-depth analysis, and residency time doubles, the tourism pressure on the town in three years will be six times what it is now. This information will be useful to private sectors investors who might be scouting for new hotel localities. ANGAP should have this information available for people who ask for it. Business people should leave the ANGAP office armed not only with maps and a word of encouragement, but also with a general information packet on the Malagasy tourism

industry that includes projections, standards, and guidelines of what may be considered acceptable hotel development along the borders of national parks.

Much more can be learned from the visitors. However, many of them are too tired at night to fill in more than a superficial form. Therefore, the current questionnaire (by Orgasys Consultants et agence d'execution) titled 5 Minutes for Nature distributed by Eau and Forêt and ANGAP is sufficient. The polling through this questionnaire could be done in a pulsed fashion. This pulsed sampling pattern leads to a higher percentage of participants in a narrower time-slot; the year-round sampling effort (for ANGAP and the tourist filling in the questionnaire) is lightened, but valid analysis of time-series trends is still possible. Such data tend to be more reliable than those collected year-round at a lower sampling intensity.

The private sector could be involved in monitoring tourist responses. In addition to each tourist filling in a form, the private sector might be willing to have their tour guides complete a far more elaborate form at the end of each tour. Most operators are acutely aware of their clients' likes and dislikes. For instance, the 5 Minutes for Nature sheet only has very broad questions through which sometimes little information is gained. For example, Question no. 9 asks: "while visiting a park or reserve, the quality of lodging is...", and the respondent is given the following choices: "of little importance, somewhat important, important, and very important." The answer gives no information about what exactly is important in accommodation. The operator will be able to solicit fine details from clients on precisely what is important about accommodation and what is not, and can also collect suggestions.

I suggest that ANGAP produce a modified version of 5 Minutes for Nature with the following questions. The same four categories for response can be used: "of no importance, of little importance, important, and very important." The following is a sample questionnaire.

1. During my stay in Madagascar, visiting a park or natural reserve is:
 - of no importance
 - of little importance
 - important
 - very important

2. During my stay in Madagascar, I will have visited the following parks and reserves:

3. My decision to come to Madagascar was influenced by (Please check all categories that apply):

- friends or relatives who had visited Madagascar
- magazine
- television films
- a tour agent/ operator in my home country
- business
- other professional reasons (please circle one: convention/conference/research/other)

4. I organized my visit to Madagascar...

- through a tour operator in my home country
- through a Malagasy tour operator
- on my own
- other (please specify) _____

5. During my stay in Madagascar, I will visit:

- the north
- the east
- the high plains
- the south
- the west

6. The following factors influence my choice of parks and reserves:

Degree of Importance (1 = highly important; 2 = important, 3 = not very important, 4 = not important)	1	2	3	4
Variety of species				
Presence of lemurs				
Presence of rare or unusual species				
Proximity to the sea				
Range of activities available				
Special activities (climbing, swimming, hiking, birdwatching, whitewater rafting, diving). If other, please specify _____				
Scenery				
Cultural sites nearby (traditional displays, arts and crafts)				
Easy access to the region and the site				

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 15: Approach the private sector, both travel operators and hotel owners, to enlist their involvement in monitoring tourist requirements and experiences. Hoteliers should hand out the questionnaire in Section 4.0 to clients near the end of their stay. The exercise should be pulsed in four periods each year: December and January, March and April, June and July, and September and October. ANGAP should gather the data and store them in a database for analysis that can be done with a simple computer program. The process will yield helpful statistics and internal reports that can influence future actions (e.g., A Survey of South Africa's International Market--Summer 1996, SATOUR, which influences decision making in the South African tourism industry).

5.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To design a survey to assess the standard of travel agents and tour operators in Madagascar and assess their attitude to the facilities and services being offered by ANGAP and the local communities

5.1 The Importance of the Private Sector

In this report, the private sector refers to travel agents, travel brokers, and operators. Travel agents and tourism operators are the direct link between the ANGAP park system and the tourism market place, as they are the channel through which the largest number of tourists come to Madagascar. An optimal relationship between ANGAP and the private sector is highly desirable for the following reasons:

- The private sector can be a vehicle through which ANGAP information is disseminated inside and outside Madagascar (e.g., brochures, marketing videos and presentations at travel conferences). If the private sector supports the park system, it will be able to lessen ANGAP's work with respect to national and international marketing. In fact, if an excellent relationship exists, the private sector will be de facto ambassadors of the park system.
- When properly informed and briefed by ANGAP, the private sector will greatly alleviate certain acute park management problems such as the management of tourists in protected areas (e.g., the behavior of tourists and guides alike, see the section on Ranomafana).
- When members of the Malagasy private sector are proud of their parks and supportive of the park system, they will go out of their way to sustain and sometimes even complement other aspects of ANGAP's work in the park system. For instance, they can make a contribution to those aspects of guide training that pertain to the etiquette of the guides and the way they behave toward the tourists (see guide training).

5.2 Feedback from the Private Sector

The history of the relationship between ANGAP and the private sector is one of disappointment, uncertainty, and sometimes downright hostility. Some operators have expressed the view that they are starting to switch to private parks, or localities where they bypass ANGAP completely, by establishing their own direct relationships with the local communities. Such a trend holds the seeds of endless potential problems for ANGAP's future efficiency by reducing the income of the parks and tarnishing the organization's image with local communities and society at large.

Some of the specific problems and comments listed by the private sector are as follows:

- Operators need brochures that are simple, informative, definitive, yet user-friendly. They are dissatisfied with the current brochures that cost 7,000 fmg. Some operators simply refuse to buy them. Others said that, even if the brochures were free, they would not show them to their clients. Some operators gave specific examples of where the brochures fall short of the mark: the maps show only the general layout of trails, making it impossible for the tourists to figure out exactly where they are on the trail. They feel these brochures are a poor reflection on the industry in Madagascar when compared with brochures from other countries and point out that many of their clients are frequent travelers that are used to a much better product. Some of them would rather make their own brochures (which may lead to problems because the contents may not be what ANGAP wants to have portrayed) than use those supplied by ANGAP.
- Guides fall far short of acceptable standards. They are too expensive, are invariably inferior to their own guides, and some of the better guides are not allowed to work in the parks because they have fallen foul of the official guide associations supported by the park system. Potential for growing conflict between the private sector and the communities will increase when the communities have to rely on their own guides to provide a high quality service.
- Circuits in the parks are poorly developed and, in some cases, may damage the very areas that are supposed to be protected by the park. The Piscine Naturelle and the camping area of Canyon des Singes were cited as examples.
- ANGAP has the dollar sign ingrained in its brain rather than fulfilling the role of protecting the biodiversity that ultimately forms the basis of the Malagasy tourism/ecotourism industry. The perception of exploiting the monetary value of biodiversity instead of protecting biodiversity could become a disaster for ANGAP.
- Because of occasional confusion about entrance fees, operators are sometimes paid twice.
- Generally acceptable infrastructure is largely unobtainable, including camping facilities and road access. Some operators made useful suggestions with respect to cooking and toilet facilities and have indicated that they are now investing in their own infrastructure and support systems rather than depend on ANGAP for these commodities. Consequently, they feel that the entrance prices are too high for what they are getting. Cooking areas are needed. Also, wood is already a problem at Isalo. Like the availability of fresh water, it will be an ever-growing problem for the park system, local communities, and private sector. One operator suggested that tourists

should not use any wood and that operators should buy charcoal in the highlands alongside the roads for use in Isalo. Compacted grass, dried cattle dung, and solar cooking should be investigated as alternative fuel sources.

- ANGAP needs to set up a system that will provide information to operators and travel agents. There are complaints that it is impossible to get useful information out of ANGAP.
- ANGAP is isolated so the private sector never sees it and consequently has a poor idea of what the organization is supposed to do.

5.3 Building a Better Relationship with the Private Sector

Before remedying the relationship between ANGAP and the private sector, ANGAP has to first clarify its own position with respect to the private sector before publicly approaching the sector itself. ANGAP should promptly take the lead in the matter, as the private sector is resourceful and will soon discover powerful ways by which it can force the hand of the park system.

The following steps are essential:

- ANGAP confronts the issue of its relationship with the private sector by starting and keeping up direct talks with private sector representatives.
- ANGAP establishes a system that ensures regular contact with the private sector. For instance, an ANGAP representative could attend the regular (monthly in the on-season, and twice monthly in the off-season) meetings between private operators.
- ANGAP thoroughly introduces itself and its aims to the private sector to eliminate misconceptions as to the role of ANGAP in the development or practice of tourism.
- ANGAP allows the private sector input (not control) into all major decisions (e.g., changes in the entrance fees) that directly or indirectly affect the private sector, so that the private sector can do long-term planning.
- ANGAP asks members of the private sector how ANGAP can help them. This will include a system that can supply up-to-date information.
- ANGAP publishes, or contributes to, a newsletter distributed to the travel and tourism industry, to start lively debate on a variety of issues relating to tourism development.

- A workshop/conference should be organized soon between ANGAP and private sector representatives. During this workshop, problems and potential solutions could be discussed.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 16: Design a plan on how to build better relations with the private sector. This plan has to focus on the immediate future and the medium- and long-term scenario.

5.4 Assessment of the Standard of Tour Operators

It is premature and unwise for ANGAP to survey the private sector in any manner other than informal conversation at this stage. What is essential is that trust is regained between the two parties before ANGAP attempts to survey the private sector by means of questionnaires. Furthermore, it is up to the private sector operators to establish guidelines for the standard of operators. They are in the position to do so because the operators have already organized themselves into several large organizations. ANGAP should obtain a list of the operators in these organizations and then try to identify one or two of the best and most cooperative ones. Their sentiments regarding the standard of their service can then be gauged through careful conversations with them.

The ANGAP representative or consultant doing these conversations should cultivate the desire of the operators to adopt two sets of guidelines. One set of guidelines will relate to the service that operators provide for their clients. These guidelines will involve aspects such as limits on price structures for certain services. It is common for operators in a developing industry to overcharge clients because they are intent on making a quick profit and there is no control. Furthermore, these guidelines must set certain standards on how emergencies are handled and how complaints from tourists can be processed. The operator system needs to be standardized through a licensing system that is tied to a course that all guides must complete before they are certified as guides (e.g., the SATOUR guide system in South Africa). This certification system is not ANGAP's responsibility, but falls in the gambit of the Department of Tourism. However, ANGAP can take the initiative to draw up guidelines for the standard of service.

The second set of guidelines will steer operators toward ecologically sound operations. A set of ecotourism guidelines for operators needs to be drawn up. ANGAP should have a published set of formal guidelines itself before it can impose such guidelines on operators that are active in ANGAP's parks.

Finally, the standard of travel agents can best be assessed by those who receive service from them, namely overseas agents and tourists. Again, surveys in which tourists partake are best done by the industry itself, even if ANGAP was instrumental in drawing up a survey, and can only be done

with the full approval of the industry. Overseas agents can be surveyed without the approval of the private sector, and some of their comments are listed in the following section.

5.5 The Private Sector Outside Madagascar

Work needs to be done in this area, particularly in regard to broad spectrum international marketing and building lasting relationships with key travel agents and brokers. *Madagascar Adventures*, a South African travel agent specializing in Madagascar, had the following comments:

- Madagascar is expensive for what you get.
- Tourists want to enjoy themselves and although many may want to rough it, at the end of the day they want a minimum acceptable standard of luxury.
- Information on the parks, or anything else in Madagascar, is hard to obtain.
- The poverty level is off-putting to many tourists.
- The cadeau syndrome and the quest for easy money will eventually ruin tourism in the country.
- Facilities are substandard.
- About half of their clients complain about various aspects of the facilities or services. Grenfell's management report for Ranomafana claims that 56% of tourists who stayed in hotels complained about some aspect of their accommodation (sample number unclear, but a total of 280 were interviewed).
- The tourism industry inside the country has to improve quickly or tourists will turn to new destinations. Packages to the Comores, inclusive of excellent hotel accommodation and airfare, cost about R3,000 for 8 days. That sum of money includes the trip from Cape Town to Antananarivo but does not allow for much more.
- Safety and the rise in number of confidence tricksters is a growing concern.

Various overseas agents and brokers are all badly in need of information from ANGAP on the different parks, general conditions to be encountered, and potential circuits that can be offered. Travel agents feel that most of their clients who complain had no idea of what to expect beforehand. When travelers are properly briefed beforehand, the chances that they will be disappointed will greatly diminish.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 17: Design a comprehensive plan for internationally marketing the national park system. The marketing campaign should be generic as ANGAP does not have specific packages to offer. This plan should target travel magazines, travel brokers, travel shows, etc. It should have a clear philosophy, a clear set of goals, and a step-by-step approach on how these goals can be achieved in a certain timeframe.

5.6 The Need for Guidelines

All ecotourism destinations controlled by responsible managers have guidelines with which tourism operations must comply. Many operators also have guidelines, and potential customers increasingly discriminate between those who have ecologically and socially acceptable guidelines and those who do not. Guidelines are fundamental tools for influencing the behavior of visitors, including operators, and are designed to reduce tourism's impact on local communities and the natural environment. They are particularly useful, as they perform a role before legally enforceable rules come into play. There are many types of guidelines, depending on the target audience and the message that must be conveyed. There are specific techniques for developing guidelines, and it should be a collaborative process between the various stakeholders.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 18: Develop comprehensive guidelines for operations in areas under ANGAP's control as soon as possible. Developing guidelines for the individual parks should be a collaborative process among communities, the private sector, and ANGAP and should be a systematic process following established techniques. Consider hiring external assistance as soon as possible so these guidelines can be in place by the start of the new year.

6.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To identify future ecotourism opportunities (direct and spin-off) that local communities could potentially exploit

6.1 The Potential for New Facilities and Services

Many opportunities for expanding tourism facilities and activities can directly or indirectly benefit local communities. I discussed all of them with local ANGAP staff, local community leaders, and the president of the committee that oversees the 50% accrued from park entrance fees. The following can be briefly mentioned for Ranohira.

6.1.1 A Community Campground

Ranohira has two accommodation supply problems: in the peak season, little or no accommodation is available, and independent travelers who do not wish to stay in a hotel have nowhere to camp. It is suggested that a community-owned and run campground be put up on the outskirts of Ranohira. The campground at Ranomafana has been fraught with problems. It seems that these problems relate to campground management and not the principle of a community campground. A campground can still belong to the community, in the sense that community members do the work and reap the financial benefits, but it is recommended that ANGAP manage the campgrounds until they run efficiently. Only then can ways be sought to transfer management to a community structure. Hot showers can be offered by means of solar heated bags. As a minimum standard, these campgrounds should have flush toilets and washing facilities with hot and cold running water.

The community campground plan can be used at all national parks, thereby creating a campground network throughout the country that will have an even minimum standard. For example, Kampground of America (KOA), a chain of campgrounds throughout the USA, charges an even rate throughout the country and is well supported by campers and other independent travelers. If communities are not able, or willing, to run these campgrounds, they should remain under the ANGAP's direct control. Such a campground system will increase the attractiveness of Madagascar as a whole to independent travelers, one of the fast-growing groups of ecotourists.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 19: Ensure that all category A protected areas have campgrounds by the end of December 1997. This process will involve the following steps: (1) conducting a simple marketing analysis on the need for such campgrounds so that they are appropriately placed; (2) drawing up a blueprint for the facility which that an appropriate consultant and key operators in the private sector review; (3) drawing up a collaborative agreement with communities that spells out their duties and benefits; (4) constructing the campsites and setting up a simple management regime for each one.

6.1.2 Cultural Tourism

The popularity of cultural and village tourism has risen considerably over the last few years. South Africa is currently enjoying an upsurge in tourism. Cultural tourism villages are found worldwide and provide people with the opportunity to discover the lifestyles of a community different to their own. The Bara communities have tremendous potential for this type of tourism, perhaps most of all along the western border of the park. A visit to Bereketa might provide some insight into the matter. However, this type of venture warrants a consultation on its own, as many factors have to be taken into account to ensure no damage to the community and that the culture is properly presented. Cultural advisors from the communities could be trained to take people around the villages and educate them in the art of spear throwing, rum making, various *fomba*, and other aspects of the Bara culture. A discussion with the VITA staff at Andasibe-Mantadia revealed that similar possibilities exist for at least some villages surrounding Mantadia.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 20: Investigate the feasibility of a cultural village in Isalo and Andasibe. The study would involve a simple market analysis; costing exercise; and a system of checks and balances, including the screening of clients, that will strive to limit cultural erosion and increase benefit to the included communities. The project must then be tested by way of a series of trial runs.

6.1.3 Music Shows

Ranohira has great potential for music shows. In fact, a person from one of the travel agencies regularly arranges for local bands to perform for his clients. Several artists in Antananarivo would be willing to assist in this, if necessary, and television journalists would be willing to give exposure to such a system. These artists can also be involved in a variety of environmental education projects.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 21: Compose a list of musicians in the areas neighboring the parks, and investigate the possibility of involving them as a tourism attractions. This can be done in conjunction with the private sector, or as part of an environmental education campaign (Section 10.0).

6.1.4 Specialized Circuits

Specialized circuits such as botany tours need to be developed. Numerous plants occur only in Isalo, or in that part of the world. These specialized markets are often surprisingly large and fairly easy to target via trade publications, institutions, and club newsletters. Madagascar has numerous returned experts, including botanists, and these people can be drawn into a plan to develop specialized circuits.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 22: Draw up a list of potential specialized circuits, and identify key individuals that can play a role in these specialized circuits. For instance, botany tours are a growing activity, and Madagascar's national parks are an ideal venue for these tours. One South African company already offers botany tours in Madagascar. ANGAP must make a list of botanical curiosities in the Category A parks and make this list available to botanical clubs in overseas countries. As guardians of the national parks, ANGAP has the responsibility to disseminate such information to potential users. A botanical tour is only one example of specialized tours. Specialized circuits can be listed in an ANGAP book on the national parks, such as the now outdated book written by Olivier Langrand.

6.1.5 Fruit and Vegetable Farming

Local communities can grow produce for tourists to eat. The potential is enormous and a ready market exists. Although Ranohira is in a relatively dry region, the rainfall is sufficient to grow rice and therefore almost any other vegetable. To induce the area to grow fresh produce for its own use as well as for the tourist market is a considerable project in itself. At the moment, virtually all the fresh produce is brought all the way from Fianarantsoa and Toliara. Some or all of the following entities can be involved in planning such a venture: the various community leadership structures, the Malagasy NGO Taratra, the Roman Catholic church, ANGAP staff responsible for education and development, and the private sector. One of the managers of Relais de la Reine mentioned that he will encourage staff to grow vegetables.

A small unit could be created to travel to the different parks, introduce the idea to local communities, and provide basic knowledge on watering and composting. The project can be very successful in areas where a significant amount of tropical land exists that needs to be rehabilitated. One potential product is macadamia nuts (such projects are highly successful in the subtropical northwest part of South Africa), or African ground nuts, that are suited to a variety of tropical soils, are easily cultivated, provide a significant source of protein, can be stored easily, and are popular with tourists. Several local NGOs specializing in agriculture could be involved in such a project.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 23: Instigate a system whereby local communities can grow vegetables for the tourism market. This will involve a small analysis of the market, which can be done by approaching hotel owners and discussing their needs with them, followed by setting up an agricultural training corps to visit areas neighboring parks and engaging communities into cultivating these products.

6.1.6 Arts and Crafts

The area has some potential for arts and crafts, but sometimes expectations can be too high. Undoubtedly, much can be learned from the Ranomafana Craft venture that can be applied to

Isalo as well. Crafts could be sold from the interpretation center rather than from a separately located craft center like in Ranomafana. This will help combat the notion that the park is for strangers and that the local people are losing out, particularly if the interpretation center is going to be away from the town itself. Some crafts are currently for sale in the park office in Ranohira, but much can be learned about properly displaying the wares. This issue probably falls in the gambit of the new interpretation center and not the current consultation.

6.1.7 Peripheral Zone Circuits

The potential for a peripheral zone circuit certainly exists near the villages of Ambatovy and Ranomena. The landscape is striking and the devastation of the forest alarming. At least one traditional medicine man displays a broad knowledge of medicinal plants. It is easy to make a display of these plants or plant some in a little garden. A cooperative of eight women runs a highly successful presentation near La Selva in Costa Rica. An 84-year-old man plays traditional instruments, an art he has learned from his grandmother. Rice is harvested in a traditional manner. The success of this circuit will entirely depend on the guide's knowledge and his ability and training to convey a proper humans-and-the-environment perspective to the tourist. If one such circuit is sufficiently successful, it can easily be extended to other borders of the park.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 24: Conduct a feasibility study on the potential peripheral zone circuit *before* its installation. The study should include: (1) an estimate of the number of tourists that will use the circuit; (2) specific products and services that can be developed for this particular circuit; (3) an overall cost analysis. The cost might be small enough to be funded by the development committee. Some of the proceeds from the circuit can go back to the fund. The study could probably be done within a week. When the study has been done and the circuit is in place, an ecotourism trial run should be conducted to identify problems and find ways to solve them.

7.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To identify the obstacles currently limiting the improvement of standards and the expansion of the range of ecotourism facilities, products, and services provided by local communities (e.g., finance, skills, awareness of opportunities, land tenure, ability to manage small businesses, legislation)

7.1 Ecotourism as a Tool for Development

Madagascar has everything necessary for a flourishing tourism industry in terms of landscapes, biodiversity, history, and cultural diversity. The Malagasy people are hard-working and innovative. However, many obstacles stand in the way of development in the areas surrounding the parks. Many of these obstacles are common in developing countries. By promoting community ecotourism, ANGAP can therefore be an important agent facilitating responsible development in rural Madagascar. The following sections discuss some of the obstacles that ANGAP can alleviate.

7.2 The Lack of Start-Up Capital for Small Entrepreneurs

Lack of start-up capital impedes many tourism projects. This may be capital needed to buy a boat (as is the case of the Guide Association in Maroanstratra, so guides do not depend on boats owned by wealthy shop owners who charge exorbitant prices for the short trip to Nosy Mangabe) or install a septic tank in a small hotel. For example, the Hotel du Center is entirely acceptable except for a toilet problem. It took the hotel 2 years to raise 8,000,000 fmg to install acceptable facilities. During that time, the hotel lost many potential clients to a hotel owned by nonlocal expatriates. A system by which small loans are granted to promising projects needs to be put in place. As an added advantage, the loan officer can view the project and give advice to the entrepreneur or find out how advice to solve certain problems can be obtained. Many foundations and trusts in South Africa grant small loans to promising individuals. The road to choosing applicants, safeguarding loans, and overcoming other obstacles, is a well-trodden one and can easily be applied in rural Madagascar.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 25: Act as a facilitator between commercial banks and community entrepreneurs to ensure that small loans at moderate rates are granted for start up capital to develop ecotourism facilities, services and products. ANGAP must also act as a facilitator between development donors/NGOs and community entrepreneurs to set up foundations and trusts for the granting of small loans at moderate interest rates. Mr. Eugene Ecot, with his banking background, ought to be an ideal person to receive proposals and coordinate such projects.

7.3 The Problem of Communication

Many hotels in the rural areas have no communications with the travel agents or any other part of

the client base. This was a common complaint in Isalo. ANGAP could install a system whereby its radio communications with the parks can be used to fill this gap until another solution can be found. The National Park Andasibe-Mantadia already provides a partial service in this regard. This will obviously cultivate goodwill from small hotel owners.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 26: Offer travel agents, tourist operators, and tourist service providers a tourist reservation service via ANGAP's radio communications network with the parks.

7.4 Tourist Information Needs

Information probably is one of the most sought-after items by tourists. They need information before they can even start to plan their visit to a foreign destination. Many tourists are quickly turned away from a destination when they cannot find any information on it. Therefore, ANGAP's tourism communication strategy should not be restricted to interpretation centers in the parks, but must reach far across international borders. I recommend the following:

- **Infoshops:** rather than concentrate on ecoshops, which may infringe on the private sector as well as communities, ANGAP should concentrate on infoshops that provide visitors with up-to-date information on topics of interest. Information is also a commodity and is more important than badges and logos to most visitors. Infoshops have more priority than ecoshops, but ideally they can be combined.
- **Newsletter:** The idea of a newsletter that updates travel books, which are frequently reprinted, is discussed elsewhere. Newsletters by other national park organizations can serve as examples.
- **Call-in line:** ANGAP should have a call-in line manned by an informed person who knows how to match inquiries with information.
- **Travel magazines:** Many travel magazines, when approached properly, will assist travel writers financially to visit destinations and write about them. The same goes for airlines.
- **Travel books:** The business of travel books is to sell information to potential tourists. Great potential exists for collaboration between ANGAP and agencies that publish travel books.
- **A somewhat technical book on the national parks:** This is an absolute must. It is ironic that most travel agencies still depend on Olivier Langrand's excellent but outdated book on the protected areas of Madagascar.

- **A glossy book on Madagascar and the national parks:** This is also a must, and the project can be done in conjunction with the Maison du Tourisme.
- **A Madagascar parks information packet:** This must be drawn up and sent to key entities in the travel industry, such as agents, brokers, and magazines.
- **Word wide web:** ANGAP could design a home page with park descriptions and a section with the latest information. I have already discussed this possibility with various ANGAP staff.

These points are not an exhaustive list of information campaign possibilities. They should, however, be part of an overall information strategy devised by ANGAP.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 27: Develop an institutional capacity to meet the growing demand for information from tourists and other stakeholders in the industry. To meet this need, it is essential to recruit at least two more people with communication/publication skills. The communications department must urgently devise a short-term and long-term strategy for a tourism information campaign, as well as install a permanent communication mechanism to disseminate relevant information to a variety of users. The idea is not to randomly disseminate information, but to follow a strategy based on a thorough investigation on what information is needed, and by whom.

7.5 Private Sector Information Needs

I encountered five people from the private sector who required information from ANGAP about the potential for investing in the tourism industry. They included one entrepreneur from Sambava, one from Maroantsetra, one with Tana with extensive links in the United States, as well as two potential investors from Antananarivo who requested to remain anonymous. They all had somewhat different requirements regarding the kind of information they needed. This sample size is too small to determine exactly what information must be included in an ANGAP dossier for private investors, but it will include at least the following broad issues:

- Tourism statistics for the last 5 years in the protected areas;
- ANGAP's 5-year plan for its own expansions (e.g., the locations of new parks);
- A list of ANGAP reports that may be useful to investors;
- Logistical help that ANGAP might be able to provide;
- Other services that ANGAP might be able to provide, for instance an escorted tour of

the area with the park manager and community leaders;

- Other information that ANGAP might be willing to provide, for instance detailed maps of the areas and demographic data; and
- Guidelines as to what type of developments are discouraged or encouraged in areas surrounded the protected areas.

As the main agent in the protected areas under its control, ANGAP has the power to significantly steer development in a responsible direction by providing potential private investors with appropriate information. At all times, ANGAP and private investors must consult with local communities to make sure that developments are acceptable to them.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 28: Increase institutional capacity to provide the information the private sector needs to improve and extend its range of facilities/products/services. To accomplish this goal, the Ecotourism Department could shift its emphasis from developing a business strategy to providing the vital information without which all the relevant parties cannot function optimally. The informational needs of the private sector, especially entrepreneurs, need to be thoroughly investigated so that an information package can be assembled to meet their needs.

7.6 The Need for Acceptable Facilities

Tourists need a minimum standard of facilities to enjoy their visit. Some of these have already been discussed elsewhere. A two-prong attack is suggested. First, the parks must improve their facilities. Second, the local communities, encouraged by the parks' actions and acting on information supplied by the park staff, must be encouraged to improve their facilities. Informed park staff (particularly the person responsible for development) can also be an information source to outside entrepreneurs.

7.6.1 Facilities Inside the Park

The majority of international tourists accept a basic standard of facilities: (1) clean toilet facilities, (2) clean water coming out of a tap, and (3) hygienic and practical cooking facilities. The lack of these most basic facilities will invariably put a ceiling on tourism growth and will lead to environmental degradation and even social conflict with communities whose resources might be affected (e.g., the campground at Canyon des Singes in Isalo). ANGAP will find many examples of destinations in developing countries where these problems have been solved satisfactorily.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 29: Take relevant ANGAP staff to selected out-of-the-way parks in South Africa, where problems about park facilities have already been solved. Such parks

include an array of provincial and municipal parks. ANGAP staff should visit parks that are far more similar to Madagascar than Kruger National Park or Tsitsikamma. ANGAP must ensure that each of its category A parks constructs the following facilities before the end of 1997: campgrounds and picnic sites with flush toilets, showers with hot and cold water, and cooking facilities. A user-friendly information/reception center *geared toward tourists* should also be considered an essential facility.

7.6.2 Facilities Outside the Parks

The need for training seminars, and a corps that goes around to small hotels has already been discussed. A special package should be created to help individuals in the community who want to become involved in providing facilities for tourism development. The Communications Department can produce a video with the help of a consultant.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 30: Develop an information package consisting of a video, basic pictures, and guidelines for small entrepreneurs interested in providing tourism facilities in the areas neighboring the parks. ANGAP can offer simple extension services to the private sector, which will include taking promising entrepreneurs to see examples of facilities and building sites, as well as providing hands on technical advice for establishing toilet facilities and supplying water and electricity. ANGAP must also compile and hand out manuals on the technical specifications for the building of essential services.

7.7 The Need for Acceptable Services

See Sections 7.6.1 and 7.6.2. The same rules apply to services as to facilities.

7.8 The Need for a Constructive Relationship between the Private Sector and Communities

The private sector and communities can cooperate strongly. Many communities in Madagascar already benefit directly from the presence of a benevolent private sector initiative. The private sector and communities need guidance on how to optimize the benefits from a constructive relationship between them.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 31: Draw up a document that explains the advantages of local community/private sector collaboration, with guidelines and examples of how this could be achieved. A video produced by the Communications Department might be helpful in this regard.

7.9 The Need for Designing National and Regional Ecotourism Circuits

An ecotourism circuit means a specific route that can be completed in a set time period to see a

certain set of phenomena/areas/species. The most common discussion with tourists concerned where they should go to see what and how long it will take them. As a parks organization, ANGAP should compile this type of information and present it in a way that tourists can use.

ANGAP needs to market ecotourism circuits that string individual parks together. Many travel industry people and tourists prefer to think in terms of circuits: for instance, a route over a 2-week period that includes certain parks and even attractions outside parks. If ANGAP takes the circuit marketing approach, it will be able to influence the volume and types of visitors to certain parks, or sections in parks, thereby accomplishing park management at a level that is super-imposed on the management of individual parks. The approach also allows ANGAP to put a flavor to specific regions. If this is done cleverly, tourists who travel in the dry south circuit one year might choose the green northeast circuit the following year. Regional ecotourism circuits are one way of increasing the time spent in a particular area.

Recommended action # 32: Consider hiring external assistance to design ecotourism circuits that make practical sense and at the same time promote maximum overall ecological insight into Madagascar. The consultant should be intimately familiar with Madagascar and the tourism industry. Afterward, the consultant should work with the Communications Department to present these circuits in a marketable form by means of booklets, videos, etc.

7.10 The Need for a Marine Component in the National Park System

The ANGAP Protected Areas system should include a marine park. Worldwide, coastal ecotourism is the fastest growing branch of ecotourism. Madagascar is in direct competition with the Comores, Mauritius, and Kenya, all of whom have fine offerings to the visitor in terms of marine attractions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 33: Promote the immediate inclusion of a marine park into the ANGAP system. Marine parks under investigation should include not only those properly delineated ones on the Masoala Peninsula, but also community parks and educational reserves without official status. Entities outside of ANGAP can run some of these, but they will officially can remain under the flag of ANGAP.

7.11 Anticipated Future Obstacles

One problem with growing ecotourism destinations is that planners neglect to investigate the negative effects of growth ahead of time, so that deleterious influences appear too late to do anything about them. If this growth and associated effects are rapid, the destination can be severely damaged, often beyond repair. These deleterious effects can appear far more quickly than people think, and proper planning beforehand can alleviate these influences or avoid them altogether. Many developing countries are faced with the same problems that exist in Madagascar,

and alternative but appropriate technologies should be developed before the last piece of wood is picked up to cook a tourist's meal in Isalo.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 34: Conduct a study of the expected negative influences of tourism growth on the protected areas and the communities surrounding them. These include obvious issues such as the availability of firewood and water and the cultural erosion so commonly displayed by traditional communities coming into contact with western-style development and consumerism too quickly. This study needs a plan of action on how these influences can be mitigated in the short-, medium-, and long-term.

7.12 List of Current Obstacles

The following table lists current obstacles, their degree, and potential solutions.

List of Current Obstacles:

THE NEED	THE STATUS	THE SOLUTION
Start-Up capital for small entrepreneurs	Very difficult to secure. No facilitation available.	ANGAP can facilitate between entrepreneurs and banks as well as NGOs, trusts and foundations
Communication for service/facility providers in the industry	Very difficult. Usually indirect and insufficient.	ANGAP can provide the service with its radio network.
Information for tourists on Parks	Very little available. Often outdated or incorrect. Not user-friendly.	ANGAP must build its capacity to supply the needed information, through staff increases, the production of a book and pamphlets, etc. Must also investigate mechanisms of designating information overseas.
Information for Private Sector	Almost nothing available.	ANGAP must build its capacity to supply the required information.. Must find out what information is needed, and by whom.
Facilities Inside the Parks	Totally substandard for international tourism.	ANGAP must focus strongly on putting in place internationally acceptable facilities by the end of 1997 in all it category A parks.
Facilities Outside the Parks	Highly variable from upmarket to below standard.	ANGAP must use all available methods to disseminate information and supply technical know-how and skills.
Essential Services	Highly variable and difficult for tourists to access.	ANGAP must survey essential services such as medical care that is available to tourists, and must make every effort to have them improved and made accessible to tourists.
A constructive Relationship with the Private Sector and communities	Promising but underdeveloped.	ANGAP must follow required actions in this report regarding the communities and the Private Sector.
National and Regional Ecotourism Circuits	Poorly developed and difficult for tourists to figure out.	ANGAP must list the help of a consultant to design these circuits, and to publicize them properly.
A marine component in the park system.	Almost non-existent.	ANGAP should have the marine reserves on Masoala be officially declared, and should immediately enlist consultants to help them to design a national system of marine parks.
Anticipation of Future Obstacles for planning preventive action.	No planning.	ANGAP must identify and plan for future obstacles now

8.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To provide ANGAP with recommendations on how to improve standards and expand the range of ecotourism facilities, products, and services provided by local communities

This report contains recommendations on how to facilitate the development of ecotourism facilities, products, and services. Because it is a complicated problem requiring various types of attention, this section deals specifically with improving guide services.

8.1 Toward a Solution to the Guide Problem

The solution to the guide problem is not immediately obvious, perhaps because everyone has an opinion on this. Some people advocate including guides into the park system as ANGAP staff (Scott Grenfell's management plan for Ranomafana), so they can be properly controlled. Others feel this will solve nothing and will lead to conflict between local communities and the parks. Some people feel there should only be one guide association, while others feel that anyone should be allowed to be a guide provided that they are knowledgeable.

The following sections discuss two broad facets to finding a solution to the guide problem.

8.1.1 Clarifying the Guides' Position in the System

According to the park director, the problems relate mostly to money: the lure of short-term profit versus long-term sustainable income. Also, the guides arrived first on the scene when there were no regulations and made the territory their own. Including the guide association in the private sector has several advantages: the guides will have to become more competitive, and they will have to abide by the rules the same way the rest of the private sector. It is therefore important for all players to understand exactly where they fit into the picture. In reality, ANGAP is currently providing shelter to the guide associations through the requirement that all visitors must have a local guide. This rule will have to go if the quality of guides does not improve, as certain private sector operators already have the capacity to train high-quality guides for specific parks. This message should go through clearly to the guide associations.

Unfortunately, it is not clear to all staff inside ANGAP precisely what their mandate is with respect to the park. I have the greatest respect for the enthusiasm and diligence of park staff. However, I have come across the attitude a few times, at least once expressed in the exact words by a high ranking official, that the parks belong to ANGAP. This is of course not the case, and should never be the case.

The following notions should be cultivated across the board:

- The park management is not the *owner* of the park. All the people of Madagascar,

not only the local communities, are the *owners* of the park (that is why it is called a *national* park).

- The park management is the *guardian* of the park, and hence has a heavy responsibility to all the people of Madagascar to do this job properly. This means they have to regulate park users in the best interest of the well-being of the park, including the guides, the private sector and the communities.

These notions should be cultivated in park staff, communities, guides, visiting tourists, and private sector users of the park. Unless everyone agrees to this general view, problems will continue to surface. The message can be easily conveyed through an educational film that can be shown widely in the communities of all three target areas. My previous experience with educational films shows that they are a highly effective tool in the Malagasy countryside. For example, a film on marine resource use made on the Masoala Peninsula was extremely popular with the fishermen and other groups in Maroantsetra and stimulated a terrific amount of discussion at meetings. With the proper guidance, ANGAP communications staff can make this film can be in-house in Hi 8 format.

It is essential that all park staff, including guides and guards, be thoroughly versed in the previously mentioned philosophy. The philosophy should be discussed with guides before it is officially aired through films and posters.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 35: Make an educational film to convey the position and roles of the park management, guides, local communities, tourists, and the private sector to all interested and affected parties. This film should be shown widely in all community outlets.

8.1.2 Guide Training

Creating an educational film is only a prerequisite to solving the guide problem. If all players do not understand exactly where they fit in, there can be no solution. The real solution is more closely related to the essence of the problem: the guides have received only rudimentary training, and sometimes no training at all. Unless guides are properly trained, there will never be a solution to the many complaints or any of the other problems.

To reiterate, for tourists, the guides are the closest interface with the park system. Guides can make or break a tourist's experience of Madagascar. Any effort or money invested in their training is therefore extremely well-spent. It is recommended that a consultant investigate the practicalities of an all-encompassing training program for guides that will have lasting effects on the tourism industry. The training program should aim to produce high-quality guides that are thoroughly versed in six important aspects:

- Guides must have international language skills. There is no short cut to this. In addition to Malagasy, they need to speak French and English fluently. Organizations such as the Peace Corps can potentially be involved in giving language lessons to guides, but this should be organized properly and not regarded as a side-line activity. The language training has to be a committed effort, and basic books need to be made available to guides.
- Guides must have ecological training that extends beyond the names of organisms. They need, for instance, to understand the difference between primary and secondary forests and must have a solid grasp of the structural and functional aspects of the ecology of the park they work in (e.g., the canopy and leaf litter in forests). The international ecotourism market is a sophisticated one, and poorly informed guides have long become unacceptable.

Park management, other guides, and travel agents consider Mr. Fidy to be the best guide in Ranomafana. I took a walk with him in the forest, and Fidy understood that he was going to be rated (he invited me to do this, to confirm his position as the best guide in spite of his problems with park management). When compared with the best guides in the developing world that I know, namely those at La Selva in Costa Rica, Mr. Fidy rates a solid 3 out of 10 (where La Selva guides are given 10 out of 10). As in the case of many other guides, it must be pointed out that he has terrific potential given the proper training.

- Guides must be trained in how to handle tourists properly. Well-mannered guides make a good impression on tourists and contribute to their enjoyment and feeling of safety. Simple techniques are available to check on a client's well-being and pace the tour appropriately. Guides must understand what clients want and be able to give it to them - within reason, of course, which means guides must know where to draw the line and must be empowered to do so. They must have a good notion of personal hygiene and what standards are acceptable to their clients.
- Guides must be trained in the guidelines of acceptable behavior required by ANGAP for visitors to the protected areas. Guidelines are written to solicit cooperation. If followed, they protect the area and increase the enjoyment of present and future visitors to the park. During their training, guides must be subjected to discussions on guidelines.

Guidelines must not be drawn up in a casual manner. I found useful and practical guidelines to be largely lacking in a recent survey of over 200 ecotourism operators and organizations involved in ecotourism. Most guidelines were either too general or too specific to be useful and some were clearly contradictory. Special techniques are

now available for drawing up guidelines so the reader will interpret and use them correctly.

- Guides need to have some knowledge of at least the other priority parks in Madagascar. Good guides have the power to influence tourists to visit other parks and can even tell them about certain differences that they can look out for.
- Guides need to be trained in basic first aid. As the volume of tourists increases, the day will come when guides will have to cope with clients that are affected by heat stroke, broken limbs, and a variety of other ailments. The guide needs to know precisely how to act in certain emergencies.

A consultant should investigate the practical aspects of a guide training program. The private sector might be willing to contribute to training guides on how to convey tourists, the Peace Corps has indicated that it might be willing to be involved in language lessons, and graduate students have indicated that they might be willing to be involved in biodiversity training. It is also recommended that a definitive manual be written for park guides in Madagascar, with a special section for each park, and that a training corps be established that will train guides on a continuing basis. Guide training is not a one-time, quick-fix type of issue. The need for guide training will continue to grow for many years to come. It is recommended that a guide rating system be investigated. Such a system can provide the opportunity of advancement for promising guides, and has a built-in mechanism of vested interests and control. On a horizontal plane, there can be different types of guides: specialized guides, general guides, etc.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 36: Devise and implement a comprehensive guide training system as soon as possible. This work should not simply be passed off to one of the current ANGAP staff as a part-time engagement. The current staff are already thoroughly committed, and guides cannot be trained by people who have not had guide training themselves. The work will involve designing a curriculum for guides, writing training materials such as manuals, making in-house training films under the guidance of a training specialist, and establishing a small corps of qualified and experienced trainers who can visit the different parks.

Once a training system has been established, other aspects of organizing guides will come into play. This would include rating systems, a register of guides that have undergone training to be distributed to the private operators, and so forth. The fees charged by properly trained guides are not an arbitrary matter and should be worked out taking into account the economic situation inside Madagascar and practices in the international arena.

9.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: To provide a policy framework for reconciling ANGAP's financial sustainability strategies and private sector involvement policies with the objective of encouraging communities to benefit from their direct participation in ecotourism opportunities

ANGAP is unclear about the what emphasis to place on making money from the parks. One line of thinking is that ANGAP should concentrate on running the parks effectively to protect biodiversity, rather than on making money from the parks. If it runs the parks well, it should be able to get funds from the conservation community way into the future. Another line of thinking is that ANGAP must devise a variety of strategies to earn money, so it can be financially sustainable in the future and need not necessarily depend on overseas funding.

The best road to take probably lies somewhere in between. However, to make recommendations, the following topics will first have to be studied in detail:

What are the medium and long range forecasts for funding from the international conservation community?

Currently, a great deal of money is available from the international community for well-managed projects, and if ANGAP acquits itself properly of its task of conserving biodiversity, it probably can be assured of receiving sufficient operational money for some time into the future. Under this scenario, ANGAP's sustainability strategy can likely be tied largely to aid and donor money, at least for the foreseeable future.

Certain people close to USAID were willing to place a figure of 10 years on the current availability level of money for conservation purposes. It would be irresponsible to predict guaranteed ongoing funds before consulting with representatives of all the relevant parties, such as USAID, the World Bank, the European Community, conservation foundations, and NGOs, to name only a few. It will be risky to depend heavily on a guaranteed inflow of world conservation money into ANGAP for the long-term future. The reasons are as follows:

- Government aid money, as well as private donor money for conservation purposes, is strongly tied to the well-being of the economy of individual countries and larger financial communities, such as the European Community. Even economists find it difficult to predict where countries will stand economically, say, 50 years from now.
- Many other areas in the world have desperate and rising conservation and sustainable development needs. Some of these countries have been ignored until now, for reasons relating to security of conservation and development workers. Angola and various other African countries are good examples. Many other countries also contain unique biodiversity. In other words, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to predict the

proportional future spread of conservation community money over the various needy targets.

- Inside Madagascar, numerous areas other than those run by ANGAP have desperate and rising conservation needs. I expect an increasing interest in protected areas by private business, private foundations, and various NGOs, all of whom are in potential competition with ANGAP for funds from the world conservation community.
- There is an increasing tendency to invest conservation money into enterprises that have a chance of becoming financially sustainable so that they will not continue to drain conservation funds into the future. It will therefore be important for ANGAP to show that it has its own strong financial sustainability strategy.

For these reasons and others, it is important for ANGAP to develop strategies that will lead to financial sustainability. However, to neglect the primary role of a national parks organization in pursuit of money-making mechanisms will be a fatal mistake (See *The Role of a National Parks Organization*, by R.F.H. Collinson).

9.1 ANGAP's Financial Sustainability Strategy

Can ANGAP as an organization be financially sustainable? This question is central to the current debate occurring inside ANGAP, as well as among outside parties involved with the organization. Certain issues need to be grasped fully before this question can be answered responsibly.

- The question of financial sustainability is meaningless unless it is viewed in terms of the role of a national parks organization. These roles have been discussed clearly in the document *The Role of a National Parks Organization*, by Roger Collinson. Unless ANGAP fully embraces these roles, and each one is executed properly, the question of financial sustainability will become irrelevant because the organization will have failed in terms of the purpose for which it was originally created. The purpose of the national parks organization is not to make money, but *to conserve biodiversity and landscape, together with other objects of scientific or cultural interest, for the long-term sustained benefit of the nation*. ANGAP as a parks organization is therefore a guardian of these unique and irreplaceable assets of the country of Madagascar. This purpose of the parks organization therefore differs totally from that of a hotel or tourism company, which is solely to make money for its owners. It is essential that ANGAP focuses first and foremost on *effective park management*, and the *provision of certain essential services and facilities* necessary for the proper functioning of national parks. These two tenets are the foundation upon which rest the protection of biodiversity, development of a park-based tourism industry,

development of communities, and a pervasive environmental education program that is urgently needed in Madagascar, like in most other countries.

- However, it is expensive to establish and maintain a national parks system, and expenses will increase with the proclamation of each new national park. To counter these rising costs does not mean that ANGAP must focus its vision on becoming a business and divert its energies accordingly. Instead, the organization must position itself in a way that will allow itself to fulfill its prime roles as best as possible, while at the same time making sure that it has an excellent working relationship with the communities surrounding the parks, and taking full benefit from the private sector's interest in the parks. The park system therefore acts as a framework that optimizes the benefits of all the parties concerned, and, in doing so, the parks organization will strengthen its own position and maximize its own financial benefits. This can be best illustrated by the diagram on the next page.

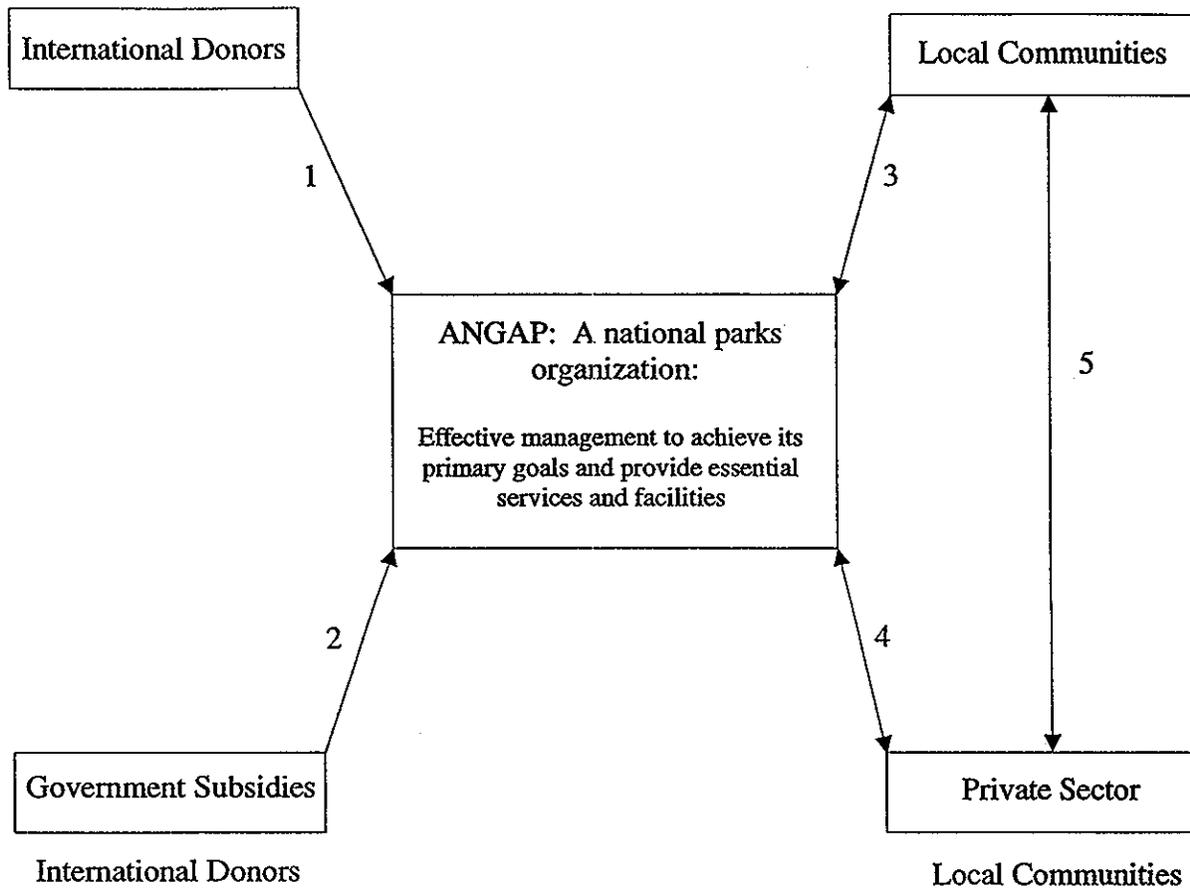
The current SOW calls for the consultant to provide a policy framework for reconciling ANGAP's financial sustainability strategies and private sector involvement policies with the objective of encouraging communities to benefit from their direct participation in ecotourism opportunities.

Regarding communities: This report contains many recommended actions that will increase the benefit for communities from their direct participation in ecotourism opportunities. It is recommended that the fifty percent of entrance fees going to the development committee be set up in a trust and managed properly with sustainability in mind, which means that an appropriate amount has to be put aside each year with the purpose of earning interest that can be applied to future developments. This conservative approach will help guard against future trends such as fluctuations in the income from park entrance fees. The fund therefore will take the legal form of a trust.

True ecotourism is defined as tourism practiced in a way that protects the world's remaining wild places and sustains indigenous peoples. Communities should be encouraged as far as possible to cater for the backpacking and adventure market, as well as the true ecotourist, by providing services such as campsites. However, when communities are not successful in managing such campsites effectively, ANGAP needs to step in by giving advice, or even by managing the campsite. Even when ANGAP manages the campgrounds, communities can still derive benefits. For instance, community members can provide services such as cleaning or providing fresh produce, water, and wood.

ANGAP could establish a nationwide campground network, as discussed earlier, and gradually involve communities so they can take over the management entirely. ANGAP will then be able to charge a levy on these campgrounds for establishing them in the first place, providing marketing

Diagram Showing Optimal Functioning of ANGAP as a National Parks Organization



1. International donors provide funding to the parks organization that shows a strong promise of fulfilling primary conservation goals.
2. The government will legally protect and may even financially subsidize a properly functioning national parks organization.
3. Local communities must derive benefits from the park system, and, in turn, they can make various contributions to enhance its success.
4. The private sector needs an efficient national parks organization that will bring tourists to the parks as well as other benefits.
5. When the system functions properly, the private sector and local communities can benefit and avoid conflict.

services, specialized expertise when necessary, and playing a supervisory role.

Regarding the private sector, ANGAP needs to follow up on other exciting possibilities for financial sustainability. Communities can also benefit directly from the following types of arrangements that can be made between ANGAP and the private sector:

- Granting sole-right concessions of certain park areas to qualified private concerns. This means that private operators will pay money to have the sole operating rights in a certain section of a park. This is no different than the multiple-use zoning of a park into areas that are set aside for total preservation, research, low-intensity ecotourism, or areas in which high carrying capacity management is applied to handle mainstream tourism. All three parks have great potential in this regard, as does Ankarana. The northern section of Isalo, as well as the southwestern border, might be particularly suitable in this regard. The practice of awarding concessions to qualified interests on a time lease basis is becoming increasingly popular in the developing world and has shown some spectacular successes.
- Temporarily farming out entire parks to qualified private concerns must be considered. There are far more parks than ANGAP has the capacity to manage at present. One solution is to hand the parks over to other entities for interim management. This type of arrangement might apply particularly to specialized parks, smaller parks, or parks that are in remote locations. Strict guidelines have to be drawn up for these types of arrangements, and work on these guidelines should start immediately. These guidelines must include the need for community involvement and the possibilities for benefits to the communities surrounding these areas. ANGAP can still retain full legal control over the park. ANGAP will take the full credit by having its logo prominently displayed. Checks and balances must be built in that will enable ANGAP to take back the park if it is not run according to previously established guidelines.

In essence, these type of agreements are not very different from the arrangements regarding parks currently being run by ICDPs, except that the contractor is a private entity with a firm financial interest in the project. The other differences are that such arrangements tend to be long-term as the investing company would like enough time to see a return for its money and effort. One common complaint of failed ICDPs is that they did not have enough time to do the project properly and that the unpredictability of funding precluded any long-term planning.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 37: Commission guidelines for options such as granting concessions, other special operating rights, and park management by outside interests. Guidelines and policies need to be ready in the near future so ANGAP's negotiating position with private

sector investors will not be weakened.

- Filming fees are a potential source of income for ANGAP. A filming policy needs to be worked out carefully, so that the free advertisement that comes with documentary films will not be jeopardized. The Communications Department can also make a short video promoting the parks as localities where commercials (advertising films) can be filmed. This video can be sent to appropriate agents overseas. Taping advertising films provides considerable revenue to parks elsewhere, as these films are commercial with high budgets. Many European and American companies come to South Africa to make commercials during the northern hemisphere winter, and Madagascar with its unique landscapes has much to offer for commercials and feature films. For example, *Gorillas in the Mist* earned Rwanda a sum of \$1,000,000 for a location fee.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 38: Investigate the film potential of ANGAP's parks. This includes drawing up a policy for charging filmmakers, which should not be simply taking over the policy of another park's system (although such policies can be compared) and preferably should be developed with the input of the filming sector. It will also include a small campaign that the Communications Department can create in-house to introduce the filming potential of the parks to relevant interests. *Most of all, it must be made easy for filmmakers to acquire permission, and fees must not be prohibitive, or they will find better and easier-to-use localities.*

- Tourists need to acquire certain products while visiting Madagascar. One such product is a beautiful and informative book that not only will be useful to tourists while traveling inside Madagascar, but will be an ideal souvenir to take back to their home countries. The total earning value in ecoshops of such a book, however, is not the main motivation behind its production. The advertising value of such books in the countries of origin of tourists, that cannot be underestimated. Also, projects such as a book fall under the category of generic marketing which is what ANGAP should concentrate on rather than attending trade shows that are designed for operators promoting existing tour product packages. ANGAP can go into partnership with a large publisher to publish a book on Malagasy national parks that will allow ANGAP to buy these books at cost and sell them in the national parks. Conversely, ANGAP can seek out private interests that may want to be part of such a project. National parks are extremely good outlets for books. Struik Publishers, the largest South African publisher of these types of books, regard the national parks in South Africa as an extremely effective outlet for their books.

A one-hour video that captures the essence of the priority parks should also be a best-seller, and it can be sold separately or in conjunction with a high-quality book. National parks in many developing countries, such as Costa Rica, accrue revenue from selling large quantities of books, videos, and posters in the interpretation centers

of their high-profile parks. However, ANGAP should not to be side-tracked by ecoshop products at the cost of running an efficient and effective park system.

I discussed with Struik Publishers the possibility of publishing a book on Madagascar emphasizing the national parks. It appears that an arrangement can be made in which the Maison du Tourisme or ANGAP can buy a certain number of books at a third of the shelf price, which is lower than the price paid for books by bookstores, which means that ANGAP can make a substantial profit on selling these books.

- Siting is of prime importance for hotel developers and a valuable commodity. Many prime sites for hotels and lodges exist along the borders of the national parks. ANGAP should immediately survey these sites, and either buy them (land is often very cheap) or reserve them by law or through agreement with communities. Potential developers, such as those that came to speak to Mr. Collinson and me, can then be introduced to these sites, which will be made available to them under certain conditions, such as a levy that can be placed on them.

National park rest camps are fundamentally different from hotels or ecolodges. These centers are established by national parks organizations to service park personnel and tourists in a variety of ways. They typically would contain a shop, where a variety of essentials and park materials can be sold, as well as ablution facilities and basic accommodation. They are an ideal solution that evolved naturally in areas where long distances and lack of infrastructure are a major problem, as is the case in many national parks in Masoala, the northern part of Isalo, and parks such as Ankarana and Masoala.

Rest camps are popular in many developing countries. The northernmost rest camp in the Kalahari Gemsbok Park, at Nossob South Africa, would be an ideal model for a rest camp that ANGAP can develop at low cost. Like Isalo, the Kalahari Gemsbok Park is a remote park, and access to it is hampered by dangerous dirt roads. Like Isalo, the park has surrounding communities that are increasingly being involved by the park management in a variety of development schemes. Such a rest camp might be an ideal investment in the northern part of Isalo. It will help channel heavy traffic away from those parts of Isalo that are currently under intense tourism pressure. ANGAP can use well-designed rest camps to channel human traffic in accordance with park management plans. These rustic rest camps will also give the communities near the parks the possibility to earn income and provide access for them to other basic requirements.

A rest camp would be an ideal base for a clinic. It could also be the site of a small interpretation center for local people and would provide appropriate lodging for park guards and visitors. ANGAP can run the rest camp or contract out its construction and management to local entrepreneurs. The intention of rest camps is not to compete with the private sector. Neither are they community campgrounds that have the single aim of giving tourists a place to sleep. Their

purpose is to provide an essential service center where no one else can fill the gap. Hence they would be immensely popular with tourists visiting places such as Ankarana.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 39: Investigate the possibility of establishing an experimental rest camp that serves the park staff and local communities and provides certain essential services and facilities to tourists. Park managers should be given the chance to view a model rest camp while on their visit to South Africa. It is suggested that an experimental rest camp be put up in the northern part of Isalo, and its progress monitored. This project should start immediately because the outcome of such an experiment will influence many of ANGAP's future actions.

9.1.1 List of Potential Avenues of Income for ANGAP

The following table lists all the potential avenues of income for ANGAP. The first avenue of income will, and should be, the financial mainstay of the national park system. To optimize this avenue, ANGAP should provide services, facilities, and products of the highest possible standard. Several of the potential avenues of income listed in the table, particularly from number four onwards, require varying degrees of involvement from the private sector.

1	Park entry fees	This will likely be the mainstay of ANGAP's financial sustainability strategies.
2	Ecoshops or other park outlets	There exists a need among tourists visiting Madagascar for certain products, particularly books and videos, that can be sold in interpretation centers or at parks entrances.
3	Park rest camps	Park rest camps, which differ from community camping grounds, can provide a diverse service to park staff as well as tourists and communities, particularly where access is hampered by long, bad roads, and where infrastructure is lacking.
4	Concession rights to the private sector	Certain areas of the parks can be granted as sole concessions to selected private companies according to clear guidelines. For instance, the northern part of Isalo can be set aside for operators who specialize in adventure tourism. Sometimes more than one concessionaire can operate in an area on a time-share basis. Typically annual fees are paid for this right, or on a per capita client basis, or as a combination of the two options. These types of agreements usually work on an annual renewal basis.
5	Farming out certain protected areas to private companies	Certain protected areas can be given to private companies to run as national parks on a long term lease of at least ten years. The parks remain under ANGAP's legal control, but is management entirely by private companies according to clearly established guidelines. Comprehensive business plans have to be submitted with all private sector proposals.
6	Campgrounds	ANGAP can develop a national campground system that can be managed by ANGAP only, by communities only, or by a combination of the two, with ANGAP playing a supervisory role to guarantee an even standard, and charging a small levy for this service to cover brochures, advertising, booking, and so on.
7	Filming fees	ANGAP must work out a clear scale of filming fees for different types of film productions: documentary, commercials (advertising films), and feature films.
8	Various taxes	ANGAP must investigate the possibility of earning a percentage of airport taxes, as well as hotel levies.
9	Levies and other fees from the private sector's hotels and ecolodges	ANGAP can develop considerable bargaining power by improving the siting of private hotels through its own management plans, and other services it can offer the private sector.

10	Reservation of prime sites for future release	ANGAP as well as the communities can gain considerable mileage by controlling, or partly controlling property along the borders of its parks.
----	---	---

The potential income avenues listed in the table call for a pervasive and fundamental strengthening of the relationship between ANGAP and the private sector. This relationship should go far beyond the level of polite diplomacy, but should involve mutual planning meetings and a regular exchange of ideas. Only then will ANGAP be able to fully use the advantages that can come from full and appropriate private sector involvement.

It is common for conflict to exist between park systems and the private sector, whether in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Costa Rica, or the United States. However, some countries have made considerable progress in developing this relationship for the best of both parties. For instance, there can be fruitful cooperation between the private landowners along the borders of national parks and the park system itself. They can even share common management plans as is the case in the game farms along the western border of the Kruger National Park in South Africa.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 40: Conduct a meeting with private sector, government, and ANGAP representatives to discuss the advantages of working together and set some goals. Meeting participants will then design a program for the first year to achieve these goals. An outside party should convene the different representatives to avoid any possible favoritism. The role for convening the parties possibly belongs to the Minister of Tourism.

10.0 THE ROAD AHEAD

10.1 Recommended Actions

This report contains recommended actions for ANGAP to move toward sustainable policies with regard to ecotourism development, the private sector, the communities surrounding the park, and other stakeholders. Executing these required actions will lead to a highly improved scenario. However, ANGAP already has an enormous task ahead of itself, and, in the words of one head office person, the scenario is constantly changing.

10.2 Development, Conservation and Environmental Education

Education is an investment in the future of the park system. If the development and education of communities surrounding the parks is neglected, the role of ANGAP as a national park system will become increasingly difficult. If communities are left ignorant with respect to developments around them, they will soon become a dangerous liability. It is therefore of paramount importance that ANGAP design a formal, long-term vision of where it wants to see the communities 5 years from now, and beyond, and that it draw up a specific plan on how to achieve this goal. An educational program is most effective when it takes place at all levels in the communities surrounding the parks.

10.2.1 The Education of Children

Education should focus not only on the park itself, but also on practical issues that affect the quality of life near the parks. Educating children is one way of also reaching the parents, particularly if events are organized in which children play the main roles but which are also open to the entire community. The following techniques have proved their potential already:

Drawing competitions: Mrs. Delina Mara Delina in Ranohira has already undertaken a drawing competition among school children in Ranohira with the general environment as a theme. Most of the drawings included animals such as lemurs and aspects of life in the area such as the presence of cattle, vegetable farming, and the all-important presence of water. We discussed several ways in which the drawing competition can be extended. Each child can write a short paragraph on the back of the drawing, commenting on its contents. Thus, a deeper understanding can be facilitated of the various environmental issues as well as the underlying reasons for establishing the park. Similar competitions can be held in communities surrounding other national parks. Schools are generally eager partners in activities that involve their pupils. A national winner can be chosen to appear in the newspapers as well as on national television. The prize of the competition is for the child and the parents to visit several other national parks in the company of an educational officer appointed by ANGAP. The drawing competition can become an annual feature of ANGAP's community and educational activities. The process has several advantages and important spin-offs:

- This is an easy way to use existing facilities and personnel to broaden the understanding of communities of their environment in general and the park system in particular.
- The publicity will illustrate ANGAP's involvement with local communities to the general Malagasy public as well as to national and international conservation agencies.
- The winning drawing can easily find a place in one of ANGAP's publications (see the 1995 Alexkor Foundation Annual Report, page 5, the drawing on page 6, the best of over four hundred drawings from schools in Namaqualand, an underdeveloped region in South Africa).
- The process will help create cohesion between the different parks in a country where isolation between different regions will remain a problem for some time.
- There are potential linkages with children from other parts of the world, including South Africa and the United States. Many young children can already speak some English, which they are learning at school.

Environmental books for children: Books could be written, in the local dialects, for children living in areas surrounding the priority parks. These books should have a participatory style: children can be invited to complete line drawing of animals or color in line drawings. Questions are also directed at the children after each short section. The books should start with a wide perspective to put their area in context with the rest of the world and Madagascar, before going into detail on specific issues. I left an example of such a book with Mr. Heryzo, one directed at the children of the Masoala Peninsula. It is suggested that a similar book be produced for each of the priority parks.

One way to accomplish this goal would be for Mr. Heryzo and a consultant to develop a time concept skeleton version. This version could be written for Isalo, Ranomafana, and Andasibe. These skeleton versions can be filled out with a short trip to each of these localities so that particular organisms can be incorporated and local dialects be used.

Other ways of involving children in environmental education include story telling, role playing, and short excursions into the park. The latter has been particularly effective at La Selva in Costa Rica, and the methods employed there can be readily copied for Madagascar. They involve a lecture by a biologist on the various animals that occur there, followed by a short walk, and a lunch afterwards when each child is presented with a small folder of pictures and interactive materials such as pictures that can be colored in or line drawings that were started of some animal, but can then be completed by the child. These methods will be best conveyed to the educational officer in a one-day seminar with illustrative materials, and it is suggested that a

series of such seminars be held at the different parks between a consultant and the educational officers. One of the teachers, Mr. Razafimahatratra showed me around the primary school. The three schools (secondary, primary, and a preschool run by the church) can be readily involved in conservation activities, by means of competitions and ANGAP-sponsored outings to the park, perhaps on a bi-annual basis.

Interpretation Centers and Children: Mr. Florent Ravoavy at the interpretation center in Ranomafana is an expert in children's education and ANGAP needs to use his skills far more widely. Many more films should be made available to the children of Ranomafana and elsewhere. Natural history films are commonly available on cassettes. By watching them, children will develop a deeper understanding and respect for nature. With a burgeoning population of already over 20,000 people in the region, the importance of children's education cannot be overemphasized. Walking excursions and more formal programs for children can be developed such as those offered to local communities surrounding La Selva, Costa Rica, where children are formally lectured inside and outside the park and discussions held afterward over a lunch provided by the park.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 41: Draw up a comprehensive plan for children's environmental education. This plan must spell out a clear philosophy, then list discreet goals, and finally list a step-by-step approach as to how these goals can be achieved.

10.2.2 The Involvement of Local Musicians

Malagasies are fond of music. The impact of environmental messages through music has already been illustrated some time ago by the environmentally inspired album of Rossy with World Wildlife Fund involvement.

It is suggested that ANGAP commissions one or two local artists from each community surrounding the park to write and perform a song about some aspect of nature or conservation. These songs can easily be recorded with mobile sound equipment, spending two days at each park, and the songs can be made available on cassette to the general population in those communities. When all is in place, the six or seven artists can be transported in a minibus to the different parks to do a one afternoon performance in the different communities surrounding the parks. Each artist can give a short talk about the region he or she is from and then perform the song. A strong interest in the sleepy towns that surround the parks is guaranteed.

10.2.3 A Catalog of Folklore About the Environment

Madagascar is a country rich in folklore. Much of this folklore revolves around animals or interesting places. An interest by ANGAP in such folklore automatically confirms an interest in local communities, particularly the more traditional ones that are usually left behind in new

developments such as a park system that has as its focus the growing tourism market. Also, there is a real danger that this folklore will be lost over the next decade or so. I am currently investigating the stories and legends of the Masoala Peninsula with a history graduate student from the University of Tamatave. It is suggested that similar projects be undertaken for the main parks in Madagascar so they can be written up in a booklet that can be made available to the local population, guide associations, and interested tourists. This project can obviously be combined with a drawing competition for schoolchildren, as well as an environmental song competition by local artists.

10.2.4 The Education of the Guides

A consultant should be commissioned to properly investigate this matter and do a costing for ANGAP on a high-quality guide training program.

10.2.5 The Education of General ANGAP Staff

Everyone working at ANGAP should be fully aware of what the organization stands for. The employees are a ready-made cadre of ambassadors. This can be achieved by three publications:

- A folded one-page brochure;
- A proper corporate-image booklet of about six pages with a slightly harder cover that will educate the public about ANGAP, as well as the private sector, the relevant government departments, and the international community; and
- A booklet that includes brochures on the individual parks in a jacket on the inside of the back cover.

All publications must be professionally produced. These publications require forethought on content and design, and they cannot be put together quickly by amateurs. Anything less than absolute quality will be self-defeating.

At another level, the education of at least a section of the ANGAP staff needs to be broadened with respect to ecotourism in general. Few people at ANGAP, if any, have had any formal training in ecotourism development. It is essential that the relevant people in ANGAP are fully aware of current world trends in ecotourism development, as well as key case studies on the consequences of ecotourism development elsewhere in the world. Similarly, few people at ANGAP have enjoyed any formal biological training, which is unusual for an organization aiming to become a national parks service. This is not meant as a negative criticism of a courageous group of people who have taken on an enormous and important task. Efficient management is one essential requirement for a national parks system. However, management cannot be practiced in isolation

of the natural world which runs according to ecological principles, and people involved in nature conservation should know these principles.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 42: Develop an educational program for relevant ANGAP staff to broaden their knowledge of basic ecological phenomena and the many sides of ecotourism development. An ecological consultant should be contracted to design a course that comprised of 10 lectures of 2.5 hours each with compulsory and suggested reading that can be bound for the convenience of ANGAP staff and made available beforehand to them. This course can be given over a period of 5 weeks, which means two lectures per week (this has been found to be an acceptable load at Connecticut State University for nonscience majors who also work full-time). It should be compulsory for park directors and certain staff in the ANGAP head office.

10.2.6 The Education of the Broader Malagasy public

Figures from Andasibe-Mantadia show an increase in national tourists from 26% in 1993 to 39% in 1995. It is a good sign when nationals support their parks. It is essential to educate the broader Malagasy public regarding ANGAP and its activities. Film is an effective medium, and, in this respect, regional television should also be fully exploited. Regional television in Diego Suarez previously expressed a great interest in airing a film on Ankarana. Two films made by a local company may be good enough for the national market, but certainly not for any television market outside Madagascar. ANGAP has several films with Malagasy natural history content, and ANGAP is acknowledged in all of these films. However, these films were made for a different television audience, and their effectiveness will be limited. The easiest way to convey ANGAP's corporate image will be by means of a film made specifically for this purpose.

10.2.7 The Education of Tourists

The interpretation centers should have a short film available on the park. Interested tourists can activate the video recorder by pushing a button. These films can also be for sale to tourists together with booklets on the park. However, the films will need to be professionally produced. Viewing stalls are popular with tourists at Volcan Poas National Park in Costa Rica, and tourists frequently buy videos. These videos automatically become free marketing tools abroad.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 43: Investigate all the environmental education possibilities discussed previously. ANGAP subsequently must design a broad environmental education program that must include a specific action plan to be put into operation as soon as possible.

10.2.8 The Education of Decision-Makers

ANGAP can play an important role in the education of decision makers inside Madagascar. The organization can organize seminars to which key people in the Madagascar government are

invited. Madagascar is a country besieged by looming environmental threats that are growing each day, and environmental education is needed at all levels. If presented correctly, an environmental education program spearheaded by ANGAP and aimed at a select audience will be successful. This type of activity is common in Costa Rica, where the Organization for Tropical Studies has arranged environmental educational workshops that have been attended by politicians from several Latin American countries.

RECOMMENDED ACTION # 44: Investigate the possibility of ANGAP as an agent for introducing environmental workshops aimed at decision makers, particularly in conjunction with ONE.

k:/afr_east.cen/1365/odenrep/10/14/96