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Rural Development in Thethi

Pursuing sustainable tourism in an Albanian mountain community

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Abstract

Tourism is an attractive development option in rural areas of South East Europe to mitigate trends such as depopulation and poverty. However, many tourism development projects prioritize short-term economic gain, with a lack of planning, resource management, and community involvement. Thethi, Albania is an example of a rural community that has recently employed tourism as a vehicle for development, but a number of negative social and environmental impacts that can be observed suggest the current form of development lacks components of sustainability. The focus of this study was to investigate how Thethi, Albania could more effectively pursue sustainable tourism development (STD). Through fieldwork, interviews, and literature analysis, impacts of current tourism development in Thethi were examined and a number of social and environmental costs were observed to affect the local community. Stakeholders, roles, and projects involved in Thethi tourism development were evaluated against STD models found in the literature. Following this, stakeholder salience and typology in Thethi tourism development were determined with the support of management theory allowing for the identification of roles which stakeholders could take to change the current development pattern towards a more sustainable one. It was determined that if the local community in Thethi could increase their relative power and strengthen the legitimacy of their landholder status, they could act as the mechanism for change. To achieve definitive stakeholder status, the local community needs to acquire power through access to finances or partnership with a more powerful stakeholder. However, it is essential to recognize that this change in stakeholder role and interaction does not necessarily result in sustainable development; capacity building and education of the local community is needed to instil urgency. This could be the role of a local or international NGO, who could also act to lobby the government for landownership clarification. Overall, this study provides guidance for stakeholder identification and local community leadership in rural tourism development, which can be extended to other South East Europe rural areas. This work also shows the value in predicting tourism development impacts, which is often ignored in the planning process.

Executive Summary

Background and Scope

Tourism has been promoted as a vehicle for rural development in the remote mountain village of Thethi, Albania. This village and the surrounding community suffers from socio-economic challenges such as lack of employment opportunities, depopulation, and aging residual communities that are common to many rural areas in South East Europe (SEE). Since the 1990s, the local population has declined from 200 families living in Thethi all year round to 100 families in the summer and only 7 families during the winter. Despite this decline, the utilisation of 'the environment' as the key resource to leverage rural development through tourism in Thethi appears to be an attractive concept for the community. This pathway has been promoted by the local government and by international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the area. However, the visitor and local community visions for tourism development, although not necessarily mutually exclusive or unique to each group, expose tension between the idea of preservation of culture and environment and the need for development and increased quality of life. Although there are many potential benefits that can result from tourism in rural villages like Thethi, the risk of negative effects are also significant. There is potential for both harm to the environment – the key resource for such a development project – and to members of the local population; the very stakeholders, whom development is intended to aid. In recognition of such risks, there is a need to examine the form, implementation and the actual and potential impacts of rural development strategies such as tourism.

Purpose

The research problem selected for investigation was - **Although tourism is perceived to bring much needed income to Thethi residents and promote rural development, there is concern that the current form of tourism development could have negative effects. It is feared that tourist development has potential to damage the key resource for tourism – the pristine environment of the area – and that it could aggravate resource management issues and social inequalities.**

Pursuant to the interest of NGOs, and in recognition of the social challenges of northern Albanian cultural patterns, this work has the point of departure that is the "pristine environment" that represents the primary resource for tourism and its enfolding activities; therefore, "environment" as the key resource for development encompasses both the natural and built landscapes. Following from this, sustainable tourism development (STD) in the context of this research is defined as "tourism development that contributes to rural development, increasing quality of life for all, while preserving the key resource for development, the natural and built environment".

The aim of this research was to investigate how potential negative impacts of tourism could be mitigated or avoided. This work builds from earlier research by the author that suggested that knowledge gaps exist in two areas: first, in the awareness within the research community in identification of positive and negative economic, social and environmental impacts of existing tourism development; and second, in the capacity of the Thethi community, local and international NGOs, government, and other stakeholders to recognize their role in producing, but also managing these impacts. The main contribution of this research is delineation of how stakeholders may strategically change their role and interactions with others in the tourism development process in order to increase their ability to influence more sustainable tourism

development.. The knowledge gaps introduced above are addressed in the research question and objectives below.

The research question posed to guide work contributing to resolution of the research problem was: **How can sustainable tourism development in rural Albania be pursued more effectively?** Using Thethi, Albania as a case study, the following objectives were proposed to provide structure to the study and provide insight into the research question.

1. Identify the current and probable future impacts of current tourism development in Thethi.
2. Identify the key stakeholders and their strategies and actions pursued in current tourism development in Thethi.
3. Evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development in Thethi in comparison to sound practice for sustainable tourism development as described within the encompassing literature.
4. Identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process where intervention may be influential in creating sustainable tourism development and evaluate potential mechanisms for change.

This work is motivated by a number of factors, not least that the main concern of the local community is rural development, or increasing their standard of living and quality of life, but without sacrificing the area they have traditionally been bound to. A number of key stakeholders and authorities believe that tourism could be a way to achieve this. However, the tourism options apparently open to the community are significantly dependent on the “pristine” environment, including cultural landforms and the built environment, as a resource. As such, it appears necessary that the community to preserve and protect the resource under their control (e.g. the environment) from negative impacts if successful (rural) development is to be supported. The core audience for this research are those in the field of sustainable rural and tourism development. This includes actors such as local and international NGOs operating in Thethi, Albania, academics studying Northern Albania, and via interactions with NGOs, the local residents.

Research Methodology

To answer the research question and contribute to the defined objectives, selected research methods and frameworks for data analysis were employed. The research was conducted with a qualitative approach in an academic context and with a feminist perspective and phenomenological ontology. Phase 1 of the study (conducted prior to this formal thesis period) involved a period of participant observation, during fieldwork in Thethi, Albania during July 2009; Phase 2 of the study involved literature reviews, semi-structured interviews, and interaction with stakeholders via meetings and conference attendance in the period of February to May 2010. A final period of fieldwork is scheduled for the last week of May and 1st week of June 2010 (to be reported in an Addendum to this work). Objectives 1 and 2 were focused on data collection and objectives 3 – 4 involved data analysis supported by the use of stakeholder identification and salience theory from management studies as a theoretical framework, which was enriched by principles of STD and community-based tourism development (CBTD). The principles and frameworks have been used in the field of tourism research, but not extensively. The aim of the first three objectives was to describe the

research problem, while the aim of the fourth objective was to provide insight into the proposed research question.

Results and Discussion

Objective 1: Current and probable future impacts of tourism development in Thethi.

This work found that ongoing impacts include economic, social and environmental costs and benefits, with most social and environmental costs of development affecting the local community. In contradiction with literature, negative environmental impacts were observed from current tourism development, including increased demand and use of resources, accumulation of solid waste, increase in production of wastewater, and infrastructure construction, with tourism overall adding pressure to insufficient or non-existent resource management systems. Such costs are problematic if the overall goal of tourism development is to act as a vehicle for rural development; this because they damage the key resource for development, the environment. The non-static nature of the community and associated development made prediction of future impacts extremely challenging, but it was clear that the predicted increase in tourism activity in Thethi will continue to place pressure on resources available to the local community and aggravate existing resource and social issues unless changes are made.

Objective 2: Stakeholders, strategies, and roles in Thethi tourism development.

Stakeholders and their roles in the Thethi tourism development process were identified and found to be more numerous than that identified in the literature, with the role of formal institutions minimal and implementation of multiple projects without coordination predicted to amplify tourism impacts.

Objective 3: Evaluation of Thethi tourism development for sustainability.

The sustainability of the current tourism development process in Thethi was evaluated using two methods. First, Thethi tourism development was evaluated for four components found in sustainable tourism and rural development literature: functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks, communication and coordination between stakeholders, awareness and education, and redefining the perception of development to follow sustainability principles. It was found that Thethi tourism development was lacking evidence for these components, and although comparison of the accommodation project with a STD implementation model did exemplify some characteristics of sustainability, the tourism development process as a whole was found to be lacking in planning, management, monitoring, evaluation and coordination of projects.

Objective 4: Identification of leverage points and mechanisms for change in Thethi tourism development.

It was established that the four components noted under objective 3 were promising points for change. However, many of the required changes were long-term and required stakeholders who were not directly affected to conduct implementation. In recognition of this, the analysis worked from the point of departure that if the local community in Thethi could achieve the status of 'principal actor', or 'definitive stakeholder', in tourism development then they could act as the mechanism for change. However, to achieve definitive stakeholder status within the current process, the local community will need to increase its degree of influence (i.e. power). Principal pathways to achieve this include access to finances or partnership with other powerful stakeholders; these partnerships could also serve to strengthen the legitimacy of their

landholder status. However, it was also essential to recognize that this change in stakeholder role would only provide the ability for the community to effectively influence development. This alone is not sufficient for sustainable development. If the community is to influence development in a manner aligned with sustainable rural development, then significant degrees of awareness and capacity building, and education of the local community is also likely required. Under existing regimes, it appears that such work can only be performed or mediated by local or international NGO or governmental institutions.

Conclusions and Implications

This research explored the tension between environmental and cultural preservation on the one hand, and the need for rural community development on the other. If the potential of the local community of Thethi to act as leaders in the tourism development of their village can be realized and capacity building takes place, then residents may be able to achieve rural development that is aligned with sustainability principles:

It is nice to be a tourist, but also nice to live here.

There are significant barriers to achieving sustainable development in Thethi, especially concerning the points of change identified via the four core themes for successful sustainable rural and tourism development. Social capital is suggested to a major determinant in rural development, which is likely to be true in the case of Thethi. With low civic participation and trust in public institutions, a lack of respect and enforcement of contracts, and government institutions characterized by low capacity, points of change towards sustainability that depend on the strength or implementation of changes in government institutions will be a major challenge. However, the changes that this research proposes to the role of the local community by-passes the need or reliance on formal institutions, but requires the community and stakeholders to recognize their potential as “owners” of tourism development and to act together. This will also be a significant challenge and is why capacity building by external stakeholders is necessary. The suggestion from analysis to create a network to increase coordination and communication between actors will also face similar challenges in establishing common goals of development.

The approach utilized in this research is applicable to evaluating and determining changes in a rural tourism development process to increase sustainability. Although results and conclusions are dependent on the specific case study, the method of stakeholder identification, tourism development sustainability evaluation, and method for identification of points and mechanisms for change in a tourism development process could be applicable to other cases.

A significant outcome of this research is that it exemplifies the applicability of stakeholder identification and salience management theory to tourism research. Further exploration of this theory, including discussion of the “manager” role in the context of a tourism development process is pertinent. Also, investigation into the interactions between stakeholders through the use of stakeholder multiplicity theory, and the addition of a fourth attribute, proximity, would be interesting topics to pursue in establishing stakeholder theory in tourism research.

Practical outcomes of this research include recommendations for changes to stakeholder strategies and actions in the Thethi tourism development process in order to achieve development with a higher degree of sustainability. Specific recommendations are suitable for the core audience of this research, or local and international NGOs working in Thethi,

especially the Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P) NGO with whom the researcher is associated. Indeed, this research suggests that NGOs should become advocates for the local community if they are to obtain ownership and a main role in the development of tourism in Thethi. Advocacy should include lobbying of other stakeholders for the creation of a small-loans program, the implementation of the LEADER program in rural Albania, or funding small-scale local tourism projects themselves, similar to the GTZ Albania accommodation project. Equally important would be the creation and implementation of awareness and capacity-building projects concerning the positive and negative impacts of tourism for local residents, but also beneficial would be awareness and education for all stakeholders involved. Through the formation of a Thethi tourism development network this could be realized.

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Abbreviations

ARPEA	Applied Research in Preventive Environmental Approaches
B3P	Balkan Peace Park Project
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBTD	Community-Based Tourism Development
ENVSEC	Environment and Security
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German)
IEP	Institute for Environmental Policy
IPPE	International Peace Park Expeditions
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LAG	Local Action Groups
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale (French)
MAFCP	Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection
MEFWA	Ministry for Environment, Forestry, and Water Administration
MTCYS	Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sport
NAT	National Agency of Tourism
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PA	Protected Area
RD	Rural Development
REC	Regional Environmental Center
SEE	South East Europe
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Dutch)
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STD	Sustainable Tourism Development
SVP	Shala Valley Project
TALC	Tourism Area Life Cycle
TBPA	Transboundary Protected Area
TD	Tourism Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WTO	World Tourism Organization
YDNP	Yorkshire Dales National Park

XII

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and research context

I realize now that during a conversation with a young woman I was staying with in Thethi, Albania, the tension between ‘preservation’ and ‘development’ was summarized in one phrase:

It is nice to be a tourist here, but hard to live.

Tourism has been promoted as a vehicle for rural development in the area, which suffers from depopulation and a lack of employment opportunities, common to many rural areas in South East Europe (Hall, 2004). In 1991, approximately 200 families lived in Thethi all year round practising farming, but now 100 families live in the valley during summer, while only 7 families stay for the winter (Galaty, 2009; Hara, 2009). Situated in the remote mountainous region of Northern Albania, Thethi is described as one of the last areas of “untouched wilderness” in the world, ideal for eco-tourism development (Figure 1-1 and Figure 1-2, (Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P), 2009). Indeed, using the environment as the key resource to leverage rural development through tourism in Thethi appears to be an attractive concept and has been promoted by the local government and international and local NGOs working in the area. For example, the Balkans Peace Park Project (B3P), a charity based in the United Kingdom, is facilitating the creation of a transboundary peace park in Albania, Kosovo/a, and Montenegro, which would act as a symbol of peace and cooperation in a region whose history is dominated by conflict (Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P), 2009; Young, 2008). The primary goals of B3P are to promote environmental conservation, sustainable tourism, and local employment.



Figure 1-1 Map of the proposed Balkan Peace Park, large scale (Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P), 2009).

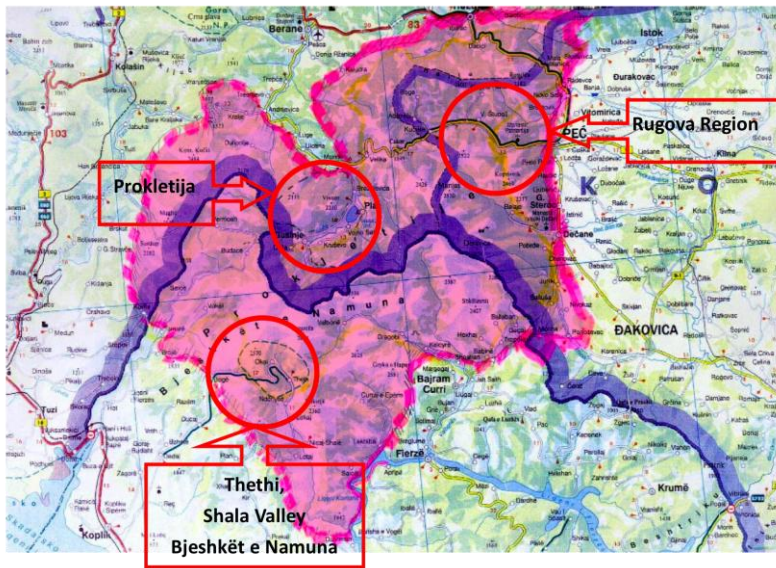


Figure 1-2 Map of the proposed Balkan Peace Park, small scale (Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P), 2009).

Tourists who visit Thethi are attracted by the untouched wilderness, “rustic” accommodation, which lacks a stable supply of electricity and water, and “traditional” lifestyle (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). The local community, predominantly ethnic Albanian Christians, have a long history in the region with unique traditions and are known for accepting travellers into their homes (Galaty, 2009; Young, 2008). They see tourism as an income opportunity, which would raise their standard of living from rustic to something more developed, more “western” (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

Although it is important to recognize that the visitor and local community tourism visions are not necessarily mutually exclusive or unique to each group, it is evident that there is tension between the two ideas of preservation of the environment and culture and the need for development and increased quality of life (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). Tourism could be a source of income and drive development, acting to empower the community. However, tourism could also lead to significant and unexpected environmental and social impacts, which may be positive or negative. For example, the young woman I stayed with could not attend the school where I taught English for the “benefit of the community” as a part of the B3P NGO summer program because she was too busy cooking and cleaning for tourists and her family. Also, the waste produced in her home, which was markedly increased by hosting guests, went directly into the environment because there was no waste management- the same environment that provided drinking water and scenery for tourists (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). These issues are not unique to Thethi, as rural villages in Northern Albania are recognized to be “a tribal society imbued with extraordinary levels of patriarchy and subjugation of women” (Galaty et al., 2009; King, Dalipaj, & Mai, 2006; Littlewood, 2002), and there is no waste management in rural Albania (MEFWA & UNDP, 2009). Therefore, without careful planning and management, there is a risk that tourism could promote or aggravate already present social inequalities and resource management problems in Thethi while trying to further rural development.

Evidently there is a need to question the form, implementation and impacts of rural development strategies such as tourism, and to explore the tension between and possibility of balancing ‘preservation’ and development. Although many benefits may result from tourism in rural villages like Thethi, the risk of costs are significant; costs which could be potentially harmful to the environment, the key resource for such a development project, and members of the local population, whom development is trying to aid. Rural development, sustainability, tourism, community, and environment are key themes that emerge in the following investigation into tourism development in Thethi, Albania (Fig. 1-3).

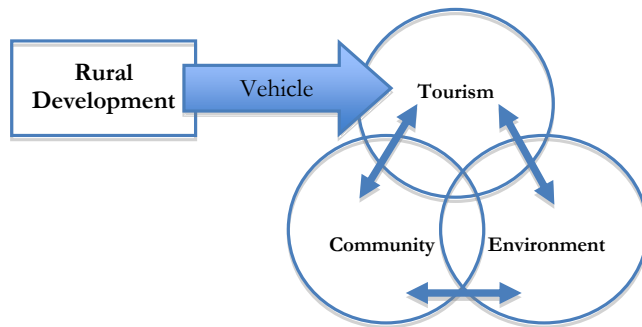


Figure 1-3 Key themes emerging from the research process.

1.2 Research problem, aim, and knowledge gaps

The research problem selected for investigation was:

Although tourism is perceived to bring much needed income to Thethi residents and promote rural development, there is concern that the current form of tourism development could have negative effects. It is feared that tourist development has potential to damage the key resource for tourism – the pristine environment of the area – and that it could aggravate resource management issues and social inequalities.

Pursuant to the interest of NGOs, and in recognition of the social challenges of northern Albanian cultural patterns, this work has the point of departure that is the “pristine environment” represent the key resource for tourism and its enfolding activities; therefore, “environment” as the key resource for development encompasses both the natural and built landscapes. Following from this, sustainable tourism development in the context of this research is defined as “tourism development that contributes to rural development, increasing quality of life even for all, including marginalized groups, while preserving the key resource for development, the natural and built environment”.

The aim of this research was to investigate how potential negative impacts of tourism could be mitigated or avoided at this early stage of development. From personal observation and previous research in Thethi, it appears that knowledge gaps exist in two areas: first, in the awareness and identification of positive and negative economic, social and environmental impacts of existing tourism development; and second, in the capacity of the Thethi community, local and international NGOs, government, and other stakeholders to recognize their role in producing, but also managing these impacts. The main contribution of this research is then proposing that stakeholders can strategically change their role and interactions with others in the tourism development process to increase their salience and achieve tourism

development that is more sustainable. These knowledge gaps are addressed in the research question and objectives below.

1.3 Research question and objectives

The research question posed to address the research problem is:

How can sustainable tourism development in rural Albania be pursued more effectively?

Using Thethi, Albania as a case study, the following objectives were proposed to logically structure the study and provide insight into the research question.

1. Identify the current and probable future impacts of current tourism development in Thethi.
2. Identify the key stakeholders and their strategies and actions pursued in current tourism development in Thethi.
3. Evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development in Thethi by comparison with sound practice for sustainable tourism development described within the encompassing literature.
4. Identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process that are influential in creating sustainable tourism development and evaluate potential mechanisms for change.

1.4 Research justification and audience

It is difficult to elucidate what the current and future impacts of current tourism development in Thethi, as rural development is occurring in parallel. However, it was apparent to the researcher during fieldwork and from literature that tourism development is perceived as the primary method for rural development (Beka, 2009; Gallerani, Raggi, Samoggia, & Viaggi, 2005; MAFCP, 2007; personal communications, 2010). Therefore, although the focus of research could have focused on impacts of rural development, tourism is likely the largest contributor to positive and negative impacts of such development. In Thethi and the Shala Valley region there is no infrastructure for industry, large-scale agriculture, or handicraft trade; the point of entry for the researcher when conducting fieldwork in Thethi was via tourism, which is the only industry and attraction in the area (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010).

Also, this research focuses on positive and negative social and environmental impacts of tourism development by defining sustainable tourism development specifically as “tourism development that contributes to rural development, increasing quality of life for all, including marginalized groups, while preserving the key resource for development, the pristine environment”. This stems from the observation that the main concern of the local community is rural development, or increasing their standard of living and quality of life (E. Marchington, fieldnotes, July 2009). It is recognized that tourism could be a way to achieve this and is dependent on the “pristine” environment, including cultural landforms and the built environment, as a resource. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the community to protect their resource, the environment, from negative impacts in order to contribute to successful rural development.

A literature survey completed to acquire a baseline of knowledge in sustainable tourism development research showed that the main fields of inquiry were in evaluating what sustainable tourism development *should* entail and how it *could* be developed. Also, many

studies examined tourism development projects for sustainability via evaluation of resulting impacts and perceptions of stakeholders, but only *after* the project had occurred (Bushell & Eagles, 2007; CBD Secretariat, 2004; Chambers, 1994; Foxlee, 2007; Hall, 2000, 2004). Lacking in the literature is research on how to *change* or *modify* tourism development to become more sustainable once it has already been developed (Moscardo, 2008); this is one of the central goals of this research.

Also illuminated by the literature survey conducted was the small amount of information concerning *prediction* of tourism development impacts before development occurred or in the project planning stages (Butler, 1980; Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009). Again, literature focused on identifying and evaluating impacts *after* development occurred (Jordan, 2000). The value in identifying potential economic, social, and environmental impacts of a tourism development process, not just for one project but a whole development as in a strategic environmental impact assessment (SEIA), will be shown in this study. Following from this, this study could contribute to the process of creating a tourism development planning and capacity building guidance tool to be used in other rural areas of South East Europe. Although no such formal tools are currently in development, tourism is a specific interest of GTZ and SNV, who could lead the development of guidelines specifically for implementation in this region (GTZ, 2010; SNV, 2010).

Finally, the outcome of this research could have very practical applications, such as the development of a workshop for the community concerning the impacts of tourism or capacity building on development issues that could be implemented or used by stakeholders involved in tourism development in Thethi, Albania. For example, this research could be fed directly into programs that are already underway in Thethi, such as the B3P summer program. The core audience of this research is intended to be people engaged in the field of sustainable tourism and rural development in the region, such as the local and international NGOs working in Thethi, academics, and, via communication with NGOs and the development community, the local residents.

1.5 Research methodology and Data analysis

A very brief outline of the methodology and analysis used in this research is presented here, as literature reviews, detailed procedures, and justification are discussed in Chapter 3, Research Methodology, and Chapter 4, Data Analysis, of this report.

To answer the research question and contribute to the defined objectives, carefully selected research methods and frameworks for data analysis were employed. The research was conducted with a qualitative approach in an academic context and with a feminist perspective and phenomenological ontology (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006). Phase 1 of the study involved a period of participant observation, conducted during fieldwork in Thethi, Albania during July 2009; Phase 2 of the study involved literature reviews, semi-structured interviews, interaction with stakeholders via meetings and conference attendance, and continued fieldwork in May and June 2010. Objectives 1 and 2 were focused on data collection and objectives 3 – 4 involved data analysis supported by the use of stakeholder identification and salience theory from management studies as a theoretical framework, which was enriched by principles of STD and CBTD. The principles and frameworks have been used in the field of tourism research, but not extensively. The aim of the first three objectives was to describe the research problem, while the aim of the fourth objective was to provide insight into the proposed research question.

1.6 Limitations of Research Scope, Key Assumptions

Limitations presented below are factors that the researcher could not control, whereas delimitations are factors that were influenced by the researcher. Key assumptions are incorporated into this discussion.

1.6.1 Limitations

Time frame – Four months, February - May 2010, is allocated to conducted thesis research and reporting of findings, which limits the capacity of the researcher to conduct long-term studies, extensive observations, interviews, and overall, limits the scope of the study. However, this research builds on foundational fieldwork conducted in July 2009, when the researcher spent 3 weeks in Albania and 1.5 weeks in the village of Thethi; also, recent interviews with Thethi residents concerning ecotourism were obtained to supplement the researcher's fieldwork.

Inability to conduct fieldwork during thesis period – Given that the four month thesis research period is from February 2010 – May 2010, the researcher was unable to travel to Thethi, Albania to conduct fieldwork due to the limited accessibility of the village during winter months because of snow. This changed the scope of research to that presented in this study.

Unrecognized bias in fieldwork, influence of NGO connection – Fieldwork conducted in July 2009 was not directly with the intent of preparing for thesis research; the researcher came across the project under a different context and via connection to an international NGO working in the area, the Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P), of which the researcher is now a committee member. This affiliation and potential for unrecognized bias at the beginning of fieldwork was a risk in this research and unavoidable; however, as the researcher became aware of the unique opportunity, data collected and preliminary thesis research investigations were made towards the end of fieldwork. Also, affiliation with B3P led to many contacts that were used to collect data, but this also inherently carries bias. An attempt to triangulate data collected was made by supplementing observations with information from literature reviews and secondary sources.

Language barrier – The primary language spoken in Thethi is Albanian, and the researcher is only fluent in English. This limited possibilities in terms of conducting interviews, communicating during the participant observation phase, and therefore the scope of research; also, internet content and literature available only in Albanian is inaccessible. However, a few village members and many younger people in Albania are fluent in English, and with the help of contacts who could translate from Albania to English, this limitation was mitigated as much as possible.

1.7 Outline of the report

Research is presented in a logical and sequential manner, with attempts to connect information presented to themes in Figure 1-3 (rural development, sustainable development, tourism, environment, community) and objectives presented to investigate the research question.

A review of relevant literature is presented in Chapter 2 in five sections. First, information pertaining to rural development, sustainable development, tourism development, and impacts of development is discussed; themes from this review are presented later in connection to

those identified in fieldwork observations (Chapter 5). Second, the actors and institutions involved in the national (Albania) and local (Thethi) tourism development process are presented thematically in section two and three as in Figure 1-3 in preparation for observations, presented in Chapter 5. The fourth and fifth sections describe literature supporting research methodology and data analysis techniques used in this study.

Chapter 3, Research Methodology, outlines and justifies the research procedure and methodology utilized in this study, while Data Analysis procedures, methods and justification are outlined in Chapter 4. This is followed by a summary of data collected, or 'observations', connected to objective 1 and 2 under the posed research question in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 presents data analysis and discussion. Following the procedure for data analysis outline in Chapter 4, objective 3 and 4 under the research question are discussed via use of stakeholder identification and salience theory, supplemented by sustainable and community-based tourism development principles.

Conclusions and recommendations concerning the research question, strengths and weaknesses of this study, implications for theory, policy and practise, and areas for further research are presented in Chapter 7.

2 Literature review

The following literature review is presented to establish a common understanding of fundamental themes underlying the research problem and question, and to place observations and analysis in Chapter 5 and 6 in the context of sustainable tourism and rural development. The search and selection procedure for conducting the literature review is presented in Table 2-1, which is extracted from Table 3-1, Chapter 3, Research Methodology.

The logic behind the presentation of information in the review is outlined in Figure 2-1. The perspective of this research is one that assumes that sustainable development is optimal. Therefore, first an overview of international principles and concepts underlying sustainable development, sustainable rural development, sustainable tourism development, and common impacts of development are presented. International principles and guidelines were selected because they should represent a 'knowledge consensus' on the topics and identification of what is needed for sound sustainable rural and tourism development practises. Themes identified in this portion of the review are later linked to results and observations presented in Chapter 5, and act as a foundation for objective 1 and 3 in the study.

Given that rural Albania is the focus of this study, it is pertinent to establish the current status of rural and tourism development and impacts of such development on a national and local level in the second and third section of this review. Institutions and actors involved with development specific to tourism, environment, and community are discussed for both the national and local levels, presented thematically as in Figure 1-3 in preparation for observations presented in Chapter 5, and act as a foundation primarily for objective 2, but also objectives 1.

Analysis and evaluation of the literature in the context of the research problem and question of this study is discussed at the end of each section. Finally, the fourth and fifth sections of this review briefly describe tourism research methods and data analysis techniques and their applicability to this study as a foundation for developing insights for objective 4.

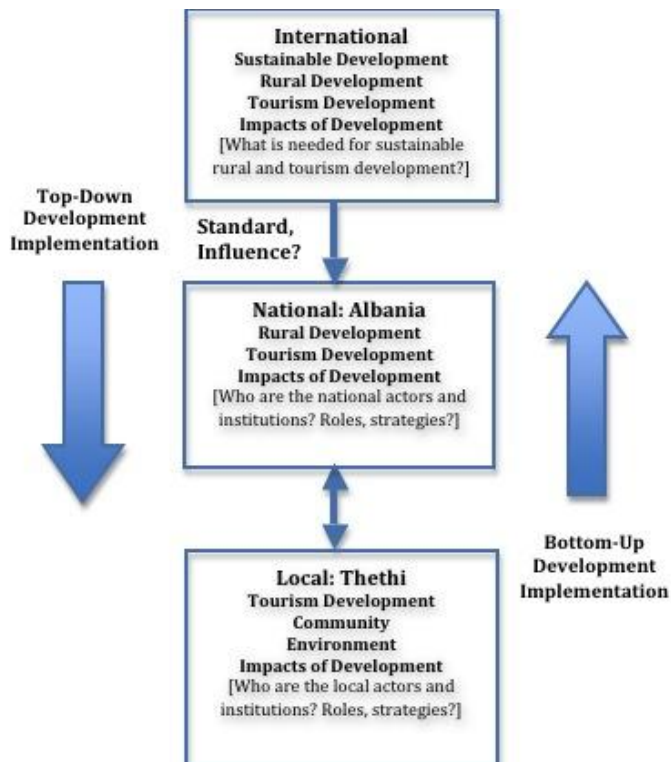


Figure 2-1 Literature review scheme and institutions and actors involved with tourism development in Thethi, Albania.

Table 2-1 Research procedure and data gathering strategy for literature review.

Literature review	Purpose of research, type of data pursued	Sources
1) January 2010	Obtain a foundation of knowledge in the field of sustainable tourism development: international, Albanian, Thethi, rural perspectives on tourism development, implementation methods.	International NGOs, online government documents, Albanian ministry websites (English only), academic literature and dissertations, tourism industry literature, Albania case studies
2) February 2010	Obtain a foundation of knowledge in qualitative research methods, tourism research methodology; Continue previous literature review.	Academic literature, case studies, tourism industry publications.
3) March 2010	Obtain knowledge on previous research conducted in the area; Investigate potential methods for data analysis, theoretical frameworks.	Academic literature and dissertations, government and NGO publications.
4) April 2010	Obtain information on rural development in Albania and common principles (EU); Investigate the local perspectives of ecotourism using the SVP database and interviews.	International NGOs, online government documents, Albania and EU, ministry websites, academic literature, Albania case studies

2.1 International principles of sustainable rural and tourism development

The first purpose of this literature review section is to establish a common understanding of core concepts underlying this research: sustainable development, rural development, and tourism development and implementation. An attempt was made to identify principles of sustainable rural and tourism development in the literature that are widely accepted, supported, and created by NGOs, governments, and private organizations, especially those operating in Albania. The second purpose of this literature review section was to determine what the established knowledge is concerning research objectives 1 and 3; or, what are common or likely impacts of tourism development projects and what are the 'criteria', or what is needed, to have sustainable rural and tourism development. Once a baseline for sustainable rural and tourism development was acquired, to make the research more relevant to the thesis case study, the scope of literature reviewed was limited to criteria specific to the following characteristics (if found): Albania, Balkans, South Eastern Europe (SEE), protected areas, rural development, and small developing countries. Limitations of using formalized principles for STD is that they are largely created by developed countries with formalized and established tourism sectors; however, they are still relevant because this is likely where the majority of tourists are coming from and are expected to reflect their expectations. Identification of positive and negative impacts likely to result or frequently observed as a result of tourism development are summarized and later used for discussion of TD in Thethi and objective 1. Finally, identification of what is required for sound sustainable rural and tourism development is summarized via a series of themes, later linked to results and observations presented under objective 3 in Chapter 6.

2.1.1 Defining sustainable development

Before discussing sustainable rural and tourism development, the term "sustainable development" should be clarified. Although widely variable, sustainable development is most frequently described as "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). It is often represented with the 'three pillar' model, which describes the link and harmonization needed between economic, environmental, and social priorities or needs in development (Adams, 2006; WCED, 1987). Global recognition and promotion of sustainable development was initiated in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, a text created from negotiations at the United Nations Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (UNCED, 1992). According to recent rural and tourism development strategies and guidelines, the concept of sustainable development is frequently accepted as a fundamental underlying principle.

2.1.2 Principles of rural development

The basis of much development literature lies in the identification of the amount and quality of *resources* available to a community, region, or nation because the resource affects the level of development, but also the path to and strategies for development (Gallerani et al., 2005). Therefore, the creation of a broad or extended view of what is defined as a resource is useful, especially in rural areas with strong cultural or traditional values (Table 2-2).

Table 2-2 Definition of a “resource” for rural development in terms of capital.

Traditional	Extended	Description
Land	Natural	Natural resources available.
Produced	Built or produced	Resources produced by human activity.
Labour	Human	Ability of individuals to take part in a production process, skilled labour.
	Social	Social structures and networks, within and outside the production process. - Civic participation and trust in public institutions has been correlated to economic growth for transition economies (Raiser, Haerpfer, Nowotny, & Fallace, 2001) Social capital is suggested to be a major determinant in development.
	Cultural	Values, such as those subjective value (i.e. associated with land ownership). Closely related to social capital, but distinct.

Source: (Bebbington, 1999; Gallerani et al., 2005)

However, to identify the basic tenants of rural development, or sustainable rural development, is challenging. It appears that most literature is based on case studies or individual development examples, which leads to a myriad of definitions. Although it would be accurate to propose that rural sustainable development must incorporate the same principles as sustainable development, surely there are specific issues characteristic of a rural environment that would create unique development paths or strategies. Roberts and Hall have made such an observation, noting that the “holistic” sustainability approach has been lost in the rural development context, as focus is on individual rural components, such as agriculture or the natural environment, in isolation of other factors (Roberts, 2001). Also, it is apparent from the literature that tourism and the agricultural sectors are inextricably linked to rural development (examples: (Deller, 2010; Kay, 2009; Roberts, 2001)).

Therefore, it is most logical to examine the rural development strategies of Albania, especially those related specifically to tourism; however, to put this information into context, first a brief outline of the EU rural development policy is discussed below. Given that Albania is hoping to become part of the EU in the future, rural development policies and strategies should eventually align with those of the EU (Delegation of the EU to Albania, 2009).

2.1.2.1 Rural development policy in the European Union

The EU has a common rural development policy for 2007 – 2013 for all member states, outlined in Council Regulation (EC) No. 1698/2005 (EAFRD, 2005). With 56 % of the EU population living in rural areas, which compose 91 % of EU territory, strengthening rural development has become an EU priority (European Commission, 2008). There are three themes, or Axes, underlying the policy, presented in Table 2-3: improving the competitiveness of the forestry and agricultural industries; improving the environment and countryside; and, improving the quality of rural life while encouraging rural economy diversification (European Commission, 2008). Rural development funding is required to be split evenly between the three Axes, with some funding diverted to “LEADER community initiatives”, or Axis 4; these are individual projects developed and implemented by local groups in rural areas to address

local issues, with a strong focus on partnerships and networks (European Commission, 2007). Core themes underlying the measures for the Axes are also summarized. An understanding of gender equality and non-discrimination are also key principles of the policy.

Table 2-3 Components of EU rural development policy, 2007 – 2013.

Improvement Axis	Measures	Core themes
1. Forestry and agriculture sector competitiveness	Selected: - promoting human knowledge and potential, i.e. via education, training - restructuring and developing physical potential, promoting innovation, i.e. via improving infrastructure - improving quality of agricultural products, i.e. via helping farmers adapt to standards	Institutional support and frameworks; Communication and coordination; Awareness, education; Perception of development.
2. Environment and countryside	- target sustainable use of agricultural land by, i.e. payments to farmers in areas with handicaps - target sustainable use of forestry land, i.e. support for non-productive investments	
3. Rural economy diversification	Measures to diversify the rural economy, including: - diversify into non-agriculture sectors - support entrepreneurship - encourage tourism Article 55 “Encouragement of tourism activities” via: - small scale infrastructures, i.e. sign posts, information centres - recreational infrastructure, i.e. access to nature, small-scale accommodation - development and marketing of tourism services	
Rural life quality	Measures to improve rural quality of life: - basic services for the economy and rural population - village renewal and development - conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage	
Support required for Axis 3	- training and information access for economic actors involved with Axis 3 - skills acquisition, animation and implementation of a local development strategy via training, information, public-private partnership	

Source: (EAFRD, 2005)

2.1.3 Principles of sustainable tourism development

Since the Rio Declaration in 1992, many international principles and guidelines for STD have emerged; this reflects the role which tourism could have as a vehicle for development, but also environmental and cultural conservation (Foxlee, 2007). There are two texts that are cited as “foundations” for guidelines that followed, *Beyond the Green Horizon: Principles of Sustainable Tourism* published in 1992 by Tourism Concern, and the *Charter for Sustainable Tourism*, which was prepared at the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in 1995 (Foxlee, 2007; Tourism Concern, 1992; WCST, 1995). The second text states in its first declaration that “Tourism development shall be based on criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically bearable in the long term, as well as economically viable, and ethically and socially

equitable for local communities” (WCST, 1995). After the *Charter*, many permutations of this definition have been used to describe STD (Foxlee, 2007). As noted in the Introduction, for the purposes of this paper it is necessary to establish STD as tourism that contributes to rural development where a pristine environment is the key offering.

After the two foundational texts noted above, international guidelines concerning sustainable tourism began to specifically acknowledge the connection between tourism, biodiversity, cultural heritage conservation, and protected areas (Foxlee, 2007). A number of reviews of existing international guidelines relating to sustainable tourism have been published (Foxlee, 2007; Mayer & Garbe, 2001). In terms of reflecting characteristics of the thesis case study, only guidelines specifically designed for tourism in protected areas was found. A summary of the Foxlee compilation, noting only recent guidelines and principles that focus on protected areas, is presented in Appendix 1, Table A-1. Common policy directions and principles are summarized in Table 2-4 and correlated to core themes noted in the EU rural development policy.

Table 2-4 Common policy directions and principles in sustainable tourism guidelines and principles.

Common policy directions and principles	Core themes
Policy, legislation and enforcement procedure in place to ensure minimal impacts from tourism.	Functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks
Planning, Integrated management, Access guidelines, Impact assessment, Monitoring	
Incentives to encourage best practise and sensitive marketing.	
Partnerships and cooperation with local communities, sharing tasks and benefits.	Communication and coordination between stakeholders
Research and information exchange between stakeholders.	
Raising awareness of conservation and sustainable tourism through education and interpretation for industry, government, and tourists.	Awareness, education: capacity building with all stakeholders
Capacity building in the form of staff training and provision support to promote sustainability.	
Ethical tourism, or the role tourism could play in poverty alleviation, gender inequality, etc.	Redefining the perception of development to reflect the principles of sustainability
Acceptance that there are limits to acceptable change of vulnerable ecosystems.	

Source: (Foxlee, 2007)

The focus of the texts appeared to reflect the goals of the organization, arising from government, NGOs, and the private tourism sector. For the purposes of this research, it is interesting to examine if and how STD guidelines and principles mention and/or prioritize local communities and the environment. Table 2-5 shows two guideline examples for the same common policy direction (policy, legislation, and enforcement); each guideline specifically mentions the local community *or* the environment as a priority for that common policy. The guidelines were selected from the Foxlee summary, which was assumed to include a relatively complete list of guidelines describing each common policy (2007).

Table 2-5 Local community participation vs. environmental preservation focus for policy, legislation, and enforcement policy direction.

Guideline example:	
Local community participation	Environmental preservation
<p>Policy, legislation:</p> <p>“Future development of tourism policies should include a more decentralized approach to planning and management that is underpinned by greater participation of local authorities and people in the decision-making process and greater attention to fostering partnership arrangements between entrepreneurs and local peoples, landholders and/or communities”</p> <p>-IUCN 1999, Approaches and Practice for Sustainable Use of Biological Resources – Tourism</p>	<p>Policy, legislation:</p> <p>“Policies and, where appropriate, legislation, environmental economic instruments and incentives should be developed to ensure that tourism activities meet the needs of nature and biological diversity conservation, including mobilizing funding from tourism”</p> <p>-CBD1997, Berlin Declaration, Principle 1.6</p>
<p>Enforcement:</p> <p>“Identify and resolve potential or actual conflicts between tourism and other activities over resource use at an early stage. Involve all relevant stakeholders in the development of sound management plans, and provide the organization, facilities and enforcement capacity required for effective implementation of those management plans”</p> <p>-UNEP 2001, Principles for Implementation of Sustainable Tourism, Principle 1.4</p>	<p>Enforcement:</p> <p>“Develop regulatory mechanisms for internalization of environmental costs in all aspects of the tourism product”</p> <p>-Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism 2002</p>

Source: (Foxlee, 2007)

As evident in Table 2-5, depending on the focus of the guideline, the local community or natural environment is given priority in policy and legislation development. This reflects the range in diversity of guiding agencies, target audience, and main focus of the STD documents, which is impressive, yet overwhelming, and bound to lead to confusion on behalf of the local community, government and tourism developers in terms of rights and roles. One can ask, why are so many different guidelines available and which is the most appropriate to use in a specific location?

A solution to this problem was presented the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress in 2008, where the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) were announced with two aims: “to come to a common understanding of sustainable tourism, and [GSTC] will be the minimum that any tourism business should aspire to reach” (TSC, 2009). The criteria were developed by a partnership of 27 organizations, including almost all guiding agencies such as United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), IUCN, CBD, and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) etc. mentioned in Table A-1, and private, public and NGOs (TSC, 2009). In attempts to have an inclusive and transparent process, the GSTC developers analyzed over 4500 criteria and 60 certification or voluntary criteria and have engaged in a consultation process with thousands of tourism stakeholders (TSC, 2009). The final outcome is a brief document which is aimed primarily at accommodation and tour operation sectors, however is stated to be applicable to the entire tourism industry and could serve many uses, such as for tourists, tour operators and government policy programs, etc. The GSTC has four categories, sustainable management, society and economy, cultural heritage, and environment, with specific indication of local community participation,

environmental preservation, and connection to relevant common policy themes identified in Table 2-4 (TSC, 2009).

2.1.4 STD implementation

The implementation of international STD guidelines will only be briefly discussed, noting that they may hold some relevance for the region due to GTZ Albania's involvement with the GSTC development and other international organizations.

The two most recent and applicable international STD implementation documents appear to be the following: CBD's 2004 *Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development*, which outlines a ten-step process for managing tourism in sensitive areas, targeting governments and managers, and WCPA's 2002 *Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: guidelines for planning and management* offers an even more detailed description of implementation (CBD Secretariat, 2004; Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002). However, these implementation guidelines are associated with the same problems as the STD principles themselves; mainly that in their creation by developed countries with formalized and established tourism sectors, they assume to a certain extent that infrastructure, policy and capacity for implementation is already developed.

Therefore, an alternative method of implementing STD which is more adaptable to local conditions and a rural community in a small, developing, post-communist country is needed. It also appears that a significant barrier to implementation of international STD guidelines could simply be the lack of capacity or knowledge of sustainable tourism in a nation or community. Finally, all of the principles and guidelines reviewed, although in varying ways, mention the inclusion of the local community as essential for STD. Therefore, instead of approaching development from the "top-down", methods of "bottom-up" tourism implementation, or community based tourism development, were investigated and discussed below.

2.1.4.1 Community-Based Tourism Development

In *Building Community Capacity for Tourism Development*, Moscardo emphasizes the importance of community capacity building to avoiding negative impacts of tourism development (2008). CBT has been defined as "tourism based on negotiation and participation with key stakeholders in the destination...the host playing a central role in determining the form and process of tourism development" (Saarinen, 2006). Although CBT is a promising vehicle for STD, effectively implementing CBT faces two major challenges: first, naivety concerning the local community political structures, which are rarely challenged or changed, which risks CBT being dominated by external consultants or government agencies which are unaware of the power dynamics; and second, the lack of knowledge by the local community concerning their own rights and role in tourism development, which often leads to exclusion and the development of false expectations (Moscardo, 2008). The barriers identified in CBT development combine to create the negative impacts associated with tourism development (Figure 2-2). Moscardo postulates that the limited tourism knowledge and experience of the local community is the core of this (2008).

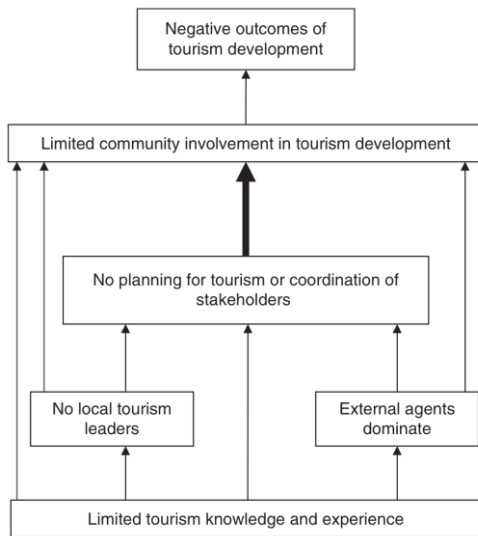


Figure 2-2 Connections between barriers to effective tourism development (Moscardo, 2008).

To overcome these barriers, the question of how to address this lack of knowledge and local community leadership is posed, which is rooted in “community capacity”. This concept can be described as collective knowledge and ability within the community and how that knowledge and ability is used to define problems and options from within the community (Moscardo, 2008). Also involved in this theory is “social capital”, which are the resources and individual can access or use based on relationships with others, involving community networks and trust (Woodhouse, 2006). Unsustainable tourism development is said to erode social capital, which then leads to a breakdown in community capacity, rather than building (Moscardo, 2008). Therefore, to improve tourism development or increases sustainability, Moscardo proposes incorporating building community capacity into CBT development, ideally before tourism development initiates (Figure 2-3).

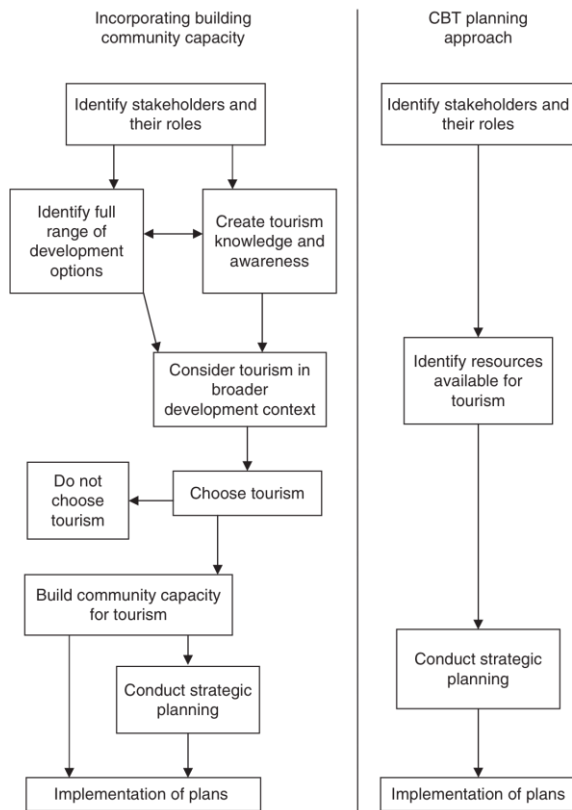


Figure 2-3 Model for community capacity building for tourism development decisions (Moscardo, 2008).

2.1.5 Impacts from tourism development

The literature concerning impacts from tourism development is abundant and briefly summarized below. Published by the WCPA and IUCN in 2002, the *Sustainable tourism in protected areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management* effectively summarizes the potential benefits for tourism in protected areas (Table 2-6) and costs (Table 2-7) according to the three pillars of sustainability, economy, society, and environment (Eagles et al., 2002). This information is supported by other studies that evaluate the impacts of tourism development on local communities (Moscardo, 2005, 2008).

Table 2-6 Potential benefits from tourism in protected areas.

Theme	Benefit
Economy, increasing opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in jobs for local residents - Increase in income - Stimulates, diversifies local economy - Encourages manufacturing of local goods - Opens up new markets and encourages foreign exchange - Improves standards of living - Generates local tax revenues - Employees learn new skills - Increases funding for local communities and protected areas
Social, enhancing quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes aesthetic, spiritual, other values related to “well-being” - Supports environmental education of local communities and tourists - Creates an attractive environment for tourists and local people, potentially compatible with new economic activities - Increases intercultural understanding, encourages an exchange between local people and visitors of culture and languages - Encourages the development of culture, crafts, arts, and value of local culture and environment - Increases the education level of local residents
Environment and Cultural heritage protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protects ecological processes and watersheds - Conserves biodiversity: genes, species, ecosystems - Protects, conserves, and values heritage resources, cultural and built - Creates economic value for resources which otherwise lack perceived value - Education and interpretation communicates value of conservation - Creates a new generation of responsible consumers by educating visitors and residents about the value of natural and built heritage and culture - Supports research and development of good environmental practise and management in tourism business, visitor behaviour - Improves local facilities, transportation, communication - Helps develop financing mechanisms for protected area projects

Source: (Eagles et al., 2002)

Table 2-7 Potential costs from tourism in protected areas.

Theme	Costs
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase in demands for basic services, i.e. healthcare, potentially leading to higher tax rates, local residents potentially cannot afford to stay; may result in increased foreign ownership and raised property value - increased protected area management costs - vulnerability to external factors beyond the control of a local community heavily dependent on tourism, including currency fluctuations, political instability, etc. - unless leakages are minimized, more profitable uses of land and activities will be sourced

Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - many tourists could disturb community activities, compete for recreation places or other services - congestion, exacerbated littering, vandalism, crime - governments placing the needs of the tourists before those of the local people could lead to lower local support for tourism - seasonal employment, however not necessarily a cost if earn enough - management strategies for national park visitors negatively affect local residents, i.e. traditional uses of resources - commercialization of traditional practises, losing authenticity - if the community lacks control or choice in the TD process, negative impacts are commonly observed; however this does not indicate that change as a result of TD is negative and negative impacts are likely mitigated with planning and management - risk high of local exploitation when large difference in wealth between visitors and local residents
Environment	<p>Example for each element:</p> <p>Ecosystems – tourist developments, i.e. infrastructure, disturb vegetation, animal habitat, drainage, etc.</p> <p>Soil – Compaction, erosion.</p> <p>Vegetation – Disturbance around high-use areas and by transportation</p> <p>Water – Increased demand, disposal of sewage into water bodies, etc.</p> <p>Air – Pollution from motorized transportation.</p> <p>Wildlife - Disturbance by noises, visitor activities, hunting, fishing, etc.</p>

Source: (Eagles et al., 2002)

2.1.6 Analysis of literature and evaluation in context of research

In Table 2-3 it is apparent that there are several key components to rural development and that tourism is cited as a measure for diversifying the rural economy into non-agriculture sectors. It is also apparent that cores themes identified as underlying STD in Table 2-4 are very much present in rural development policy; institutional support and frameworks, communication and coordination, awareness and education, and redefining perception of development to reflect sustainable development are required for sustainable rural and tourism development. Also, in connection to the resource concept presented in Table 2-2, it is evident that the EU policy targets all five ‘extended’ capitals available for development. Agriculture and forestry appear to be key rural resources, but there is emphasis on diversification via entrepreneurship and tourism. The “environment and countryside” also appear to be key resources given the focus in Axis 2 on sustainable land use.

The “holistic” sustainability approach noted by Roberts and Hall is evident in the EU rural development policy, as each pillar of sustainability is addressed (Roberts, 2001). However, the weighting or importance of each is not noted, but minimum budget allocation requirements do exist (10 %, 25 %, and 5 % for Axis 1, 2, and 3, respectively) (MAFCP, 2007). The “holistic” approach to development could also be applied to the resource capitals described in Table 2-2, as the extended definitions appear to be based more on the sustainability concept than the traditional.

It is apparent that both the GSTC criteria and common STD directions and principles outlined by Foxlee above reflect the original STD definition from the 1995 Charter (WCST, 1995). Also, documents involve local community participation and preservation of the environment, but in different ways. In the GSTC, participation and cooperation with the local community is reflected in terms of employing locals, including in management positions,

purchasing local goods, supporting local entrepreneurs to sell goods, and in developing a code of conduct; while previous guidelines, such as the CBD guidelines, are oriented towards local community participation or direct involvement in the planning, management, and enforcement of tourism developments (CBD Secretariat, 2004; TSC, 2009). This is a significant difference in the role allocated to the local community in STD that will create confusion over the role and rights of local communities and responsibilities of tourism developers. Similar complexity and confusion surrounds the preservation of the environment, whether or not this is of higher priority than local communities, when comparing GSTC to previous guidelines.

The costs and benefits of tourism development presented in Table 2-6 and 2-7 are highly dependent on the context of development; indeed, these costs and benefits are not specific to just tourism, but all kinds of development. For example, the increase in employment opportunities for local residents will only be a benefit of tourism development if this is a priority or recognized as important by tourism developers. Similarly, tourism could act to protect environmental processes and watersheds only if strategies and actions specifying this are put into place. Also, the number of actors involved in tourism development will make it difficult to ensure benefits and avoid costs of tourism development.

It is possible that if the four core themes underlying successful rural and tourism development (institutional support and frameworks; communication and coordination; awareness and education; perception of development) are not in place, many benefits of development would not be realized or negative impacts of tourism development would occur. To further investigate this, underlying themes of negative tourism development impacts were elucidated. In a study by Moscardo, 80% of 329 reviewed case studies of tourism development from 92 countries reported negative impacts from tourism development (Moscardo, 2005, 2008). From these impacts, five core themes were identified, presented in Table 2-8, the majority of which can be linked to social and environmental impacts and the lack of one or more core themes.

It is acknowledged that some of the impacts listed in Table 2-8 could have been avoided via planning and management controls; however, Moscardo recognized that the lack of knowledge about the negative impacts of tourism is also extremely limiting in preparing or planning for such impacts (Moscardo, 2005, 2008). Literature has focused on impacts and variables relating to local resident - guest interactions, or residents themselves, and in established, large-scale tourism projects, rather than the tourism development process (for example, (Apostolopoulos & Sonmez, 1999; Pearce, Moscardo, & Ross, 1996). Also, tourism studies tend to connect the number of tourists in a destination with, for example, environmental degradation, an obvious over-simplification (Andersen, 1991; Southgate & Sharpley, 2002).

Table 2-8 Five common themes underlying negative impacts of tourism development.

Theme	Causes	Core themes lacking?
Disruption to daily life Social, economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - traffic congestion, crowding - increase in cost of living - presence of tourists at rituals or ceremonies - changes in land use forcing residents to go elsewhere to live, work, recreate 	Institutional support and frameworks; Communication and coordination; Awareness, education;
Disillusion with failed promises of tourism development Social, economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - less income and fewer employment opportunities than expected - job requiring training taken up by new residents, local people not trained or do not have skills - jobs available low skill level and low career potential, often seasonal or part-time - high level of small business failure due to lack of tourism knowledge, business skills 	Redefining perception of development to reflect sustainability.
Conflict Social	Between community members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakdown in trust and relationships, power struggles between opposing groups in the community (i.e. pro/con tourism development, different vested interests) Between family members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changes in employment, income resulting in changes in traditional age and gender roles in families Between tourism and other activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - land used for tourism in conflict with desires for subsistence and recreational uses 	
Cultural change Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to change cultural practises for presentation and to sell for tourism Some cases: - changes to culture out of local community control Other cases: - local resident unable to change culture; i.e. use of images to promote culture locks community in certain roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - timing of tourism impede some traditional practises, i.e. agriculture, leading to shortfall in resource production 	
Environmental degradation Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - building infrastructure - pollution and waste disposal problems - depletion of natural resources, i.e. water, food stocks - changes in wildlife behaviour - inappropriate architecture used for tourism activities 	

Source: (Eagles et al., 2002; Moscardo, 2005, 2008)

2.1.7 Summary

A common understanding of core concepts underlying this research, sustainable development, rural development, and tourism development and implementation, or the first purpose of this literature review section, is established in the discussion and analysis above. The second purpose of this literature review section was to determine what the established knowledge is concerning research objectives 1 and 3. Identification of positive and negative impacts likely to result or frequently observed as a result of tourism development were summarized in Table 2-6 and 2-7, to be used later in this study for discussion of TD in Thethi and objective 1. Identification of what is required for sound sustainable rural and tourism development was found to be a set of reoccurring themes, including functional institutional support and

frameworks, communication and coordination, awareness and education, and redefining perceptions of development, which can be connected to observations presented in Chapter 5 and objective 3. These themes are defined and described primarily in Table 2-4, but also by Axes described in Table 2-3.

The above literature review concerning international principles of sustainable rural and tourism development is summarized in Table 2-9.

Table 2-9 Summary: International principles of sustainable rural and tourism development.

Section	Summary and evaluation
2.1.1 Sustainable development	Assumed to be optimal. Underlying principle in recent rural and tourism development principles and guidelines.
2.1.2 Principles of rural development	Tourism is cited as a measure for diversifying the rural economy into non-agriculture sectors in order to increase rural quality of life. Themes underlying STD and rural development include: institutional support and frameworks, communication and coordination, awareness and education, and perception of development. Approach to rural development holistic in terms of three pillars of sustainability, but weighting or importance of each pillar unclear.
2.1.3 Sustainable tourism development	As defined for this research, STD assumes the local community is a key stakeholder because tourism is being used to promote rural development for the benefit of local residents, with the environment as the key resource. Themes underlying STD similar to those for rural development. STD principles and guidelines reflect sustainable development principles, however unclear on how to involve the local community and protect the environment; rights and roles unclear.
2.1.4 Implementation of STD principles	Associated with the same problems as the STD principles in that their creation by developed countries with formalized and established tourism sectors assume to a certain extent that infrastructure, policy and capacity for implementation is already developed.
2.1.5 Impacts from tourism development	Costs and benefits of tourism development highly dependent on the context of development, complicated by the number of actors. Benefits may not be realized unless four common policy themes are in place. Planning and management for such impacts is essential, but little information is available concerning impacts. Underlying themes of negative impacts of tourism development are strongly linked to social and environmental impacts, including: disruption to daily life, disillusion with failed promises of tourism development, conflict, cultural change, environmental degradation. If the community lacks control or choice in the TD process, negative impacts are commonly observed; however this does not indicate that change as a result of TD is negative and negative impacts are likely mitigated with planning and management

2.2 Status of rural and tourism development in Albania

The primary purpose of this literature review section is to establish the current status of rural and tourism development in Albania; the path to development, or historical influences, is briefly discussed to place the current development into context. Although the research problem and question focus on a village in Albania, it is pertinent to examine the relevant national actors and institutions because they will likely shape and influence activities on the

local level. This section of the literature review, along with the next, contributes primarily to objective 2, identification of stakeholders, roles, and strategies involved in the current form of tourism development in Thethi; influential national actors and institutions in rural tourism development are identified. Although objective 1 is focused on impacts from tourism development in Thethi, impacts common to development in Albania may be applicable and are identified. This section of the literature review is presented thematically under community, tourism development, and environment, as in Figure 1-3 in preparation for comparison to observations presented in Chapter 5.

2.2.1 Community

2.2.1.1 Rural development policy and strategy in Albania

Rural development in Albania differs from most member states of the EU because it is a country in transition (Gallerani et al., 2005). Developing and transition economies in poor rural areas were historically characterized by the production of agricultural products for rural consumption, but also cash crops (Gallerani et al., 2005). Now, with open markets and increased mobility, rural and non-rural areas are connected, development in rural areas of most transition economies remains unsatisfactory, including Albania (Gallerani et al., 2005).

The transition period during the 1990s in Albania was influenced by a complex history, marked by high emigration, and the collapse of the pyramid scheme in 1997 (Gallerani et al., 2005). The Albanian process of transition has been characterized by high liberalisation and low institutional development; Gallerani *et al.* proposes that the limiting factors of development in Albania are institutional structure and the related state of social and human capital, in which education is proposed to play a strong role (Gallerani et al., 2005).

In order to have a functioning market governed by institutions, or “structure that humans beings give to their interaction” (North, 1990), two things are proposed to be required: respect of contracts (enforcement) and the coordination of exchanges (governance) (Gebre-Madhin, 2003). In rural areas of Albania, a lack of contract respect and enforcement is most evident in the guarantee of property rights and the availability of funding (Gallerani et al., 2005; Holland, 1998). There is still uncertainty surrounding rights to property and funding was lacking because of illegal or semi-legal activities, such as pyramid schemes, drained resources (Gallerani et al., 2005). Enforcement of contracts in Albania operates via formal and informal institutions, often in uncomplimentary ways (Gallerani et al., 2005). Due to a lack of resources, training, and recent communist history, public institutions struggle to maintain their commitments and fill their management roles (Gallerani et al., 2005). In certain regions of Albania, especially the north where tribal organization is dominant, informal institutions such as the “Kanun”, a historic code of law, is strictly followed; however, this is reputed to work effectively only in small social systems, struggling to adapt to enlarged markets (Saltmarshe D., 2001). Problems with enforcement of contracts are purported to be a result of the fundamental lack of trust Albanian citizens have in changing social capital, but also the “cultural matrix” of Albania, which is characterized by strong national identity and simultaneously low identification with public institutions and state (Gallerani et al., 2005; Holland, 1998).

Although a small country, Albania suffers from a lack of and poorly designed infrastructure; road and railway networks are inadequate and internet access insufficient, which are the main limits to economic exchange (Gallerani et al., 2005). Local governments in rural areas typically have low transparency and high rates of corruption, which, along with individualistic behaviour, results in increased time and costs of administration and an ineffective public

system (Carletti, Di Pasquale, Gallerani, Krypa, & Viaggi, 2004). The urban and rural planning system was not efficiently replaced after the fall of communism, so land privatization and certification system is still not properly working. Trading by small entrepreneurs typically follows opportunistic patterns from social and economic relationships rather than a consistent strategy from the market (Gallerani et al., 2005).

However, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection (MAFCP) in the Albanian government recently developed a rural development strategy 2007 – 2013, designed for compliance with the EU policy described above (Table 2-3) and is presented in Table 2-10 (MAFCP, 2007). The trend in policy direction from 2006 to 2013 appears to keep approximately half of the funding allocated for rural development still in Axis 1, improving the agriculture and forestry sectors, while there is a noticeable decrease in funding in Axis 2, improving the environment and countryside; no funding changes occur in Axis 3 and minimal funding is allocated to LEADER program development. However, there is no agency currently operating to implement the rural development strategy; a “Rural Payment Agency” will be established under the MAFCP, but operate independently with support of different government agencies at different levels. Also, development agencies, such as the UNDP, and Local Action Groups (LAG) could be instrumental in implementation (MAFCP, 2007).

Table 2-10 Components of Albania rural development policy, 2007 – 2013.

Axes	Measure	2006	2013		EU min %
		%	% axis	% total	
1. Forestry and agriculture sector competitiveness	Farm modernisation	35.8	55	27.5	10 %
	Value added/marketing	2.9	30	15	
	Forests	5.0	10	5.0	
	Training/advisory services	0	5	2.5	
	Total	43.7		50	
2. Environment and countryside	Less favoured areas	21.2	10	1	25 %
	Agro-environment and Natura 2000	0	90	9	
	Total	21.2		10	
3. Rural economy diversification and rural quality of life	Non-farm employment	0	20	7	5 %
	Quality of rural life, infrastructure	35.1	80	28	
	Total	35.1		35	
4. LEADER program	Participatory development	0		5	
Grand total (%)		100 %		100 %	
Funding (m Lek)		7355		17000	

Source (MAFCP, 2007)

2.2.1.2 Status of land ownership in Albania

It has become evident that land ownership is an integral component of sustainable tourism and rural development, so a brief overview of the current status of land ownership in Albania is pertinent.

After the fall of communism in the early 1990s, agricultural cooperatives were quickly dismantled and at the end of 1993 approximately 92 % of land suitable for agriculture was distributed, forming 450,000 private farms each roughly 1.5 hectares in size (Holland, 1998). Approximately 79 % of the distributed agricultural land went to private enterprises, 75 % of which were families (IMF, 1994); it can be assumed that a local or regional government authority organized this. Residents in rural areas quickly seized collective land previously occupied by families prior to communism; village boundaries were established and parcels of land were distributed in Northern Albanian by village councils according to the rules of the Kanun (Hall, 1999; de Waal, 2004). Therefore, although in this period there was growth in agriculture production, it was constrained by the fact that subsistence farmers owned most land. Laws introduced in 1995 transformed deeds for agricultural land into property titles and allowed foreign individuals or companies to purchase land if they invested three times that much in the land usage (Holland, 1998). However, residents in rural areas during this time were still very unclear as to land ownership and title, complicated by several factors: land registries were up to 12 months behind current status and despite legislation, land registries did not necessarily exist; emigration of large portions of the rural population delayed clarification in land ownership and made defending property rights difficult; legal access for citizens was difficult and it was unclear if courts would recognize their claims (Holland, 1998). During rural privatization the government failed to enforce laws and often this resulted in local communities by default given a high degree in flexibility to shape events (Hall, 1999).

2.2.2 Tourism Development

2.2.2.1 National tourism development post-communism

It is critical, yet beyond the scope of this paper, to understand the complex political history of Albania, which has shaped the present social, economic and political environments (Hall, 2000; Tarifa, 1995; Young, 2008). Albania was under communism until 1991, which was followed by mass emigration and transitional development, which was disrupted by the economic crisis and collapse of the pyramid scheme during 1997. Both periods of change were characterized by violence, anarchy, and institutional corruption, which continue to be problematic (Tarifa, 1995).

A small field of literature exists concerning the historical path of tourism and development in Albania (Hall, 1999, 2000, 2004; Lezzi, 2001; Young, 2008). During the late 1970s when Albania cut ties with China, policies of self-reliance and isolation ruled, limiting the opportunities for international tourism development (Hall, 2000). At this time the potential for small-scale diverse rural tourism development was high, however state-managed “Stalinist approach” to tourism separated foreigners from ‘real Albanians’ using controlled tours, limiting the distribution of tourist income to the population (Hall, 2000). During the transitional development period, the process of land privatization began in 1995, which also allowed foreign investment; in 1997 one third of foreign direct investment was in tourism encouraged by tax exemptions on profits for 5 years (EIU, 1997).

When considering rural tourism development in SEE as a whole, five issues have been identified by several academics to affect and constrain STD (Hall, 2004):

1. The role of international development agencies, consultants and the ‘transition goal’ to shift into the global economy (Coles & Hall, 2004; Simpson & Roberts, 2000).
2. The shift of policy to decrease state intervention when government intervention and public-private partnership for long-term sustainability are needed (Hall, 2000).
3. The need to manage spatially separate demands of higher spending market segments and those of diffuse mass market demands (Jordan, 2000).

4. The requirement to resolve conflicting perceptions of need, between tourists, developers, conservationists, and local communities, but also within the local community (Houliat, 1999; Verbole & Cottrell, 2002)
5. The need to connect tourism development to the local economy and social structure of a community, with the recognition of nature and role of social capital in doing this (Roberts, 2004).

Therefore, it is apparent that potential for STD in Albania is greatly influenced by its current social, political and economic climate, which was shaped by a tumultuous past. The themes of communism, transitional development, land policies, economic crisis, and sustainable and rural development through tourism create a unique local environment for tourism to develop.

2.2.2.2 Current status of national tourism development

Since 2005, government policies concerning tourism are implemented by the National Agency of Tourism (NAT, known as the National Tourist Organization until 2007), which operates under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports. The NAT functions with two departments, a Directory of Marketing and Promotion and Directory of Assistance, “cooperat[ing] closely with private sector and NGOs which operate in the field of tourism” (National Tourism Agency, 2010). Implementation of NAT strategies is via coordination with local governments and the private sector, although it is unclear if any communication between the actors currently exists (Miller, 2010).

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports has created a strategic document outlining tourism actions and policies for 2007 – 2013 and an integrated document involving all four sections of the department as a result of decree no. 395 “Strategy and Action Plan for the Development of Natural and Environmental Tourism” (2006) and “On tourism” (2007) (MTCYS, 2008b, 2008a). The second law aims to develop and implement international standards for tourism in Albania and prioritize cultural and natural heritage development tourism, requiring the creation of institutional structures involving monitoring, management and promotion of local tourist destinations

The 2007 – 2013 strategy builds on the 2003 Strategy for Tourism Development, which focused on strengthening the tourism sector using the principle of sustainable development; not all aspects of the 2003 plan were realized, such as sustainable product development and application of sustainability at all levels in tourism development and revising the design of “priority tourism zones” based on economic, social, cultural and environmental analysis (MTCYS, 2008a). The 2007 – 2013 strategy defines the key tourist products in Albania as (1) Sun and beach tourism, (2) Special interest tourism (including ecotourism), and (3) Business tourism and conferences. Preconditions tourism development listed in the 2007 – 2013 strategy include the following:

- Sustainable development principles must be applied at all levels of tourism development in the central, local and private sector.
- Completion of tourism legal framework and organization of tourism sector in private and public spheres to ensure effective implementation and management of visions and goals.
- Infrastructure development, including transportation, water and solid waste and water treatment systems, telecommunications, and internet.
- Review and establish zoning and land use plans for tourism development and clarification of land ownership to ensure sustainable development.
- Investment in natural and cultural resources, human capacity, and management systems so the tourism sector can develop effectively.

- Data collection and processing system development.

Mountain area tourism development is cited as ideally being very compact (150 tourist/hectare) or in the form of “villages”. Rural tourism development is also cited as having great potential due to the large number of villages in the country, with a population of almost 1 million people, and amenable agro-tourism, ecotourism, and nature tourism. Rural area development and ecotourism appear to be a priority in order to diversify tourism development, avoiding mass coastal tourism; however, this contradicts the priority of key tourism products listed above.

In a report published in 2009 for the UNFCCC under National Circumstances, tourism in Albania is observed as experiencing significant growth in correlation with improvements in road infrastructure over the past two years (MEFWA, 2009). In 2007, the number of foreign visitors staying overnight was approximately 967 000 persons, with the objective of increasing this number to 1.25 million by 2012 and raising the tourism GDP contribution by 15 %. The overall aim of tourism development in Albania cited in this report is to develop “special interest” tourism, such as cultural or environmental, as well as beach and business tourism with policies that integrate cultural and natural heritage management (MEFWA, 2009).

2.2.3 Environment

2.2.3.1 Environmental Impacts observed in Albania from development

Although objective 1 is focused on impacts from tourism development in Thethi, impacts common to development in Albania may be applicable. Therefore, first it is relevant to establish the current conditions or state of the Albania environment and management systems that could impact the environment, or cause the impacts observed from development. This may also help clarify the difference between impacts from rural development and tourism.

The current state of the urban and rural environment has been evaluated by the Albanian Ministry for Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (MEFWA) in a 2007 strategic document and 2009 communication to the UNFCCC (MEFWA, 2007; MEFWA & UNDP, 2009). Table 2-11 describes the current urban and rural state of the Albanian environment by component, such as water, and air, and impacts on that state resulting from post-communism development, unless otherwise specified.

Table 2-11 UNFCCC communication on the current state of the Albanian environment.

Component	State
Water (mainly urban, becomes rural with tourism)	Urban: Distribution system problematic, frequent infiltration from sewer lines; regulatory instruments include effluent charges, drinking water fees, and non-compliance fees, however only drinking-water fees are in place in some places (2009).
Air (mainly urban)	Historic sources of pollution: industrial chromium smelting, copper, cast-iron, cement and steel metallurgy, thermo-power plants Current: ‘unacceptable’ levels of PM10 in urban areas, oil extraction and refining, mobile sources, domestic heating, cement production, garbage burning; Urban areas: air pollution most problematic here, transportation is the main source.
Soil (mainly rural)	Erosion: caused by unsustainable agriculture and forestry practises, pastoral activities, especially along river banks Contamination: relatively low, except in former industrial sites where clean-up did not occur.

Biodiversity (mainly rural)	Protected area coverage is not sufficient to allow for effective protection, not representative of the different habitats which exist in Albania, and plagued by illegal activities, i.e. hunting, logging, construction. Currently 936 endangered species in Albania.
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Source: (MEFWA & UNDP, 2009)

Table 2-12, also produced by the Albanian Ministry of environment, presents information in a slightly different manner, relating units of activity associated with development to environmental impact.

Table 2-12 MEFWA report, Environmental impact per unit activity.

Activity	Description	Impact
Urban development	Domestic and commercial property development, use -construction, urban and rural, poorly planned and regulated, without permits; lack wastewater and waste management collection, low financing - high impact compared to standard of living in urban areas	Air quality- construction dust, household and transport emissions Water resources- poor regulation, leaks in some distribution systems 75% Water quality- Insufficient collection, lack of treatment, contamination Landscape – Erosion of urban-rural distinction
Industry	Mining, manufacturing - CO ₂ emissions high per unit GDP for industrialized countries - SMEs often not invest in waste management systems, use insufficient public systems	- air emissions, spills, leaks, discharge to water specific to construction: noise, dust, disturbance, damage to roads
Transport	Road, rail, air - dominated by the road sector - rail stagnant, air expected to increase	Development and use of roads: - main impacts on landscape, biodiversity Poor air quality in urban areas: - poor quality of fuel, high average age, size of vehicles with low efficiency, poor vehicle maintenance, increased standing time due to inefficient road network
Agriculture	Exploitation of forests, pastures, fish resources - potential for re-intensification of agriculture due to increased funding	- erosion inappropriate ploughing - misuse of water from inefficient irrigation systems - fragmentation of land
Energy	Production, distribution of electricity - low energy efficiency, weak distribution system, poor insulation	- frequent shortages in supply lead to diesel generator use and result in high emissions in urban areas
Tourism	Tourist asset development, tourist resource use	- impacts similar to those from urban development, mainly from inadequate waste management and wastewater collection
Waste (urban and rural issue)	Urban: waste management challenges due to migration from rural areas, economic and population growth; waste from households, including hazardous waste, construction, production and service sector waste collected without separation; collection is via direct discharge or special bags, responsibility of the local	- lack of proper waste treatment, dumping, burning, and poorly constructed landfills results in a high risk of air and water pollution, exposure of contaminants

	<p>government. Estimate 550 kg/capita/yr</p> <p>Rural: no waste collection; dumping or burning, Estimate 170 kg/capita/yr</p> <p>Little recycling, landfill is main disposal method, however no properly constructed landfill sites exist in the country</p>	
Past activities	Industrial and mineral extraction	- land and water contamination in former industry and mine sites

Source: (MEFWA, 2007; MEFWA & UNDP, 2009)

2.2.3.2 National park management in Albania

In Albania, protected area land surface is currently estimated to be 12.6 %, with plans of increasing this to 20.5 % by 2020 (UNEP, 2010). As a result of Constitution adoption in Albania in 2002, an environmental legal framework has begun to develop; the Constitution states aim related to the environment and sustainable development: "...healthy and ecologically suitable environment for the present and future generations...rational exploitation of forests, waters, pastures as well as other natural resources, based on the sustainable development principle...[and the right of everyone] to be informed on the environmental situation and its protection..." (MEFWA & UNDP, 2009).

The legal framework in Albania for protected area designation and management is comprised by several laws: No. 8906 "On protected areas" (2002), "On biodiversity protection" (2006), and "On wild fauna protection" (recent, post-2006). These laws are the primary nature protection legislation in Albania, supplemented by several decrees, including No. 267 "On the procedures of designation of Protected Areas and buffer zones" (2003), No. 266 "On the Administration of Protected Areas" (2003), No.81 and "On the Protected Areas Committee" (2005) (UNEP, 2010).

"On protected areas" legislation covers the following areas: proclamation, protection, administration, and sustainable use of protected areas and their resources; facilitation of conditions for the development of *environmental tourism*; education and information exchange with the local community; and, economic incomes for the local community and businesses. The legislation also outlines protected area management, distinguishing management levels for the six IUCN protected area categories (UNEP, 2010).

The Albanian Ministry of the Environment, Forests, and Water Administration (MEFWA) regional Directorate of Forestry Service agencies, who establishes a management committee, the "protected area committee", carries out administration of protected areas. The legal support for this administration is outlined in the decree "On the Administration of Protected Areas", which has the following tasks: administration and guarding of protected areas; overseeing implementation of protected area management plans, including land management and monitoring plans, which require publication; collecting fees for use and exploitation of protected areas; controlling visitors and users; creating regulations for use, i.e. hunting and fishing, etc (UNEP, 2010).

In a recent feasibility study by the IUCN for a transboundary protected area in Southern Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia, *sustainable tourism development* is cited as the greatest opportunity to develop local economies in protected areas, but with caution (2010). The study recognizes that without proper planning and management, tourism would develop unsustainably, leading to non-reversible changes in the environment: "...should these natural values be gone, a considerable number of current customers, in particular the foreign ones,

could simply disappear forever” (UNEP, 2010). The report also goes on to state that the future and sustainability of tourism in protected area is dependent on “the cooperation of nature conservation authorities and protected area administrations with local municipality authorities and the tourism sector” (UNEP, 2010).

2.2.3.3 MEFWA strategy for the Environment

The Albanian national strategy for development and integration with respect to the environment is outlined in the “Environmental Sector and Cross-Cutting Strategy” report created by the MEFWA (2007). The report outlines the current conditions of the environment; level of resources devoted to environmental protection; legislation and implementation; vision, strategic priorities, and goals; policies; resource implications; and accountability, monitoring and evaluation (MEFWA, 2007).

In 2007, only 0.006 % of total public expenditures were dedicated to MEFWA, with 75 % of expenditures (revenues and investments) relying on external assistance (2007). With a staff of only 200 in the environmental protection program, and 40 staff working in Regional Environmental Agencies responsible for enforcement, most working in the field do not have the appropriate means of transport, communication, or administration tools. Implementation of current legislation suffers as a result, and knowledge or awareness of such legislation is low; financial penalties for breaches of laws are not actually collected. Overall conclusions of the current state of the environment are that the level of public funding for environmental protection and infrastructure to protect the environment is too low, and inefficient economic activities, such as transportation, result in high impacts per unit of activity (MEFWA, 2007). Future priorities and goals of the ministry include: enforcement of environmental legislation, adoption of European community legal standards, capital investment in environmental protection, financial support for environmental infrastructure, environmental resource management, communication and awareness, decentralisation and ownership

2.2.4 Analysis of literature and evaluation in context of research

It is evident that institutions and organizations are struggling to develop not just in rural areas, but the whole of Albania; from the literature above, it also appears that urban areas are given more political attention and likely funding. According to the Albanian rural development strategy outlined in Table 2-10, the largest funding decrease is under Axis 2, the “less favoured areas” measure; for example, mountain or handicapped areas (MAFCP, 2007). The strategy document supports the overall decrease of funding for Axis 2 because it is assumed preservation of the environment and landscape is integrated into the other axes as well; for example, nitrate pollution could be reduced by adjustment in farming practises and equipment (MAFCP, 2007). However, this approach is extremely risky because it assumes that all environmental and landscape issues arise solely from agricultural and forestry practises; in fact, illegal forestry and mining have had significant environmental impacts in rural Albania (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). The strategy also assumes in baseline analysis of Axis 2 that “Albania has varied and relatively unspoilt natural resources. Farming and forest practices are relatively extensive, environment-friendly and there is good scope for farmers to benefit from their multifunctional role of providing landscape for recreation and producing food” (MAFCP, 2007). As previously noted, forestry practises are not environmentally conscious, and natural resources are being spoiled with garbage due to poor or no waste management practises (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). Finally, Axis 2 funding projected for 2013 does not meet the EU minimum % standard, which is not justified in the document.

Specifically relating to tourism, there is a 0 – 7 % increase from 2006 – 2013 in funding allocated to “non-farm” employment, which are predicted to be mostly small-scale family enterprises, such as tourism, processing and local crafts (MAFCP, 2007). An emphasis is placed on small-scale infrastructure potential resulting from tourism activities and also entrepreneurship among women and young people, which will require specific training and information. Non-farm related tourism is also mentioned as a source of damage to the environment as a result of pollution and unplanned construction; control of such damage is proposed to be mitigated by a public education program “...to create better awareness of the value of Albania’s natural and cultural heritage, particularly for higher value international tourism which is the fastest growing market internationally and the most lucrative market for Albania” (MAFCP, 2007). Finally, farm tourism is also promoted as a development option for least favoured areas, in combination with organic or eco-farming (MAFCP, 2007).

Therefore, in connection to the EU policy and “resource” concepts noted above, it is evident that Albania is placing increased importance on built or produced capital (agriculture and forestry), have acknowledge that they need improvements in social capital, but have decreased the priority of natural capital as its own entity. It is also clear that tourism is seen as a key strategy in increasing rural quality of life in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors

The current strategy for tourism development in Albania is strongly connected to themes of sustainability, environmental protection and local community involvement; however, as with any strategy, it is the implementation which is often executed poorly, and likely to be the case in Albania because of constraints noted by Hall, including natural and social capital. Therefore, it is more pertinent to examine specific tourism development projects to see if this strategy is implemented; in this research, the case study of tourism development in Thethi is analyzed below. This will also elucidate the connection between national and regional or local tourism development strategies.

It is interesting that the tourism Ministry notes land ownership as a precondition for tourism development, indicating there is awareness at a national level that this is problematic for development. Also, the four core themes reflected in international sustainable rural and tourism development principles are evident in the preconditions for tourism development in Albania note by the tourism Ministry.

From the information presented in Table 2-11, it appears that development has impacted rural areas most noticeably in terms of biodiversity, soil, and water environmental components. However, as tourism increases, pressure will increase on each environmental component, such as water distribution in urban and rural areas. From Table 2-12, it is interesting to note that tourism impacts are assumed to be similar to urban development, thus not accounting for rural tourism environmental impacts, which may have a relatively higher impact in undeveloped areas. Development activities causing most rural environmental impacts appear to be agriculture, energy, tourism, a lack of waste management, and past development activities. From both tables, it is clear that development in Albania has been fast and without much consideration for the environment.

The Albanian protected area legal and management framework and MEFWA strategy were investigated to determine which actors and institutions were involved in environmental protection, especially relating to the Thethi area. Legislation for protected areas appears to be very new, with the majority of the responsibility for protection falling onto MEFWA. The status of the Albanian Ministry of Environment is quite dire, with low levels of public funding insufficient to conduct protected area management and law enforcement. Again, strategies appear to be sustainable, but in practise the implementation of such strategies is failing

primarily due to poor institutional frameworks and support. Evidently, protected areas in Albania will not be protected from environmental impacts of development until this improves.

2.2.5 Summary

The primary purpose of this literature review section, to establish the current status of rural and tourism development in Albania, was accomplished and current development was placed into context by a brief overview of historical political, economic, and tourism development in Albania. The following section of the literature review and research observations will confirm which national actors and institutions are relevant to rural and tourism development on a local level in Thethi; however, influential national stakeholders predicted to be of relevance are summarized in Table 2-13, contributing to objective 2 of this research

Table 2-13 National actors and institutions involved with tourism development in Albania.

National Stakeholder	Role in rural and/or tourism development in Albania
Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection	Rural development strategy creation, funding distribution.
Rural Payment Agency and associated agencies at different levels of government, UNDP, LAG	Implementation of rural development strategy, unclear if operational.
Regional and national government	Organization of land registry and selling of land to private investors, foreigners.
Local government (Commune)	Distribution of land parcels in rural villages.
Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports (MTCYS) and the National Agency of Tourism (NAT)	Tourism development strategy creation, funding distribution.
Local governments and private sector under direction of NAT	Implementation of tourism development strategy. -unclear how much communication, coordination (if any currently)
Ministry for Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (MEFWA)	Administration of protected areas, implementation of management and monitoring plans, regulation of use, controlling visitors.
Regional Environmental Agencies	Implementation and enforcement of PA legislation.

Although objective 1 is focused on impacts from tourism development in Thethi, impacts common to development in Albania maybe be applicable and are identified in Table 2-12, with agriculture, energy, tourism, a lack of waste management, and past development activities appearing to be the causes of rural environmental impacts. Table 2-11 outlines environmental components affected by development, biodiversity, water, and soil appearing to be most likely affected in a rural context.

The above literature review concerning the status of rural and tourism development in Albania is summarized in Table 2-14.

Table 2-14 Summary: Status of rural and tourism development in Albania.

Section	Summary and evaluation
2.2.1 Community	<p>Rural development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transitioning from a centralized to open-market system has influenced development, with institutional structures and human and social capital playing key roles; private property constraints and slow institution reconstruction major factors affecting transition, rural development - Albania is places increased importance on built or produced capital (agriculture and forestry), have acknowledge that they need improvements in social capital, but have decreased the priority of natural capital as its own entity - Tourism is key strategy in increasing rural quality of life in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. <p>Land ownership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -registry system behind and long delays in obtaining property deeds, unclear who officially owns land - Laws introduced in 1995 allow foreign individuals or companies to purchase land if they invested three times that much in land usage
2.2.2 Tourism development	<p>Strategy for tourism development in Albania is strongly connected to themes of sustainability, environmental protection and local community involvement; but, poor implementation.</p> <p>Key tourist products: 1. Sun and beach tourism, 2. Special interest tourism, and 3. Business</p> <p>Awareness at a national level that lack of clarity in land ownership is problematic for development.</p> <p>Four common policy themes reflected in international sustainable rural and tourism development principles are also apparent in the preconditions for tourism development in Albania.</p> <p>Rural tourism development is also cited as having great potential due to the large number of villages in the country.</p>
2.2.3 Environment	<p>Environmental component most affected by development in rural areas: water, soil, biodiversity.</p> <p>Development activities causing impacts in rural areas: agriculture, tourism, (lack of) waste management, past activities.</p> <p>Protected area legislation is very new, Ministry of Environment responsible authority; but low levels of public funding insufficient to conduct protected area management and law enforcement.</p>

2.3 Status of rural and tourism development in Thethi, Albania

The primary purpose of this literature review section is to establish the status of rural and tourism development in Thethi, Albania. This section contributes to objective 1, the identification of impacts from the current form of tourism development in Thethi, and objective 2, the identification of stakeholders, roles, and strategies involved in tourism development in Thethi. Given the size and location of the village, it was expected and found that little formal information pertaining directly to objectives 1 and 2 was available; previous fieldwork conducted by researchers in the area and NGO reports were the main sources of information. For example, the Shala Valley Project (SVP) conducted fieldwork during summers of 2005 - 2008 in the Shala Valley with two goals: first, to produce a chronology or record of the Valleys cultural resources, historic and current, in order to help local administration create a management plan; second, to study people who have lived in

“isolation” at the edge of a frontier zone (Galaty et al., 2009). Also, a recently published feasibility study conducted by UNEP and ENVSEC on establishing a TBPA in the peace park region contained information specific to the region in Northern Albania where Thethi is located (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). This section of the literature review is presented thematically under community, tourism development, and environment, as in Figure 1-3 in preparation for comparison to observations presented in Chapter 5.

2.3.1 Community

2.3.1.1 Status of land ownership and household infrastructure in Thethi, Albania

During the communist era, policies restricted private land ownership to a certain number of “dynyms” of land per house (1000 m² parcels of land), so many families expanded their households by building separate homes to preserve claim to their land (Galaty, Lafe, & Tafilica, 2005). However, it was evident in SVP interviews conducted during 2005 and 2006 that the families of some villagers have been using land for agriculture and pastoral practices for decades in the low and highlands of the Valley (Galaty et al., 2005). Some residents noted that families rented plots for cultivation to others, indicating another layer of complexity in the informal land ownership system. However, the pasture agreements are unclear; either the land is all communal and shared with no disagreement, or all land is owned and people use their own land (Galaty et al., 2005). In general it was observed that all people in the village knew each other and who owns which plot of land. Also, it was purported to be general knowledge that no one should sell their land to outsiders, as there has recently been interest and potential investors (Galaty, Lafe, & Tafilica, 2006). It is evidently from the interviews that the people in Thethi have a strong connection to their land because of their tribal and agriculture roots.

Figure 2-4 shows the distribution of the 10 neighbourhoods in the Shala Valley which comprise Thethi: Okol, Nik-Gjonaj, Gjelij, Nen Rreth, Gjecaj, Ndrejaj, Kolaj, Ulaj, Grunas, and Nderlysaj. The Shala River runs through the village and is fed by tributaries in the surrounding mountains. There were 460 building structures documented by a recent archaeological survey in Thethi, part of the SVP; 162 of these are homes, with 67 occupied in the summer months at the time of the survey (2005), the rest unoccupied homes, barns or outbuildings, and corn cribs (Galaty, Lafe, & Tafilica). Approximately 18-25 families inhabited the village in the winter of 2004, but this number is decreasing with time. The composition of neighbourhoods is unclear, although each has their own water-powered grain mill and older neighbourhoods (Ndrejaj, Kolaj, and Ulaj) revolve around one or two old, stonewalled paths. Each neighbourhood is predominantly populated by one clan, although not exclusively (Galaty, Lafe, & Tafilica, 2005). Households in Thethi are one or two-story stone buildings inhabited by a single extended family; the largest family home is cited to house 14 members from 3 generations (Galaty, Lafe, & Tafilica, 2005). A common layout of the home is with the kitchen and eating area on the ground floor and sleeping quarters on the upper floor; historically, animals were kept on the first floor, although now they are housed outside in barn structures (Galaty et al., 2005).

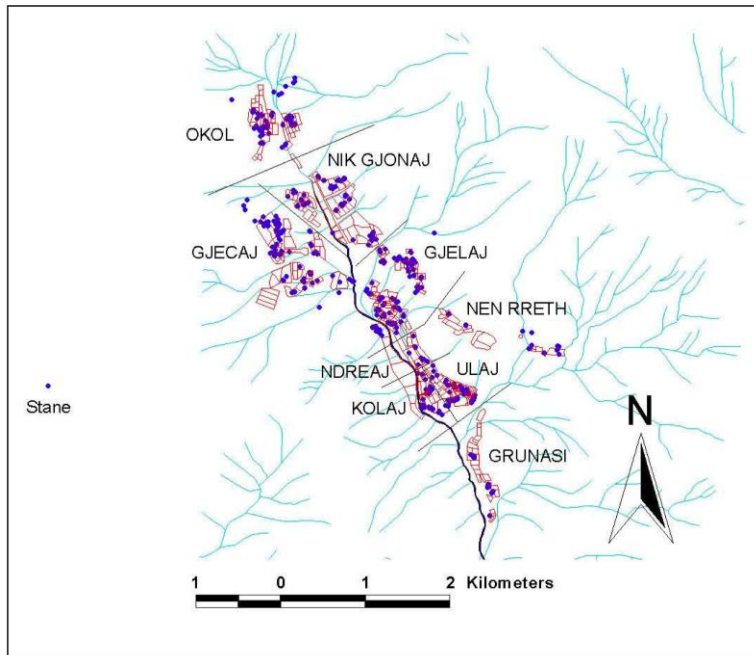


Figure 2-4 The village of Thethi is comprised of 10 neighbourhoods: Okol, Nik-Gjonaj, Gjellaj, Nen Rreth, Gjecaj, Ndreaj, Kolaj, Ullaj, Grunas, and Nderhsaj. The Shala River (black line) runs from north to south through the village, fed by tributaries (blue lines) (Galaty et al., 2005).

2.3.1.2 System of local governance in Thethi and Shala Valley region

It is pertinent to understand the basic structure of governance in Albania to understand who is responsible for decision-making. Given the disorganization, poor implementation, and enforcement of national legislation, suggesting a disconnect to rural areas, the focus of this discussion will be on local and regional government in Thethi and Northern Albania. Also, only post-communist government structure will be presented, however it must be noted that the communist government structure and history carries a legacy and greatly influences current actions and mindsets of stakeholders (Hall, 2000).

The structure of Albanian local government is outlined in Figure 2-5, with lines indicating accountability (Saltmarshe D., 2001); Saltmarshe gathered data from two villages in Northern Albania, which is likely comparable to governmental structure in Thethi. In this scheme, villages a region are grouped to form the Commune. The “Commune Council” is a 13 person elected body with an elected Commune Director. The “Bashki” administers urban areas and Communes administer rural areas. The author notes that the “Reth” does not have much authority over Communes and Bashkia because of the concentration of power, resources, and authority in the Bashkia (Saltmarshe D., 2001). Finally, as noted previously, informal institutions, such as the Kanun, are just as important, if not more so, than formal government structures and likely forms the basis of most village-based governance in Northern Albania (Gallerani et al., 2005).

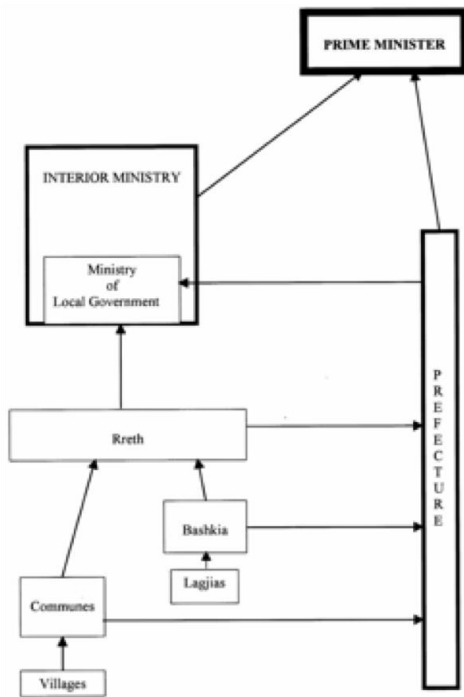


Figure 2-5 Structure of Albanian local government showing lines of accountability, post-communism (Saltmarshe D., 2001).

2.3.2 Tourism Development

2.3.2.1 Current status of tourism development in Thethi

There is no industry present in the Shala Valley region, so the main sectors of the economy are agriculture and forestry; however, most land and resource use is for the subsistence of local inhabitants (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). Limited employment opportunities, temporary and permanent, and growing economic demands of the local population has lead to abandonment of traditional land-use practises and depopulation of the Valley; this is also correlated to illegal activities, such as fishing, hunting, and forestry (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010).

The Shala Valley in Albania has a long history of accepting visitors into their homes, although a formal tourism sector has yet to be developed in the area (Galaty, 2009; Hara, 2009). Although post-communism Thethi experienced depopulation, many families return to the Valley during summer to protect their property rights (Hara, 2009). Tourism has been recognized as a means to raise the standard of living in Thethi, with several NGOs involved in developing projects, primarily GTZ Albania.

2.3.2.2 GTZ Albania: Destination development in the mountain area of Thethi

GTZ Albania has been involved with supporting sustainable development in the Thethi region via a tourism project, operating with funding from the German federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation from 2007 – 2012 (Beka, 2009). The stated “target group” of the project are inhabitants of the region, specifically the “economically active population”, and agents executing the project are members of the regional and local (commune) political administration (Beka, 2009).

The project identifies the potential for “eco compatible and...tourism of high quality”, with two aims: a sustainable reduction in poverty via providing employment opportunities in isolated mountain areas and establishing conditions for “seasonal, cross-border, ecological compatible tourism” (Beka, 2009). Specifically, GTZ took on the role of consultation and education with local administration and private businesses, and funded local economic development pilot projects; such projects include the preservation of ancient monuments and tourism, focusing on traditional houses and an accommodation project, described below. Participative development has been used to involve the local residents of Thethi in the development of projects, however the procedure and how feedback is included in planning is unclear (Beka, 2009). GTZ’s funding application procedure requires the following: the number of people benefiting from the project, services it offers to tourists, how much labour and materials will be contributed by local people, the name of person responsible for the project and who will reconstruct it (proposed by residents), and it must be approved and signed by the Commune (Beka, 2009).

The GTZ accommodation project provided 2000 Euros in supplies and materials to each family participating who were eligible to apply for a stove, two bathroom furnishings, beds, tables, and chairs (Beka, 2009). In total 9 families participated in the program by fall 2009. Other data within the same GTZ report indicated that 11 families were offering beds for visitors, while 14 family homes offering accommodation are indicated Figure 2-6 sourced from a GTZ presentation. GTZ statistics indicated over 80 beds were available to visitors in 2008, and during that year Thethi was visited by approximately 5000 tourists who brought in over 100 000 Euros. Money earned was reportedly spent mainly on home renovations (Beka, 2009).

Although the accommodation project has been largely viewed as successful, it has been observed by other researchers to have created disparity in the village between families who have joined the project and those who have not, separated geographically in the village, increasing the socio-economic inequalities (Hara, 2009). Also, despite the involvement of the local community, residents have noted that the project has not yet acted to alleviate poverty, as many residents still lack water and electricity supply and therefore cannot accommodate tourists; however, given the short time frame of the project, this may be an unreasonable expectation (Hara, 2009). GTZ observed a high amount of scepticism about the project initially from local residents, however GTZ now believes families see the economic benefits from tourism and more would like to become involved. They also observed competition occurring between ‘guesthouses’ (Beka, 2009). Small measures in the project were contributed by the local administrations; 11 km of the road from Shkodra to Thethi was paved, with now 52 km out of a total 80 km paved (Beka, 2009). GTZ has also identified opportunities for quality tourism that could be developed in the Thethi region, including: rock climbing, mountain biking, and kayaking on the Shala River (Beka, 2009).



Figure 2-6 Families offering accommodation in Thethi, Albania (Beka, 2009).

Other small scale tourism projects implemented in Thethi by GTZ collaborating with other NGOs include: trail marking and creation of a hiking map and guide for tourists (GTZ and GEF); reconstruction of the local school in Thethi in 2007 (German Embassy); restoration of the Kula Tower, a historical monument in Thethi (Dutch Embassy); reconstruction of grain mills, ongoing starting in 2008 (Komuna Shale, MADA, GEF); and, rebuilding of river bridges in and around Thethi starting in 2008 (SG, GEF) (Beka, 2009). Future projects concerning the sustainable development of Thethi identified by GTZ included (Beka, 2009):

- Road infrastructure: construction of the remainder of the road from Shkodra to Thethi was planned for the winter of 2009 and investment was planned for a road from Valbone to Thethi.
- Medical infrastructure: plans for a tourism health center with a doctor and nurse to be placed in Thethi, contracted for several months of the year.
- Communication infrastructure: tourism information with internet planned to be available in the school.

- Further reconstruction of bridges and mills.
- “Cleaning project” for a waste-free Thethi: GTZ has identified waste as “a very high risk for the quality of tourism”, but the local government in Thethi must apply to the district of Shkodra for competitive grants.
- Solar panel hot-water heating project: specifically aimed at tourism comfort, financed by the UNDP small grants program.
- Tourist signboard in Thethi containing information about accommodation and transportation to and from Shkodra.

2.3.2.3 Local perspectives on eco-tourism

During the summers of 2005 and 2006, interviews with 14 local families of Thethi were conducted by Antonia Young and Besmir Vukaj concerning potentials for eco-tourism under the Shala Valley Project (SVP) (Young, 2006). Although the small sample size may limit extensive conclusions, information is still valuable for this study, and results are summarized as follows (Young, 2006):

- Link between road improvements, tourism employment, infrastructure: Almost all families interviewed cited improving the road conditions to Thethi as a top priority; this would allow for easier access for tourism, which was cited by all as being the only employment opportunity which would allow local residents to continue living in the village. This was also connected to the expressed need to extend the tourism season, as currently most visitors typically leave by October. Some informants believed that if conditions improved and tourism flourished, other infrastructure, such as a school and a hospital, would follow.
- Willingness to stay in Thethi: All families interviewed stated a preference for remaining in Thethi than moving somewhere else; however, for this to happen, many things need to be improved, such as the road, employment of teachers, hospital, etc.
- Environmental impacts and protection: Informants claimed little to no environmental damage in Thethi caused by humans, although some concern was expressed about animal protection and illegal logging; the garbage piles were not mentioned until people were pressed, and then they agreed something should be done to remove it.
- Tourists and accommodation: Families interviewed suggested hotels and private homes as accommodation, with no mention of camping; also, it was noted that Albanian tourists would not be a source of income as they would stay with family, friends, or at no costs. Charges would not apply to the interviewees (“friends”) and ranged per bed for a one-night stay, to only charging for one week at a time including all food.
- Tourist attractions noted by local people included: fresh air, environment, the water, waterfalls, snow-capped mountains, the view, walking, climbing, etc.

Finally, in a study by Hara, a questionnaire was distributed to the residents of Thethi to evaluate the local awareness of costs and benefits of tourism (2009). Out of the 100 surveys distributed, 29 families or 32 people responded; 31 families indicated they wanted economic benefits from tourism, while only 13 reported they received economic benefits, with 15 of 18 families citing no benefits from tourism due to lack of facilities. Also interestingly, 20 of 32 people saw no disadvantages to tourism, with 9 people recognizing tourism could be harmful to the environment and no people were concerned with tourism causing conflict. Hara’s study concludes that “ecotourism” has the potential to stimulate transboundary cooperation

via mutual interests of environmental protection and economic interdependency, but it must be recognized that this exposes roots of conflict and disparity in the area (2009). The formation of coordination groups of NGOs and third party actors in the area is also desirable, although B3P should aim towards transferring initiative to local people via the formation of local action groups, which could be stimulated by income generated from tourism (Hara, 2009).

Finally, the development of an “Alps National Park” in Northern Albania is projected for 2010-2011, which would incorporate Thethi National Park. As a result, a zoning system would be implemented consisting of four elements: a core zone (minimal disturbance), recreation use zones, sustainable-use zones, and traditional use zones; Thethi is noted to be a recreation use zone, with permitted activities listed including “community based tourism developments”, such as accommodation projects (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010).

2.3.3 Environment

An attempt was made to find literature concerning the role of local institutions, Thethi National Park management, Regional Environmental Agencies, and on environmental impacts of rural and/or tourism development in Thethi. Aside from the local resident views on environmental impacts and protection noted above, little information was found; although this may be a result of the limitations stated in Chapter 1, such as language barriers, and this is not surprising given the low amounts of funding and resources available to the MEFAW and novelty of the legislation. Also, as noted in the literature review section on the current status of rural and tourism development in Albania, many institutions simply have not been created yet. Finally, there is no Thethi National Park website, only information for tourists about the park through other agencies, although literature indicates the park was formed with five others in 1960 (Buchroithner, 2000).

However, in a feasibility study for the establishment of a TBPA in the mountain regions of Northern Albania, including the Shala Valley, Kosovo, and Montenegro, the state of the environment and potential threats were outlined (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). This study states that the environment in the region is “in general well preserved” for a number of reasons: peripheral location, isolation from urban areas and transportation infrastructure, and inaccessibility due to mountains. Also for the reasons stated, tourism development and the associated environmental impacts remains low (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010).

The report does indicate that human impact and pressure on the environment and biodiversity in the Valley has “significantly increased” over the past decade and can be correlated to: insufficient sewage treatment, no solid waste management or collection, uncontrolled land development, illegal forestry practises, habitat fragmentation and loss, loss of water retention in logged areas, forest fires, illegal fishing and hunting, impacts from former refugee camps and demining, and so on (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). Also, the local population is stated to have a “low level of ecological awareness” and local institutions lack capacity to address environmental issues; little action has been taken to mitigate or control environmental threats in the area (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). The ethnic conflict in the region, civil wars in Serbia and Kosovo in 1999, had immediate effects on the environment and long-lasting indirect effects, such as landmines, discontinued traditional land-use, and a lack of management or mismanagement (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). Air and water pollution are relatively low in the region; however, with little to no water supply and wastewater treatment systems in the mountainous area, there is a risk that this will change. Also, uncontrolled land development is problematic and facilitated by the lack of or lack of valid land development plans in some regions (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010).

The report states that the responsible authority of the Albanian portion of the proposed TBPA would fall under the protected area administration, the Forestry Police from the Regional Forestry Service Directorates in Shkodra, and authorities in the Shkodra and Kukes Prefectures (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010); it is unclear if these authorities are currently managing Thethi national park.

2.3.4 Analysis of literature and evaluation in context of research

It appears that formal institutional structures may not be a dominating force in the community of Thethi; although formal structures are in place, traditional land ownership and governance methods appear to be dominant from the interviews and research noted above. The convergence of tradition with change and development that tourism will bring, including formalized institutions, will likely be a shock or adjustment for local residents who will be expected to adhere to both new and old customs. Also, policy implementation should be sensitive to these traditions, as they will likely not be successful otherwise. This would suggest an agricultural or pastoral angle for environmental protection, although this may only be relevant to the older generation.

It is evident that tourism has a mixed reputation in Thethi, although residents seem to have low awareness of the negatives impacts of tourism. Also, it is unclear how much consultation and what type of involvement the local community has with GTZ in the accommodation project. It is interesting that overall tourism appears to be given priority in development before other projects of greater relevance to local residents, including electricity, water, and health care. Although GTZ has recognized such projects in their future plans, the focus does not appear to be development for the local people, but for tourists; for example, tourist information and internet will be set-up in a building which is used as the local school, and a medical center will be set up for tourists. This is likely to result in tension between local residents and visitors.

Finally, information is lacking concerning environmental impacts of rural and tourism development specifically in Thethi, although some information was found for the Shala Valley and surrounding region. Impacts from tourism development are currently minimal, although would significantly increase with further development. Impacts from rural development noted are similar to environmental impacts from rural development noted in literature of a national or Albanian context in section 2.2. It is interesting that “low ecological awareness” was observed in the regions population because their dependence on traditional land-use and agriculture would imply the opposite. (generation?)

2.3.5 Summary

The primary purpose of this literature review section, which was to establish the status of rural and tourism development in Thethi, Albania, has been achieved. This section contributes to objective 2, the identification of stakeholders, roles, and strategies involved in tourism development in Thethi, summarized in Table 2-15. Information pertaining to objective 1, impacts of current tourism development, was found for the Shala Valley region; as described in section 2.3.3, few impacts from tourism development are observed.

Table 2-15 Actors and institutions involved with tourism development in Thethi, Albania.

Local Stakeholder	Role in rural and tourism development in Albania
Local residents (summer and winter)	Landowners through traditional and pastoral practises. Operate guesthouses through GTZ accommodation project. Distribution of land parcels in rural villages.
Local government	Village and commune.
GTZ Albania	Rural development through sustainable tourism: accommodation project
Other NGOs funding projects and/or operating in the area: GEF, German Embassy, Dutch Embassy, Kmuna Shale, MADA, SG	Trail marking, hiking map and guide for tourists, reconstruction of local school, restoration of Kula Tower, reconstruction of grain mills, rebuilding of bridges.
Forestry Police from the Regional Forestry Service Directorates, Shkodra; authorities in the Shkodra and Kukes Prefectures	Protected area management of Alps National Park (and therefore likely Thethi national park)

The above literature review concerning the status of rural and tourism development in Thethi, Albania is summarized in Table 2-16.

Table 2-16 Summary: Status of rural and tourism development in Thethi, Albania.

Section	Summary and evaluation
2.3.1 Community	Land ownership: Official system not in place, however agricultural and pastoral practises have defined land ownership. Neighbourhoods: set-up according to clans historically, 460 building structures, 67 occupied in the summer months (2005), approximately 18-25 families in winter. Local government: Combination of formal local structure (village, commune, etc) and informal governance (Kanun, tribal code of law)
2.3.2 Tourism development	No industry, limited employment opportunities in the Shala Valley, but growing economic demand. GTZ accommodation project to develop guesthouses, trail marking, hiking maps; future projects focus on health and energy <i>for tourism</i> , waste management. Local perspective on eco-tourism: residents would like to remain in Thethi, believe tourism a way to do this and road construction essential; low awareness of negative impacts of tourism. Overall, local residents appear hopeful that tourism will bring much needed rural development, but development appears to be benefiting mostly tourists. Community based tourism development suggested for future development in Thethi.
2.3.3 Environment	Preserved because of isolation, low levels of tourism. Human impacts have increased significantly in the past decade, correlated to insufficient wastewater and solid waste management, illegal activities, etc. Low ecological awareness in the local population and low capacity of the local government. Proposal for formation of a “Alps National Park” and TBPA with Montenegro and Kosovo.

2.4 Tourism research methods

The purpose of this literature review section is to briefly introduce tourism research agendas, approaches, perspectives and methodology common to the field of academic research in order to contextualize and justify the research methods used in this study. “Tourism Research Methods, Integrating Theory with Practise” by Ritchie, Burns, & Palmer (2005) and “Research Methods for Leisure and Tourism, A Practical Guide” by Veal (2006) form the basis of this review. Tourism research methods were evaluated, rather than sustainable or rural development research methods, because it is the focus of the research question; however, all three fields use similar qualitative methods, outlined below. Application of tourism research method agendas, approaches, and methodology to this research appears in boxes below introductory text and in Tables 2-17 and 2-18.

2.4.1 Agendas, approaches, perspectives

Ritchie, Burns, & Palmer have identified nine components which typically determine tourism research agendas and come from a specific set of values or perspective which shape research results: variability of tourism as a form of consumption; tourism as a performance or act by the tourist; tourism as a ritual activity; tourism as a method of mediation; the role of tourism in human agency to plan and induce change; tourism as an interdisciplinary link; consequences of tourism on communities; tourism prediction; and, the ambiguous nature of tourism (2005). Also, there appear to be two common approaches to tourism research, which are said to be influenced by its funding source and who is conducting the research: a soft or qualitative approach, typically used by academics in “tourism studies” who focus on the “tourism problem”, versus harder or quantitative approaches, typically used by industry, which examine “tourism management” or the tourism industry; but, mixed methods are also used (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006). The qualitative approach focuses on theory and searches for the deeper meaning of tourism as a social or cultural phenomenon, termed “hermeneutic”, while the quantitative approach views tourism as an industry that can be predicted and managed, termed “positivist” (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

In terms of this study, mediation, agency and change, interdisciplinary, ambiguity, consequence and prediction can be seen as key themes in the research question. The research is conducted in an academic sphere using a qualitative approach, examining tourism in a hermeneutic sense.

In order to approach research in an ethical way, it is essential to recognize that different research ontologies recognize different constructs of the “truth”; these constructs establish a relationship between the researcher and the “truth” (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006). Four main categories of research ontologies are identified as positivistic, post-positivistic, constructionist, and critical theory, which are rooted in philosophy discourse (Table 2-17), but additional ontologies, such as feminism and chaos theory, are now recognized. Each ontology, or perspective of a research approach, is used to seek different answers within a research area; therefore, different methods for conducting research are needed (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

Table 2-17 Research ontologies and connection to tourism research.

Ontology	Description	Applicability to this Study Cut?
Positivistic	Finding of acts and causes of social phenomena; does not consider the subjective states of individual.	No.
Post-positivistic (Phenomenological)	Understanding behaviour from the subject's frame of reference or point of view.	Yes, example: current forms of tourism development in Thethi.
Constructionist	People generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences, describes how learning occurs.	Yes, example: community based tourism development, capacity building.
Critical theory	Understanding relationships between social structures and thought.	Yes, example: power relations within Thethi, influence of political structures on tourism.

Source: (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

2.4.2 Feminist and gender perspectives in tourism research

In simple terms, feminist and gender approaches serve to question positivism theories by asking, "How do we know what we know?" These perspectives question how knowledge is produced, legitimized, and reproduced by dominant groups, and therefore focuses on power relations in knowledge production (Ritchie, 2005).

Feminist research is primarily concerned with the relationship between the researcher and participants, with an aim to make the research process less hierarchal, committed to feminist principles in purpose, conduct, and research reporting, committed to doing research "for women", or other disadvantaged groups, not "on them", and a commitment to reflexivity in the research process, which is viewed not as a problem but a resource (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

There are many different schools of thought within feminism, which then have their own research approaches. In the early 1990s tourism research began to use this research perspective to look at various domains of tourism: visual and semantic representation of tourism and imagery; questioning of dualistic concepts and hierarchies (public/private, male/female, work/leisure, host/guest); tourism as a modern form of colonialism; and sex tourism. Finally, the feminist research perspective in tourism is concerned with social and cultural perspectives; the first examining the extent to which patriarchy exists in relation to the production and consumption of tourism, while the later looks at the extent localized power relations exert forces on gender relations in tourism (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

The feminist research perspective is based on the assumption that there is inequality between men and women; although this would not be appropriate to use in all research contexts, given the patriarchal nature of Albanian society, it is an appropriate approach (King et al., 2006; Littlewood, 2002). Overall, it would be interesting to consider the role of gender in shaping tourism development in the village given the male-dominated social customs, but this is beyond the scope of this study. Also, although women are predicted to be the largest disadvantaged group in Thethi, others may exist, such as economically disadvantaged groups.

2.4.3 Methodology

A variety of tourism research methods are commonly used and described below. Focus is placed on the case study approach, action ethnography, and qualitative interviewing methodology, as these are the most relevant to this study. Table 2-18 presents the methods and indicates how they connect to this research. It is emphasized in the literature that it is very common to use multiple methods in one study (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

Table 2-18 Tourism research methods.

Research method	Description	Applicability to Study
Case study approach	Used in tourism research as both a hypothetico-deductive method and holistic inductive method In tourism academic research, there are two types of case studies presented: - instructional case studies, which focus on one complexity within the case and reinforce this aspect - independent research case studies, which are used to add knowledge, relying on multiple sources of evidence.	Yes, Thethi as a case study for sustainable tourism and rural development.
Action ethnography, Participant Observation	Action ethnography is a method resulting from the study of tourism from an anthropology perspective. This methodology recognizes that the “subject population has a right to the social power of knowledge” and in tourism literature this is realized by providing a means for a community to represent themselves and identify the nature of and solution to their problems (Ritchie, 2005). Involves the use of participant-observation, which describes the researcher’s role.	Yes, fieldwork July 2009.
Interviews	Interviews can be formal or informal with respect to the context of the interview, and structured, semi-structured, or unstructured in terms of format. Qualitative interviews are typically formal or informal, semi- or unstructured, used as qualitative methods commonly within the phenomenological, constructivist, and interpretivist paradigms.	Yes.
Focus groups	Similar to interviewing, but explicit use of a group interaction to produce data and insights that would be otherwise less accessible.	Yes.
Visual evidence	Tourism marketing and tourists producing photos/videos which create visual images that can be used as research data.	Somewhat applicable.
Tourist geographies	Examines the way in which “space” is activated, constructed, and constituted by the tourist; production of destinations.	Somewhat applicable.
Content analysis	Systematic analysis of actual and symbolic content of all forms of recorded communication.	Somewhat applicable.
Other methods commonly used in tourism research but evaluated to not be useful in this research: - Delphi technique, cluster analysis, framing analysis, GIS in tourism planning, longitudinal research methods, mystery shopping technique		

Source: (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006).

The approach for case study research used in this study and integration of multiple research methods can be visualized in Figure 2-7.

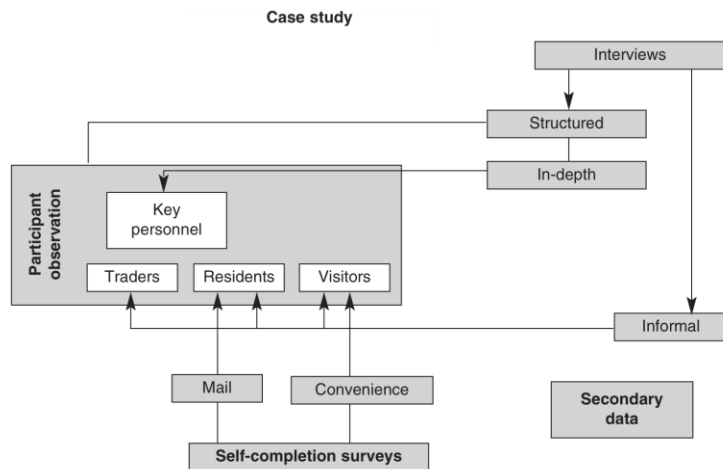


Figure 2-7 Methodology used in case study research (Ritchie, 2005).

2.5 Data analysis in tourism research

Finally, the fifth section of this literature review briefly describes data analysis techniques used in tourism research and their applicability to this study as a foundation for developing insights for objective 4 and the research question.

Review of literature reveals that there is no uniform method for conducting data analysis in tourism research, as analysis is highly dependent on a specific research question, what type of data is collected, and what information the researcher is trying to elucidate (Ritchie, 2005; Veal, 2006). Given the high frequency of surveys used in tourism research, survey analysis of numerical, but also non-numerical data, is common; SPSS software can be used to determine frequencies, cross-tabulation of two variables, means, and produce graphics, typically followed by statistical analysis (Veal, 2006). Framing analysis can be used to look at mass media tourism narratives by examining the way language codes and establishes power relations, while content analysis evaluates and compares actual and symbolic content of all forms of media related to tourism, from advertisements to academic literature (Ritchie, 2005). Cluster analysis uses variables to describe a specific set of objects, such as a sample of tourist, for example ecotourism (Ritchie, 2005).

It is evident that these analysis methods are all very specific to the type of research conducted; therefore, the remainder of this literature review section focuses on discussion concerning data analysis techniques that are applicable to the objectives of this study.

Applicable to the first objective of this study would be a framework for predicting and analyzing impacts of tourism development. Surprisingly, a review of the literature indicated a gap in this form of analysis, with a foundational text in 1980 on the "tourism area life cycle" (TALC) and few studies after this (Figure 2-8, see (Butler, 1980; Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009)). The obvious drawback in predictive theory is that it is based on current models and often inaccurate, and as stated by Moscardo, little is known about tourism development impacts (Moscardo, 2008).

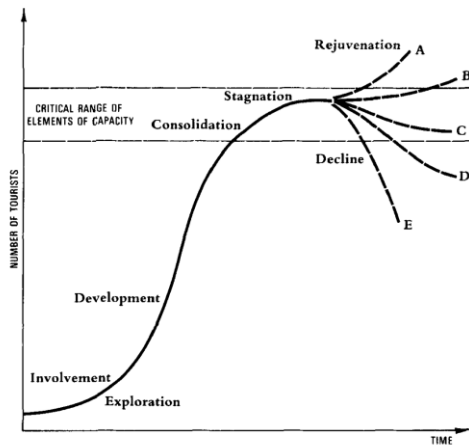


Figure 2-8 Hypothetical evolution of a tourism project, where curve A: renewed growth and expansion, curve B: continued growth at reduced rate, curve C: readjustment to meet all capacity levels and stabilization of growth, curve D: continued overuse of resource, decreasing competitiveness, curve E: catastrophic event, i.e. war or disease, immediately declining the number of visitors (Butler, 1980).

The second objective requires a systematic method for identifying stakeholders, strategies and actors involved in tourism development; also the fourth objective requires an analysis method that would allow for identification of leverage points and mechanisms of change in a development process with multiple stakeholders. A theory for identification of stakeholders and salience is well established in management theory and applicable to tourism, as described below. Applicable to the third objective of this study, evaluation of a tourism development process for sustainability could be based on criteria required for sustainable rural and tourism development, which were established in Chapter 2.1.

2.5.1 Stakeholder identification and salience theory

Although stakeholder theory has been popular in management literature for decades, more recently has the concept of “stakeholder salience” has been proposed. A fundamental article by Mitchell, Agel, and Wood described a theory of stakeholder identification by and salience to management within an organization using three elements: power, legitimacy, and urgency (1997) (Figure 2-9). The more elements, or attributes, a stakeholder possesses, the great salience the stakeholder has to management; for example, “definitive stakeholders” possess power, legitimacy, and urgency and therefore are of highest importance to managers, while stakeholders who only possess one or two attributes are less important (Mitchell et al., 1997). This theory relies heavily on a common understanding or definition of the attributes and underlying bases, stakeholder, and salience (Table 2-19). The theory concludes with the concept that given this model, stakeholders could strategically attempt to acquire more salience by acquiring missing attributes (Mitchell et al., 1997). Also, it should be noted that this theory places decision-making power solely in the managerial position; it is the decision-maker who identifies and recognizes stakeholder claims, salience, and priority and must be convinced that stakeholders possess attributes. Finally, there is some discussion in the paper concerning weighting of attributes, measuring, and if one is more important than another in determining salience, such as power (Mitchell et al., 1997).

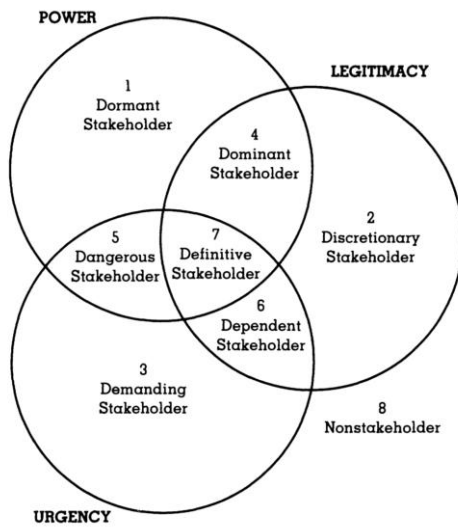


Figure 2-9 Stakeholder typology: one, two, or three attributes present (Mitchell et al., 1997).

Table 2-19 Key constructs in Mitchell, Agel, and Wood stakeholder identification and salience theory (1997).

Construct	Definition	Bases
Stakeholder	“Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives”	Not applicable.
Salience	“The degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims”	
Power	“A relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done”	Coercive (force, threat), Utilitarian (material/incentives), Normative (symbolic influences)
Legitimacy	“A generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, definitions”	Individual, Organizational, Societal
Urgency	“The degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention”	Time sensitivity (degree to which managerial delay in attending to claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder), Criticality (importance of claim or relationship to stakeholder)

Source: (Mitchell et al., 1997)

The Mitchell, Agel, and Wood model rely on only three attributes correlating to salience and define only the relationship between management and stakeholder as influential, which have since been criticized in the literature. A fourth attribute has been proposed as influential in stakeholder identification and salience, which is proximity; this element was introduced to the theory to allow for the natural environment to be recognized as a primary stakeholder in organizations (Drisco & Starik, 2004). This additional emphasizes that the Mitchell, Agel, and Wood theory is based in normative social and economic contexts, resulting in prioritization of

stakeholder claims based on short timescale. The authors push for a reinterpretation of the stakeholder identification and salience theory, which would be based on sustainability and networks (Drisco & Starik, 2004). Building on this, the idea of “stakeholder multiplicity”, which recognizes that organizations exist within a network of relationships and that there are interactions between stakeholders who can compete, compliment, or cooperate was developed by Neville and Menguc (Currie, Seaton, & Wesley, 2009).

Tourism research has only recently made use of stakeholder identification and salience theory; for example, a study used the theory as a systematic approach in determining stakeholders for feasibility analysis in the planning stages of a tourism development (Currie et al., 2009). The method was applied to the development of a land and water trail on the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, Canada; the trail is in a remote location, but given its vast distance or size, many groups with specific interests were involved (Currie et al., 2009). The procedure for stakeholder identification in the study is presented in Table 2-20. It is important to note that instead of a single manager identifying stakeholders and recognizing attributes, the “manager” in this study included a tribal council and the researchers themselves, which allowed for different perspectives on salience (Currie et al., 2009). This framework and method of analysis has also been used in natural resource policy development (Grimble & Wellard, 1997) and in a discussion of sustainable and maintainable tourism development, a case study in Northern Australia (Hardy & Beeton, 2001).

Table 2-20 Procedure for stakeholder identification in planning or feasibility analysis of a tourism project.

Step	Currie et al. Procedure
1	List and evaluation of potential stakeholders: Initial lists created by each member of project team using key informant approach; involves gathering data from structured contacts with experts or leaders; Researchers then meet with individuals to assess involvement in the development; key informants identify others who may be affected or affect the project. Snowball sampling.
2	Content analysis: Used to expand initial list of stakeholders based on literature: websites, publications, mission statements of local community, businesses, NGOs, etc. Associated or similar tourism websites were also investigated, and inferences made for potential group or individual involvement.
3	Production of independent lists and then compilation of a master list (agreement between lists not necessary for inclusion).
4	List separated into five categories for classification: Federal Government Agencies, Provincial Government Agencies, Crown Corporations, First Nations, and Local Governments, Businesses and various Socio-Economic Organizations.

Source: (Currie et al., 2009).

3 Research methodology

3.1 Procedure, methodology, justification

Given the information presented in Chapter 2.4, a research procedure with selected methodology was designed to best answer the posed research question (Table 3-1 and 3-2). The research was conducted with a qualitative approach, in an academic context, and with a feminist perspective and phenomenological ontology.

Table 3-1 Research procedure and data gathering strategy.

Phase	Research activity Methodology	Purpose of research, type of data pursued	Sources
July 2009	Fieldwork, Albania July 2009 Participant observation	- obtain primary information about: resources supply and use, tourism and rural development, environmental impacts	Local Thethi residents, B3P NGO members, Albanian residents, personal observations.
September 2009	B3P meeting Semi-structured interviews (formal, informal)	- liaise with international NGO, academics to gain their perspective on region, tourism, development; see park management system in UK	B3P NGO members, chair, Yorkshire Dales National Park staff
January 2010	Literature review, ARPEA course paper (Lund University)	- obtain a foundation of knowledge in the field of sustainable tourism development: international, Albanian, Thethi, rural perspectives on tourism development, implementation methods	International NGOs, online government documents, Albanian ministry websites (English only), academic literature and dissertations, tourism industry literature, Albania case studies
February 2010	Literature review	- obtain a foundation of knowledge in qualitative research methods, tourism research methodology - continue previous literature review	Academic literature, case studies, tourism industry publications.
	Email and phone interviews Structured and semi-structure interviews (formal)	- initial attempt at contacting Albanian stakeholders - contact made with B3P members, former thesis students	Environment and development NGOs: UNEP, UNDP, WWF, REC Albania, SNV, B3P Albania, GTZ, IEP Albania, MTCYS
March 2010	Literature review	- obtain knowledge on previous research conducted in the area - investigate potential methods for data analysis, theoretical frameworks	Academic literature and dissertations, government and NGO publications.
	YDNP and B3P meeting Structured and semi-structured interviews (formal, informal)	- liaise with regional actors - network and obtain warm contacts to help with contacting Albanian stakeholders - example of park management and sustainable tourism development with local participation in the UK YDNP	B3P NGO members and committee, Yorkshire Dales National Park and Forest of Bowlands staff and tourism managers, SNV Albania rep, 3 Kosovo Ministry of Environment reps, 2 Serbian environmental NGO reps.

April 2010	Literature review	- rural development in Albania and common principles, SVP database	International NGOs, online government documents, Albania and EU, ministry websites, academic literature, Albania case studies
	Email and phone interviews, key contacts Structured and semi-structure interviews (formal)	- increased efforts to contact local NGO actors using contacts from YDNP/B3P meeting - obtain SVP interviews to increase local resident perspective	Environment and development NGOs: SNV, B3P Albania, GTZ, IEP Albania Michael Galaty, SVP Email interview, B3P volunteers/tourists Electronic interview local Thethi residents (facebook)
May 2010	Conduct data analysis, formulate specific results and recommendations.		
May and June 2010	Accepted for oral presentations of recommendations at 3 conferences in region (Kosovo, Albania, Serbia) Structured and semi-structured interviews (formal, informal), participant observation	- obtain feedback on results and recommendations, continue research	(1). South East Europe Student Research Conference, May 28 th – May 29 th 2010, Prishtina, Kosovo (2). Introducing Ramsar Convention principles towards integrated management of Lake Shkodra/Skadar & Buna/Bojana River natural resources, June 5 th 2010, Shkodra, Albania (3). The 6 th Regional Conference, Environment for Europe: Green education and green economy, June 7 th – 8 th 2010, Belgrade, Serbia

Choice of research methods is justified via background information provided in Chapter 2.4 and the analysis above. It would have been ideal to incorporate further fieldwork, participant observation, and interviews with stakeholders in Albania and Thethi, but due to time constraints, costs, and time of year this was not possible; therefore, the scope of research was adjusted to the current form. Also, attempts to overcome the lack of regional contact by attending international meetings to establish contacts with local actors, presenting research conclusions and recommendations at three regional conferences and continuing fieldwork and research in May and June 2010.

Information presented in Chapter 5 is based on interviews with multiple actors in each category; a multi-household perspective was obtained by interviewing tourists staying in different family households. Also, translation of a village meeting during fieldwork about concerns of Thethi residents was the source for “top three village concerns”; although the headman was presented, whole village was not represented. The remainder of information was extracted from observations of researcher, participant observation techniques, and interviews with the host family, local people at school, around village, and other tourists staying.

Informants for interviews during the participant observation phase were largely obtained through contacts with Albanian and International B3P volunteers already established in Thethi, and subsequently via connections with local residents through the school and family providing accommodation once established. Later interview informants via email, telephone and meetings were initially sourced via contacts obtained during the participant observation research phase and B3P contacts; however, after the YDNP meeting, further contacts were able to be made with more relevant informants and the snowball technique for identifying sources of information were used throughout the study. This technique was largely a result of time restrictions and opportunities that arose.

Benefits of using three research methods, participant observation, interviews and literature reviews, include: the opportunity to compare and interpret academic research and theory with primary sources; also, using these methods in sequence during the research procedure allowed for inductive analysis of the case study.

Drawbacks of the research methods used include unintended bias on behalf of the researcher, the primary instrument for data collection in observation and interviews, and the ‘westernized’ perspective and source of most academic literature; this was mitigated with efforts to obtain material from local NGOs and research conducted directly in the region, and good research practises. In order to avoid bias inherent to case study research, as the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection, triangulation of information by using multiple research methods and having data reviewed by two independent thesis supervisors was attempted via observation, literature, and interview methodology. If this was not achieved, two method sources, including confirmation in multiple literature sources, were obtained.

Data collected via the above research procedure was used to answer the research question through four objectives; these are listed in Table 3-2, indicating the primary research method used to collect data for these objectives and the process in which objectives were attended to.

Table 3-2 Research objective, methodology and stage in research procedure.

Objective	Primary research method	Stage in research procedure
Identify the current and probable future impacts of current tourism development in Thethi.	Participation observation, literature.	Data collection
Identify the key stakeholders and their strategies and actions pursued in current tourism development in Thethi.	Participation observation, interviews, literature.	Data collection
Evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development in Thethi by comparison with sound practise for sustainable tourism development described within the encompassing literature.	Literature to support analysis.	Data analysis
Identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process that are influential in creating sustainable tourism development and evaluate potential mechanisms for change.	Interviews, literature to support analysis.	Data analysis

4 Data analysis procedure

4.1 Procedure, methodology, justification

As presented in Table 4-1, theoretical frameworks for organizing data and data analysis methods were needed for specific objectives developed to answer the research question of this study. The procedure for data analysis followed the schemes presented in Table 3-1 and 3-2. Background on the frameworks and methods of analysis was presented in Chapter 2.5.

Table 4-1 Data analysis frameworks and methodology

Objective	Primary research method	Stage in research procedure	Theoretical framework	Method of analysis
Identify the current and probable future impacts of tourism development in Thethi.	Participation observation, literature.	Data collection	Organize via sustainability principles: economic, social, environmental, benefits and costs.	For prediction use theory from Tourism area life cycle (TALC) (Butler, 1980).
Identify the stakeholders, strategies, and actions involved in the current tourism development process in Thethi.	Participation observation, interviews, literature.	Data collection	Organize similar to sustainable tourism development stakeholder models cited in international and community-based tourism literature.	Stakeholder identification procedure adapted from Currie <i>et al.</i> (2009).
Evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development in Thethi.	Literature to support analysis.	Data analysis	Sustainable tourism development stakeholder models cited in international and community-based tourism literature.	Comparison with the models for sustainable tourism development cited in literature: International tourism development and community-based tourism development models.
Identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process which are influential in creating sustainable tourism development and evaluate potential mechanisms for change.	Interviews, literature to support analysis.	Data analysis	Stakeholder salience model based on power, legitimacy, urgency and proximity from management theory.	Stakeholder salience management theory to evaluate how stakeholders could obtain more salience in tourism development process.

The first objective of this research, identification of impacts resulting from and predicted for tourism development in Thethi mainly required data collection; impact prediction uses theory from “Tourism Area Life Cycle” (TALC) (Butler, 1980). The theoretical frameworks used to organize the data collected are based on those commonly found in literature and outlined in Chapter 2.1, sustainability principles and sustainable tourism development. The benefits of using the sustainability framework is that it is simple, well-recognized and forms the base of the research question posed. The limitations of using this framework include the vague and broad nature of the term “sustainability”, lack of clarity concerning the weighting of each sustainability dimension.

The second objective, identifying stakeholders, strategies and actors involved in tourism development in Thethi, used a procedure for stakeholder identification adapted from Currie *et al.* that outlined the use of stakeholder identification and salience management theory in tourism planning and feasibility analysis (2009). The procedure for stakeholder identification in the study and adaptation for this research is presented in Table 4-2. Adaptations were required mainly as a result of limited time to conduct research and lack of ability to conduct fieldwork during the thesis research time period. Correlation with the research procedure and data gathering strategy (Table 3-1) should be noted.

Table 4-2 Procedure for stakeholder identification adapted from Currie *et al.*

Step	Currie <i>et al.</i> Procedure	Adapted procedure for this research
1	<p>List and evaluation of potential stakeholders:</p> <p>Initial lists created by each member of project team using key informant approach; involves gathering data from structured contacts with experts or leaders;</p> <p>Researchers then meet with individuals to assess involvement in the development; key informants identify others who may be affected or affect the project.</p> <p>Snowball sampling.</p>	<p>List and evaluation of potential stakeholders:</p> <p>Initial lists created by the researcher using key informant approach; involves gathering data from structured contacts with experts (B3P contacts)</p> <p>Researchers then meet with individuals to assess involvement in the development; key informants identify others who may be affected or affect the project. (meetings, conferences, initial email and phone interviews)</p> <p>Snowball sampling (further email, phone interviews)</p>
2	<p>Content analysis:</p> <p>Used to expand initial list of stakeholders based on literature: websites, publications, mission statements of local community, businesses, NGOs, etc.</p> <p>Associated or similar tourism websites were also investigated, and inferences made for potential group or individual involvement.</p>	<p>Same procedure.</p> <p>Literature specifically targeted: IUCN protected area guidelines, dissertations and research in Thethi, SVP database and local interviews, travel literature (GTZ, Bradt guide), websites (Facebook, Albanian tourism websites), and stakeholders evaluated in similar protected area studies.</p>
3	<p>Production of independent lists and then compilation of a master list (agreement between lists not necessary for inclusion).</p>	<p>Production of a list and then review of the list by three independent parties; two of who are involved with B3P (Antonia Young, Nigel Young) and research supervisor (Philip Peck); also, the IUCN list of stakeholders involved in protected area tourism development planning was consulted.</p>
4	<p>List separated into five categories for classification:</p> <p>Federal Government Agencies, Provincial Government Agencies, Crown Corporations, First Nations, and Local Governments, Businesses and various Socio-Economic Organizations.</p>	<p>Same procedure, categorization conducted if necessary.</p>

Source: (Currie *et al.*, 2009).

Similarly, the third objective, evaluating the sustainability of tourism development occurring in Thethi also relies on the sustainability framework, with analysis based on requirements for sustainable rural and tourism development found in literature, as described in Chapter 2.1. However, a CBTD model is also used for comparative analysis because of the greater relevance to the Thethi case study.

The fourth objective represents the core of this study and analysis. In order to identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process that could be influential in

creating more sustainable tourism development and evaluation of potential mechanisms to enact this change, stakeholder identification and salience theory was used. As described in Chapter 2.5, this theory is useful because it attempts to clarify “who and what really counts” in decision-making (Mitchell et al., 1997). The application of this theory then could be in any context where there are multiple stakeholders who possess different attributes, lead by a ‘manager’ or decision-maker, and uses a common language or framework. Once interactions and salience is established, one could use this theory to determine how stakeholders could change their interactions and strategies to become more salient in a decision-making process. Therefore, this theory would be applicable and useful as a framework and method for analysis in this research for objective four, determining leverage points and mechanisms for change in tourism development occurring in Thethi. However, drawbacks to this theory are in using the theory itself; by subscribing to this description of decision-maker and stakeholder interactions, power is seated in the decision-maker, who then must be convinced of stakeholder attributes and salience. Also, the theory uses terminology that could be misleading, such as “dangerous” stakeholders.

4.5 Data collected

The procedure, methodology, and justification for data collection are outlined in Chapter 3. Data collected was initially through participant observation, followed by interviews and supplemented with literature reviews to provide insight into objectives 1 and 2, identification of current and future impacts and key stakeholders, strategies, and actions in current tourism development in Thethi. This chapter presents observations from participant observation fieldwork and interviews followed by a discussion describing relevant connections with literature presented in Chapter 2; non-peer reviewed fieldwork conducted by three other researchers during the same time period as the researcher in the context of the B3P summer program and observations made by SVP researchers are included to validate some observations (Galaty et al., 2005, 2006; Hara, 2009; Milsom & Cowden, 2009). Formulation of insights for objectives 1 and 2 with connections to the research problem and question concludes the chapter.

5.1 Observations

Prior to fieldwork in Thethi during July 2009, the researcher proposed three areas of investigation for scoping of thesis research during time in the village: basic resource availability, use, and management by local people for the community and tourists; the amount and characteristics of tourism currently operating; and the current and/or potential future impacts of tourism development. Also, another objective of the researcher was to obtain an overall sense of the place or role that the environment held in the life of people living in Thethi, if possible (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

Once in Thethi, the researcher pursued the three areas of investigation, briefly discussed below. In attempts to coordinate with information presented in Chapter 2 literature review sections 2.2 and 2.3, observations are presented thematically under community, tourism development, and environment as in Figure 1-3, followed by discussion.

5.1.1 Community

5.1.1.1 Land ownership and governance in Thethi, Albania

Interviews with a local resident in Thethi revealed the apparent disorganization and delay in distribution of land ownership permits, as they and others have not received land permits and it is unclear how much land they own officially. One informant who was born in the Valley and now works for an NGO stated that individuals in the home owned only land directly surrounding homes. However, it was clear that residents knew traditional landownership rights and plots involved with agricultural practises could (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009; personal communications, 2010).

Local governance in Thethi involved the election of a “Headman”, or village representative. It was apparent that some members of the village believed this election process to be corrupt and did not support the current Headman. However, another informant stated that the Commune has far more authority than the Headman. Although it was clear to all in the village who the Headman was and that any NGOs operating in the village needed to make their presence and activities known to the Headman, it was unclear what exactly his role and decision-making power was. Evidence of the importance and role of the Kanun in the community was through the presence of a Kula, a tower where male members of a family in a blood feud would take refuge in accordance to the Kanun laws. It was apparent that the

Catholic Church also played a very strong role in Thethi, with most families attending Church each Saturday (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009; personal communications, 2010).

5.1.1.2 Resource availability, use, and management

Table 5-1 summarizes the characteristics of basic resources available and used by a typical household in Thethi based on participant observation fieldwork during July 2009 by the researcher.

Table 5-1 Resources availability, use, management, and perspectives of the resource by the local Thethi community and tourists.

Resource	Available? Source?	Characteristics of Use, Infrastructure	Management	Local perspective	Tourist perspective
Water	Yes, although low flow at times. Shala river fed by tributaries.	- no treatment - pipe distribution system to taps in village, one source shared by all - irrigation canal system for agriculture Uses: drinking, cooking, bathing, cleaning, agriculture.	None.	"we have lots of water" - abundance of water, but runs out still in some homes - priority in top 3 village concerns - do not connect proximity and cleanliness of drinking water source to other activities	- drinking water directly from stream uncommon, but good taste - some became sick, thought maybe because of water contamination
Electricity	Not to all. Hydroelectric power plant in north part of Thethi on the Shala River	- wire distribution system, not all houses connected - poor distribution system, those closer to source receive more power Uses: lighting.	System in place, but not active.	- do not have enough electricity - priority in top 3 village concerns	- basically no power; barely enough for light, cannot power laptops, cameras
Food	Yes. Local production, goods brought in from Shkodra via private car or <i>furgon</i>	- cooking over fire, wood ovens, or gas stoves - no refrigeration - only women cook and prepare meals - men and women work in agriculture - main crops: maize, potatoes, beans, onions - animals: cows, pigs, sheep, chickens - traditional agricultural practises, ash fertilizer	Unclear.	- proud of culinary practises - cooking and meal preparation "women's work" - families would not eat with guests - priority is agricultural work if a choice is made between labour and school	- food is delicious and plentiful - agriculture is very "old fashioned" - unclear if some families serve guests and then eat (small) remaining portion of food
Household waste	Not applicable. Largely packaging.	- garbage placed in available bins installed by B3P, if overflowing or larger, put in informal piles	None.	- not viewed as problematic, exception is "no littering" campaign by	- very unsightly, ruins the natural landscape

				school children	
Sewage and grey water	Not applicable.	- modern toilets, drop-toilets, outhouses - septic beds used with some modern toilets	None	- do not connect proximity of waste disposal to other activities	- modern toilets are nice but rarely working - unclear where sewage goes
Heating	Yes. Firewood	- wood stove used in winter months	None	- unclear because study in summer months	- unclear because there in summer months
Transportation	Yes, but costly. Private car or furgon.	- paved road halfway to village (Boga); other half gravel path through mountains, treacherous	None Arrange ride with driver in Shkodra or Thethi when want to leave	- wish for whole road to be paved; government has promised this but has not yet happened	- difficult to prearrange a time to leave, sometimes unreliable

(E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009)

In agreement with the literature, households in Thethi were observed to be one or two-story stone buildings inhabited by a large family, with animals kept in barn structures outside (Galaty et al., 2005; E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). The only buildings observed to be communally used included the local Catholic Church and school, both of which lack electricity, plumbing and heating; however, the school does contain two drop-toilets and wood stoves in classrooms.

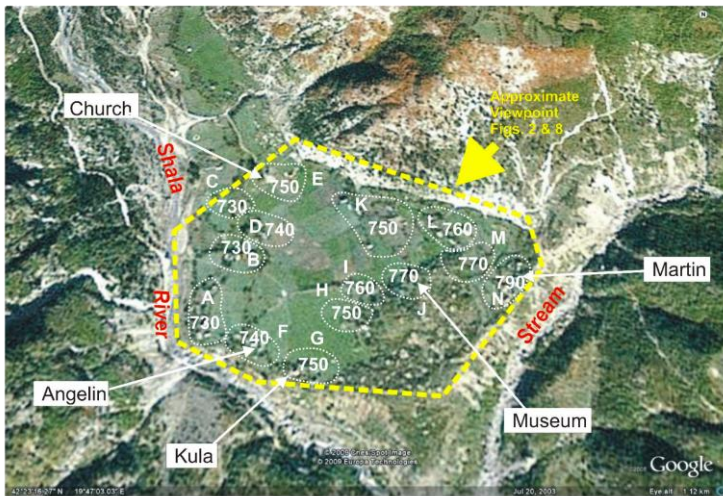


Figure 5-1 Aerial view of the south Thethi, neighbourhoods Kolaj and Ulaj. White dashed lines indicate clusters of houses and numbers the average elevation in meters. The red marked “Stream” is proposed to be the water source which the village uses (Milsom & Conden, 2009).

Water for drinking, cleaning, cooking, and bathing is obtained from taps located around the village. The taps are connected to a common water source via a pipe distributions system and are not metered; it is unclear when this system was installed (E. Marchington, field notes, July 58

2009). In a rudimentary study of water supply to the neighbourhoods of Kolaj and Ulaj, which contained 19 occupied houses at the time of study, the water source was stated to be a south-west flowing tributary of the Shala River, distributed by a complex series of irrigation channels (Figure 5-1) (Milsom & Cowden, 2009). Pre-communism, the irrigation canals were described as being smaller, using natural sources, whereas during communism, larger and concrete canals were created and since (poorly) maintained (Galaty et al., 2006).

Electricity is provided by a small “communist-era” hydroelectric power plant which is supposedly maintained by local community members on a rotating basis (Milsom & Cowden, 2009); however, a community member commented that this maintenance system is not functioning (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). Electricity is distributed via above ground transmission lines, although not all houses are connected; it is not metered and consumption is unmonitored, so houses closer to the production source have first bid in obtaining electricity. This, along with distribution losses, is expected to be the cause of little to no electricity in some parts of the village; a local community member who does not have enough electricity to power a 60 W light bulb complained that families in the north could power a television (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). In a meeting concerning the electricity supply of the village, local residents expressed interest in obtaining a large diesel powered generator, but some tourists believe the hydropower source could be made more efficient (Milsom & Cowden, 2009).

It must be noted that some homes have moderately functioning indoor plumbing for water, toilets and showers; hot water is a rarity, but some have acquired generators to overcome this. These modern utilities are a very recent development resulting from the GTZ tourism accommodation project grants given to 10 families and many homes still lack any plumbing and electricity (Hara, 2009; E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

With a long history of farming and animal husbandry, Thethi residents have traditionally produced most of their domestic food needs. Maize is the primary crop, usually interplanted with beans and sometimes squash. Potatoes, onions, and other vegetables are also produced, and most families keep 1 – 3 cows, sheep, chickens, and/or pigs (Galaty et al., 2005). Local specialities are numerous, including raki, alcohol produced from wild plums and a very salty goats cheese. However, with an increasing number of tourists, villagers make trips to Shkodra to purchase more food and food that is desired by tourists (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). Cooking is typically done over a fire, indoor or outdoor wood-burning ovens, and/or gas-powered stoves. Given the low amount of electricity available, there is no refrigeration (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

Household waste, now increasing due to the influx of packaged goods into the village, and excess building materials are not collected or subjected to a waste management system; the regional government is supposed to transport garbage to a landfill in Shkodra, but does not service the area (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). B3P installed several waste collection bins, and via the B3P summer program, students collected litter and erected “Keep Thethi Tidy” signs along hiking paths, but the lack of collection has resulted in garbage piles near homes and along the river (Hara, 2009; E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). Drop-toilets and outhouses are commonly used for human waste disposal, although with the advent of tourism, some homes have installed “western style” flush toilets; however, these are often mal-functioning. Flush toilets dispose of wastes into septic beds, but it is unclear if the septic beds are contained and unlikely that they are emptied; construction is seemingly uncoordinated in terms of proximity to drinking water, irrigation channels, and rivers (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

Homes are presumed to use wood stoves for heating, although this is not utilized in the summer months. Transportation to the village is primarily from Shkodra following a paved highway for half the distance to Boga, where the road then follows an enlarged, gravel sheep track path through the mountains (Galaty et al., 2005). Some local families have their own or shared vehicles, while others and tourists are transported to and from the city via *furgons*, or small mini-vans, which act as local taxis. Transportation within the village is mostly on foot, although horses or also used (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

5.1.2 Tourism Development

5.1.2.1 Characteristics of current tourism development in Thethi, Albania

The researcher found evidence of many forms of tourism activities, indicating tourism is developing at a rapid pace. These observations are summarized in Table 5-2 and discussed below.

Tourism development was apparent upon entrance into the village, where visitors are met with a large map indicating marked hiking trails in the area. GTZ was identified as the funder for map production, trail marking, and an accommodation project (Marchington, 2009). Along with monetary support, GTZ was said to have offered to families participating in the accommodation project consultation on tourists' needs, range and quality of services, and signs to place in front of homes offering accommodation.

Although the GTZ accommodation project has been largely viewed as successful by some, it is also believed by some to have created tension in the village between families who have joined the project and those who have not, discussed below under tourism impacts (Hara, 2009; E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). One community member is cited as saying "...it is ridiculous to accommodate tourists, even we, local people, do not have proper supply of water or electricity" (Hara, 2009). Also, some families have started to develop accommodation projects privately, without the assistance of GTZ. It was unclear which guesthouses were funded by GTZ and who was not, and competition between families for tourists was evident; for example, one family had children approaching tourists soliciting for customers (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). It was evident to the researcher that most encountered tourists preferred to stay in accommodation that was 'westernized' with functional toilets and working electricity and water; however, this only provided income to those families who are already relatively financially secure (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

The Balkan Peace Park Project (B3P) was another actor involved in promoting tourism in the area, active in Thethi during the summer months, operating a school program run by international volunteers for local children since 2008; the volunteers stay as tourists with local families, providing some of the first accommodation opportunities for many residents (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). Also, if a Peace Park were to be successfully established in the region it is believed by B3P members that it would also promote tourism, especially on an international scale.

Developers were converting an ex-communist building into a medium-sized hotel during 2009; this is not located directly in the Valley, but just outside the Valley. It is not entirely clear whom the developer is and if they have a connection to Thethi, although they are purported to be from Tirana, the capital of Albania. After inspection of the current construction site, it is also unclear what the source of water, electricity, and waste disposal will be (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009). It was not possible to obtain a local perspective

on the development, however it will result in increased competition for tourist accommodation and place pressure on existing resources.

There was evidence of local entrepreneurship beginning in Thethi, in addition to the informal tourist accommodation projects. The local community, along with GTZ and B3P, support the use and payment of local guides when tourists are hiking in the region, and several “bars” and cafes have been established in people’s homes. Also, one local resident has opened a small shop at the front of his property, selling candy bars, snacks, and drinks. Another resident has begun to sell jams and preserves from her garden to tourists. Several children were also promoting themselves of guides to the local “ethnography museum”, an older house in the village (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009).

The remaining types of tourism development in Thethi include outdoor travel companies and travel literature. It is unclear how many private companies lead trips to Thethi and the area; a brochure produced by GTZ and the Albanian government advertising tourism in Thethi lists seven travel company websites. Until recently, travel literature has been very limited and few guidebooks to the region have been developed. With the advent of social networks and private websites, it has become apparent that some local residents, or people with connections to the village, are designing their own tourism sites (for example, www.thethi-guide.com).

Table 5-2 Characteristics of current tourism development in Thethi

Tourist development project/activity	Characteristics	Stakeholders involved	Local perspective	Tourist perspective
Formal accommodation project	Small grants given to local families meeting project criteria to adapt homes for tourism, signs.	GTZ organization, local community.	Divided: some benefit, others do not.	Preference for ‘western style’ accommodation, not with poorer families.
Informal accommodation projects	Host guests in their homes without GTZ funding. Creates competition between families for tourists.	Private, local individuals.	Want to receive benefits from tourism, but may not meet GTZ criteria.	Sometimes unclear who is a part of the formal accommodation project and who is not.
Trail marking, signs	Village and rail map at village entrance, markings along trails.	GTZ funding, local people and volunteers perform labour.	Unclear. Pride in hiking map and trails.	Very helpful in planning hikes and finding the way to landmarks.
B3P, Peace Park IPPE	Creation of a transboundary protected area, promoting environmental conservation, stimulate local employment and sustainable tourism; operates a summer program in Thethi.	B3P, international volunteers/tourists, working with local residents.	Divided; some support, some are frustrated with lack of visible and practical results.	If aware of the project, intrigued by the concept. Unclear, survey not conducted.

Hotel development	Converted communist building, medium-sized modern hotel. Will provide accommodation competition, resource use unclear.	Private developers from Tirana.	Unclear.	Not applicable.
Local entrepreneurship	Development of bars, cafes, small shop, selling of local preserves, hiking guides, "ethnography" museum.	Local community, largely younger families and children.	Try to obtain more economic benefits from tourism other than accommodation.	Very well received.
Outdoor travel companies	Unclear how many operators are involved.	www.outdooralbania.com, www.shkodratravel.com, www.europatravel-al.com, samsel_travel@yahoo.it, www.destinationalbania.co, www.highalbania.com, www.travel-tirana.com	Unclear.	Unclear. However, helpful in determining how to reach the region and what there is to see.
Literature: Travel books, websites of private individuals	Limited amount of material, but steadily increasing, especially on the internet.	Lonely Planet Albania, Bradt Albania travel guide, http://www.thethi-guide.com/ , facebook groups	Unclear.	Unclear. However, helpful in determining how to reach the region and what there is to see.

Source: (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009; personal communications, 2010)

5.1.3 Environment

5.1.3.1 Thethi National Park management

An informant who has a home in Thethi and works for an NGO dealing with forestry in Northern Albania indicated that a management structure is not yet in place for Thethi National Park, despite that the local government (Commune) should manage and a ranger should be protecting and enforcing legislation. The only park infrastructure visible was a sign on entrance into the park; also, there is no Thethi National Park website, only tourist information through other agencies.

5.1.3.2 Current impacts of tourism development in Thethi, Albania

It was difficult to identify impacts of current tourism development in Thethi for two reasons: first, tourism development is still on a relatively small scale, so impacts will likely not be present until tourism is more developed; second, the initiation of tourism development in Thethi is occurring with other significant changes in the region and country, so tourism development is occurring in a changing, not static, community. However, it was apparent that tourism is one, if not currently the only, major vehicle being promoted for rural development in the region. Table 5-3 outlines several impacts that are highly likely to be attributed to increased numbers of visitors to the region as a result of current tourism development, and further discussed below in Objective 1 discussion. Impacts are organized thematically by the

three pillars of sustainability, economic, social and environmental impacts, and described as a stakeholder cost, benefit or unclear, where the stakeholder is identified.

Table 5-3 Impacts of current tourism development in Thethi.

Sustainability pillar	Impact description	Impact occurring as a result of tourism development: Yes or Unclear Cost, Benefit, Unclear (to which stakeholder?) Evidence
Economic	Influx of local, national and foreign tourists to the village.	Yes, benefit to local families and individuals able to participate. Bring income to <i>some</i> of those providing accommodation, entrepreneurs running small businesses (bars, cafes, local preserves, guided hikes, ethnography museum).
	External Outdoor travel companies, expeditions to region.	Yes, benefit to travel company and tourists. Bring income primarily to travel companies (aside from accommodation- indirect affects)
	Travel literature produced by private companies and individuals.	Yes, benefit to travel literature industry and tourists. Bring income primarily to private companies and individuals.
Social	Aggravation of socio-economic divide in the village.	Yes, cost to local people. Tension between families receiving benefits from tourism accommodation and those who do not, or are not participating.
	Placing needs of tourists before local people.	Yes, benefit to tourists, cost to local people. Development of tourist infrastructure before providing residents with healthcare, sufficient electricity, water, and waste management.
	Influx of tourists from other cultures or parts of Albania.	Yes, cost and benefit to local people and visitors. Bring in different ideas, and cultures to village. Some tension between patriarchal traditions and urban Albanian women.
	Influx of NGOs (local, international) promoting tourism, researchers, media.	Yes, cost and benefit to local people and visitors. Bring in different ideas, and cultures to village, capacity and skills. Some tension with resident expectations and feeling of use, distrust in promises. Minimal disruption to daily activities via tourist observation: Church, agricultural practises, cooking, etc.

Environment and cultural landscape	Increased demand and use of resources (water, electricity, food, transportation).	Yes, primary cost to local people (and tourists while visiting). Low availability of water, electricity to some homes due to increased use; need to bring in food from outside Thethi to feed guests.
	Accumulation of solid waste.	Yes, primary cost to local people (and tourists while visiting). The presence of visitors to Thethi aggravates the waste management problem by increasing the amount of packaging and construction waste to piles around village.
	Increase in production of wastewater (sewage and grey water).	Unclear, not tested; likely primary cost to local people (and tourists while visiting). The presence of visitors to Thethi aggravates the waste management problem by increasing the amount of sewage and grey water released directly into the environment, potentially contaminating soil and waterways.
	Infrastructure construction.	Yes, cost and benefit to local people and benefit to tourists. Building: tourist infrastructure, modification of homes, road improvements, bridge reconstruction, preservation of Kula, church, 'museum'.

Source: (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009; personal communications, 2010)

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Observations and literature

It is evident that observations made by the researcher during fieldwork and while conducting interviews are well supported by observations by others conducting fieldwork, but also literature presented in Chapter 2, section 2.2, Albanian context, and 2.3, Thethi context; however, some observations diverge from the reviewed literature. Key correlations and divergences are discussed below in connection to the themes of community, tourism development, and environment.

Observations concerning landownership and governance structure in Thethi were in accordance with the literature cited in Chapter 2.2 and 2.3. Informal institutions, such as the Kanun, the Catholic Church, and tradition appeared to play a strong role in the resident's lives, and it was unclear how much, if any influence, formal governance has in the Valley. The characteristics of rural development in Albania cited in Chapter 2.2.1 are evident, but exaggerated and dire in Thethi; the standard of living is in fact far worse than the national average, with a lack of basic infrastructure such as water and electricity, and basic services such as medical care and education (UNEP & ENVSEC, 2010). It is clear that other than tourism, implementation of the national rural development policy is lacking in the Valley, which is perhaps reflective of the large funding decrease for Axis 2, or "less favoured areas". It is also obvious that preservation of the environment and landscape will not simply be integrated into other axes, but needs specific attention in the village.

As for tourism development in Thethi, the current status as described in section 2.3.2.1 was accurate, but incomplete. Although GTZ projects play a visible and large role in the village,

many other stakeholders are involved and multiple projects are developing at a rapid pace. Many similarities between local perspectives on eco-tourism summarized by interviews in 2005 – 2006 in Chapter 2 and observations made by the researcher were noted, as well as the overall lack of awareness of the local population concerning impacts of tourism development. During research in Thethi, there was no observation or discussion of the “Alps National Park”. Overall, the researcher observed the concern of local people about the prioritization of tourism development over basic needs; the extent of consultation between Thethi residents and those developing tourism projects remains unclear. In correlating Thethi tourism development to characteristics of national tourism, four of the five issues noted to affect STD in SEE are clearly reflected by tourism in Thethi, Albania. The role of an international actor, GTZ, does most definitely affect tourism development in the area, as they are the main source of income. It is unclear what the ‘transitional goal’ of Albania would be, but in the local context of Thethi there is a definite urge, especially from young people, to modernize similar to have lifestyles similar to that in urban areas; this urge to modernize is a factor in tourism development, which allows for homes to become upgraded to ‘modern’ standards. The decrease of state intervention in the area is most definitely observed, as the village has been neglected in terms of medical and educational services. Also, the conflict in perception of need between ‘outside’ actors and the local community, but also within the local community concerning tourism development is most definitely observed in Thethi concerning the accommodation project. Finally, it appears that the tourism development in Thethi has attempted, but is only partially successful in, connecting the development to the local economy and social structure; the results of the tourism survey indicate that benefits of tourism have not been realized by the majority of residents and the potential negative impacts of tourism are not recognized. The preconditions 2007 – 2013 strategy for tourism development are definitely not fulfilled Thethi, yet tourism development continues in Thethi at a rapid pace; also, although rural tourism development is priority and is being pursued in Thethi, the role and involvement of government bodies in this development is unclear, and at least not visible.

The lack of available information on Thethi National Park management can be explained by the observed lack of any planning, management, and enforcement of legislation occurring in the park. Also, a significant difference with literature presented in Chapter 2.3 would be the observation of economic, social, and environmental impacts from the current form of tourism development in Thethi. Impacts cited in the literature concerning rural development in Albania were also observed, but tourism appears to be playing a significant role in aggravating these impacts already present and contributing new impacts.

Therefore, although literature concerning rural and tourism development in Albania and Thethi is relatively abundant and accurate, observations via fieldwork and interviews conducted by the researcher elucidates inconsistencies with the literature, correlations and differences between national trends and policies and the local context, and clarification of characteristics of development specifically in Thethi. The interactions of tourism development, community, and environment, as depicted in Figure 1-3 are evident in literature and observations. Interactions between tourism and the local community and tourism and the environment are evident from the discussion above. The impact of the environment on the local community is to provide ecosystem services for subsistence, while its impact on tourism is to act as a key resource for eco-tourism development.

5.3 Objective 1

Identify the current and probable future impacts of tourism development in Thethi.

The current impacts of tourism development in Thethi are presented above in Table 5-3. The connection between common impacts from tourism development cited in Chapter 2.1, costs and benefits of tourism in protected areas in Tables 2-6 and 2-7, are clear. From Table 5-3 it is evident the majority of social and economic costs are to the local community; these can likely be correlated to the five common themes underlying negative impacts of tourism development: disruption to daily life (minor), disillusion with failed promises of tourism development, conflict, cultural change, and environmental degradation (Moscardo, 2008).

It is very difficult to predict future impacts of tourism development given the non-static development occurring in the village; for example, it is highly likely that the completion of the hotel under development in Thethi will result in positive and negative impacts, but it is difficult to estimate the characteristics or size of such impacts.

If the TALC model by Butler is considered, Thethi tourism development continuing as it is currently designed, with little management or planning in place, would result in curve D development, continued overuse of resource, that being the carrying capacity of the environment to absorb impacts (Butler, 1980). However, it is likely that before carrying capacity of the environment is reached, tourists will not choose to visit the area based on aesthetics and comfort concerns, while local residents, not achieving rural development, would likely continue the trend of rural depopulation.

However, a certainty is that since tourism development is used as the main vehicle for tourism development in Thethi, there will likely be an increase of tourists visiting the region in the future; this will result in increased pressure on resources available to the local community and tourists, outlined in Table 5-1, aggravating current resource management problems *unless* changes and improvements in the current system are made. Also, if road construction is completed, this will result in greater access to Thethi, both allowing for progress in development, but also potentially resulting in negative social and environmental impacts unless planned and managed carefully (which is not occurring currently).

The above discussion provides insight into objective 1 of this study and gives evidence to the stated research problem. In order to address the research question posed, or how can STD in rural Albania be pursued more effectively, the tourism development process in Albania needs to be elucidated and connected to the impacts described above. This is addressed by objective 2, discussed below.

5.4 Objective 2

Identify the stakeholders involved and their roles in the current tourism development process in Thethi.

Using the observations described above, supplemented with literature in Chapter 2, stakeholders and their roles involved in the tourism development process can be identified. Also, in order to further clarify the tourism development process, a 'stakeholder map', or scheme outlining the various stakeholders, projects, and interactions, was also developed and is discussed below.

5.4.1 Stakeholder identification and roles

The procedure for stakeholder identification in this research was adapted from research by Currie *et al.* and outlined in Chapter 3, Research Methodology in Table 4-2. For the purposes of this study, Mitchell, Agel, and Wood's definitions are used with slight adaptation (Table 2-19 and Table 6-3). Therefore, a "stakeholder" can be described as "Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives", where in this study the organization is defined in relation to the tourism development process (see objective 4). This is a very broad definition of a stakeholder, whom could also be described as possessing 1) a (legitimate or illegitimate) claim, and/or 2) the ability to influence an organization (Savage, Nix, Whitehead, & Blair, 1991). However, the broader definition is used in this research to ensure all stakeholders are included. The "role" of the stakeholder is elucidated from observations described above and pertinent literature in Chapter 2; a brief description of the stakeholder's activity in terms of actions and current involvement in Thethi tourism development is noted as well in relative terms: high, medium, low and unclear. Results are presented in Table 5-4.

From Chapter 2, section 2.2, national actors and institutions involved with tourism development in Albania are presented and incorporated into Table 5-4. However, noting literature and observations, the actions, presence, and authority of formal national and even regional government structures in Thethi appears to be lacking. However, the power and potential for action via income and normative power exist with these stakeholders, but remains dormant for now; this is further discussed under objective 4.

From Chapter 3, section 2.2, local actors and institutions involved with tourism development in Thethi are presented and incorporated in Table 5-4. These stakeholders appear to be far more relevant than national stakeholders; but again, institutional structures, such as protected area management, lack real involvement.

The remainder of stakeholders presented in Table 5-4 were from observations and interviews pertaining to tourism development, specifically Table 5-2. For completion, this list was cross-listed with the IUCN's guidelines on tourism development in protected areas generic list of those typically included as stakeholders in a project: park planners and managers, park volunteers, park visitors, park employees, local community, native and indigenous communities, landowners, residents, resource extraction interests, government ministries, allied or competing government agencies, profit-making private sector, NGOs, environmental groups, economic development organizations, licences and permit holders, hospitality industry, tour operators, destination marketing organizations, educational institutions, researchers, and media. This list can be grouped into four categories which summarize the most significant stakeholders, as defined by IUCN: 1) society, or local community, 2) park managers, 3) tourism operators, 4) visitors and users (Eagles *et al.*, 2002).

Table 5-4 Stakeholders and their roles in Thethi tourism development

Category	Stakeholder	Role in Thethi TD (Relative activity: High, Medium, Low, Unclear, N/A if not existent yet)
Landowners	Local	High (for those involved)
	Non-local	Unclear
Transportation	Furgon drivers	High
Investors and builders	Local- entrepreneurs (websites, non-GTZ (or accommodation))	High
	Albanian	Unclear
	Foreign	Unclear
Government	National: MAFCP, MTCYS, NAT, MEFWA	Low in local context
	Regional- Reth, Commune Rural Payment Agency, Regional Environmental Agencies, Forestry police	N/A, unclear
	Local- Headman, LAG	Low, N/A
International NGOs	B3P UK, UNEP, UNDP, WWF, MADA, GEF, German Embassy, Dutch Embassy, Kmuna Shale, SG	High, tourism and rural development projects
Local NGOs	IEP Albania, SNV Albania, GTZ Albania, B3P Albania, REC Albania	High, tourism and rural development projects
Local community	Distinct groups could be based on: age; gender; year-long residents, part-time residents; socio-economic position; educated, not educated, left the valley, not leave; grow up in the valley, not; involved in accommodation projects, not, etc.	High (automatically)
Tour operators	Outdoor Albania, High Albania, foreign companies	Low-medium
Tourists	Regional, foreign	Low-medium
Education, research	Peace park expeditions, Shala Valley Project, independent researchers	Medium

Source: (E. Marchington, field notes, July 2009; personal communications, 2010)

From Table 5-4 it is evident that multiple stakeholders in the Thethi tourism development process exist. It is also clear that group stakeholders together under certain labels, such as “local community”, “local NGO”, or “international NGO” may not be entirely appropriate; given that these groups are comprised of a diverse number of stakeholders with different interests and objectives, they ideally should be considered as individual stakeholders. However, within the scope of this paper it is not possible to conduct this analysis; also, Albanian and international documents typically use these labels and groupings for stakeholders, so this is justified.

An interesting concept to consider is the impact of geographical and timescale boundaries on stakeholder identification. This is especially pertinent when considering impacts of

development on the environment, which can occur in much longer timescales than, for example, economic benefits or income, although may occur on a similar scale to social changes. For the purposes of this report, geographical boundaries are limited to the tourism development within the village of Thethi; however, it should be noted that national and international stakeholders may influence this process. Also, if a sustainability approach is taken, then timescale for tourism development must be considered a few generations.

The main stakeholder of interest in this research is the local community because tourism development is a vehicle for rural development, which is their primary objective. However, although not typically included in traditional management or organizational theory stakeholder lists (Mitchell et al., 1997), and excluded in the IUCN stakeholder list above, Drisco and Starik have argued for the inclusion of the natural environment as a primary stakeholder, not just represented by environmental groups, organizations, or networks (2004). In this research the environment is viewed as the key resource for development because it is what tourism is dependent on; therefore, along with NGOs, the local community should act to protect and represent their interests. It is interesting to note that although typically a community and environment are considered one stakeholder, believed to have uniform objectives and values, this is largely never the case. For example, the Thethi local community is very diverse and depending on age, gender, and/or socio-economic status, objectives in a tourism development project and values will be highly variable. Similarly, the environment is also very diverse, in terms of multiple components and capacity to absorb impacts; for example, the impact of tourism may not be high in the atmosphere, but could affect water supply.

5.4.2 Stakeholder map

In order to further clarify the tourism development process, a 'stakeholder map' or scheme outlining the various stakeholders, projects, implementation and interactions to create tourism impacts was also developed (Figure 5-2). It is evident that there are multiple stakeholders and multiple projects, all being implemented independently, with little interaction between stakeholders. Also, some projects, such as the accommodation project and perhaps other NGO projects and the hotel development, went through a planning stage in their design; however, it is evident that many projects were not planned, and likely few conducted environmental, social, or economic impact assessment before (or after) implementation. Also, there is currently a lack of monitoring and evaluation for most tourism projects, especially in a holistic sense looking at the whole development.

The above discussion provided insight into objective 2 of this study and gives evidence to the stated research problem, as well as insight into the connection between tourism development and why impacts are produced. In order to address the research question posed, or how could STD in rural Albania be pursued more effectively, the sustainability of the current tourism development process in Albania needs to be assessed. This is discussed below under Objective 3.

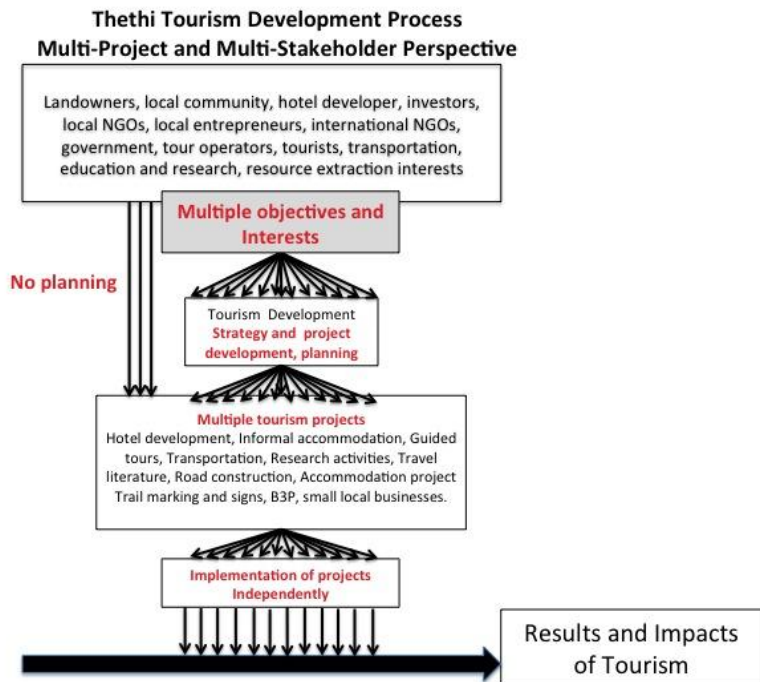


Figure 5-2 Thethi tourism development process from a multi-project and multi-stakeholder perspective.

5.5 Summary

Observations presented from participant observation and interviews were supplemented by and connected to the literature review presented in Chapter 2. As a result, key insights were formulated into objectives 1 and 2, identification of current and future impacts and key stakeholders, strategies, and actions in current tourism development in Thethi. With the current tourism development process now clarified, to address the research question posed, or how can STD in rural Albania be pursued more effectively, objective 3 and 4 are analyzed and discussed in Chapter 6.

6 Data analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze and discuss objectives 3 and 4 under the research question posed, or, to evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development process in Thethi and then to identify leverage points in the process where changes could be made to increase sustainability. Building on information presented in the literature review in Chapter 2 and insights into objectives 1 and 2 discussed in Chapter 5, analysis involved comparing the tourism development process in Thethi to “ideal” or sound practises for STD and requirements outlined in Chapter 2.1, followed by a stakeholder identification and salience framework from management theory to propose points and mechanism of change to increase sustainability. The presentation of insights into objectives will proceed with analysis followed by discussion.

6.1 Objective 3

Evaluate the sustainability of the current tourism development in Thethi by comparison with sound practise for STD as described within the encompassing literature.

The tourism development process in Thethi and associated current and future impacts were clarified in Chapter 5 allowing for evaluation of the sustainability of this process. Given that literature in Chapter 2 defined the principles and overviewed guidelines for sustainable tourism development, a logical method for sustainability evaluation was to determine if the Thethi TD process displayed characteristics that STD is based on. Also, comparing a model of STD implementation to the Thethi TD process exposed characteristics linked to sustainability. Results from these two evaluation steps are discussed below.

6.1.1 Evaluation of Thethi TD process using STD requirements

Literature concerning requirements and forms of sustainable tourism, including themes and concepts it should include, what and how to create strategies for STD, policies and tools to monitor and evaluate STD, and best practise examples are abundant (see Chapter 2); guidelines on sustainable tourism in protected areas were published by the IUCN and guidelines for policy makers on sustainable tourism by UNEP-WTO (CBD Secretariat, 2004; EUROPARC, 2001; UNEP & WTO, 2005; UNEP STIE SCP Branch, 2010; WTO, 2010). To use this information, a series of reoccurring themes found in rural and sustainable tourism development literature were proposed in Chapter 2.1 to underlie STD requirements: functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks; communication and coordination between stakeholders; awareness and education; and redefining the perception of development. To determine if the Thethi TD process displayed characteristics that STD are based on, the process was evaluated for presence of these themes (Table 6-1).

Table 6-1 Evaluation of Thethi TD process for sustainability.

Core Theme	Evidence in Thethi TD process
Functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks	<p>Government institutions, legal frameworks in process of being established; unclear if regional or local government stakeholders responsible for coordination, planning, management or monitoring of tourism are active.</p> <p>NGO support in development of tourism projects, small-scale infrastructure (i.e. GTZ accommodation project), but management and monitoring unclear,</p> <p>→ Overall lack of functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks for tourism</p> <p>→ Aggravated by lack of functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks for rural development, protected area management, and land ownership.</p>
Communication and coordination between stakeholders.	<p>Coordination with local community by some NGOs noted, but communication and coordination between various NGO groups, NGOs and government, between local entrepreneurs within the community lacking.</p> <p>→ Overall, communication and coordination lacking between majority of stakeholders, especially between different institutional levels of government, in different government sectors, and between those implementing tourism projects</p>
Awareness, education concerning development: capacity building with all stakeholders.	<p>The lack of awareness of positive and negative impacts of tourism development was observed in the local community, despite capacity building by GTZ for the accommodation project; lack of environmental concern (or awareness) evident through waste management conducted (piling garbage) by the local community and society as a whole</p> <p>→ Lack of awareness of positive and negative impacts of tourism development by key stakeholder, the local community</p>
Redefining the perception of development, following the principles of sustainable development.	<p>Attitude towards development in the community appears to be focused on a rapid pace and maximizing economic benefits, without planning or management for social and environmental impacts; a desire to improve the standard of living in the village to that resembling 'western modernization' is evident.</p>

From the information presented in Table 6-1, it appears that the tourism development process in Thethi is lacking characteristics of a sustainable tourism development process. The basic requirement for functioning institutional support and frameworks are lacking, not only for tourism development, but also for rural development, protected area management, and land ownership as well. Communication and coordination between stakeholders is unclear, but in some cases is not present or efficient, and awareness of tourism development impacts in the local community is low, accompanied by an attitude towards development that does not reflect characteristics of sustainability. Therefore, this analysis suggests that currently the tourism development process in Thethi lacks some characteristics of sustainability and could use improvements.

6.1.2 Evaluation of tourism development in Thethi via comparison with a STD implementation model

As a second method of analysis, comparing models of STD implementation to the Thethi TD process exposed characteristics linked to sustainability. However, an “ideal” tourism

development model was elusive in the literature, which was understandable given that each TD project is uniquely implemented in its own way and design, uncommon to other projects. What does exist in the literature are schemes outlining stakeholder involvement and how to include the local community in TD decision making (Eagles et al., 2002; Moscardo, 2008). Literature presented in Chapter 2.1 described community based tourism development, which was also cited to be used as a development project in Thethi under the “Alps National Park” zoning description (Chapter 2.3). Therefore, the model for community capacity building and tourism development developed by Moscardo and presented in Figure 2-3 served as an “ideal” STD implementation model (Moscardo, 2008). Since this model is project-based, it was compared to the development of one tourism project in Thethi (Figure 6-1). The GTZ accommodation project was selected for comparison because it is most well developed and information about this project was most available.

As evident in Figure 6-1, the GTZ project does include some relevant steps of the ideal TD process, namely stakeholder identification and community capacity building via workshops. However, the development of the project is most noticeably solely dependent on tourism without consideration of other options, and seems to lack strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The lack of these components indicates a lack of sustainability in project development.

However, it is not appropriate to evaluate the sustainability of the tourism development process in Thethi based on the evaluation of one project, nor is it necessarily reflective of the sustainability of other projects. Therefore, the entire tourism development process in Thethi was examined in attempts to view development holistically (Figure 6-2). From the multi-project and multi-stakeholder perspective, the lack of coordination, planning, and management between the stakeholders and projects operating in Thethi is clear; the result is a series of projects implemented separately, each resulting in impacts on the environment and local community, which have the potential to amplify when occurring simultaneously. For example, if the hotel development begins to draw electricity from the same source as the local residents, this will increase pressure on the already problematic source and distribution system. The lack of planning, management, and coordination among the different tourism stakeholders, and absence of monitoring and evaluation of tourism projects in the village indicates the TD process in Thethi is not entirely sustainable.

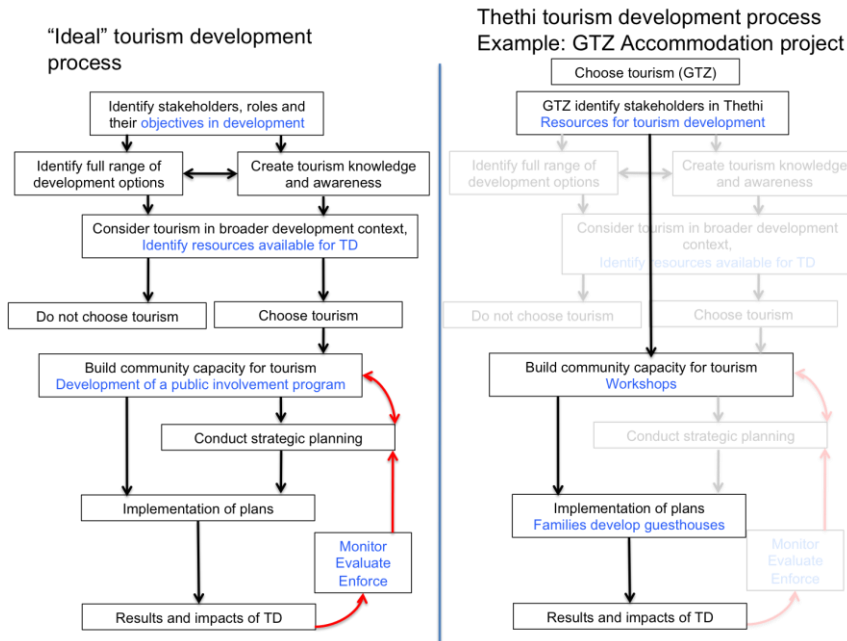


Figure 6-1 Thethi tourism development process compared to an "ideal" STD process.

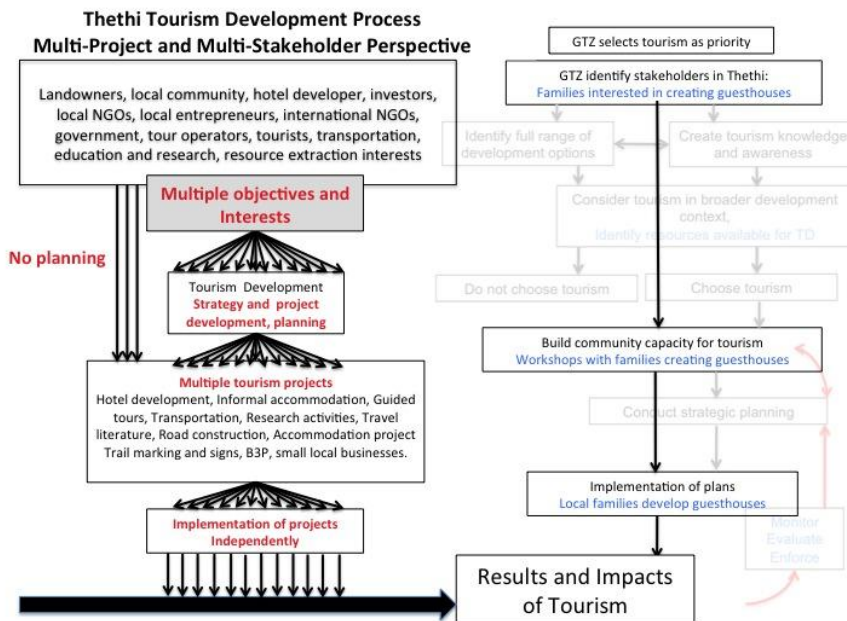


Figure 6-2 Thethi tourism development process from a multi-project and multi-stakeholder perspective to evaluate sustainability.

6.1.3 Summary: Objective 3

It is clear from the two methods of evaluation above that the Thethi tourism development process is lacking some components required for sustainable tourism development. In order to contribute to rural development, while preserving the environment, it is evident from the first evaluation that institutional support and frameworks for tourism in the village need to be established, functioning and efficient, communication and coordination between stakeholders needs to be increased, awareness of the local population of impacts of tourism development should be improved, and the local perception of development ideally should reflect a sustainable perspective. From the second method of evaluation, implementation of tourism projects in the village should incorporate planning, management, monitoring and evaluation, as well coordination between stakeholders implementing projects. Discussion surrounding points and mechanisms for change to increase sustainability in the Thethi TD process is outlined below under Objective 4.

6.2 Objective 4

Identify “leverage points” in the Thethi tourism development process that are influential in creating sustainable tourism development and evaluate potential mechanisms for change.

Objective 3 presents evidence that suggests the current form of tourism development in Thethi lacks characteristics of sustainability. If the research problem presented in Chapter 1 is revisited, a lack of sustainable tourism development is problematic because it could act to damage the key resource for tourism development, the pristine environment, and aggravate resource management problems and social inequalities; this would not result in sympathetic rural development, which is the objective of the local community. Therefore, it is of interest to all stakeholders involved, but especially the local community in Thethi, to pursue sustainable tourism development. This is reflected in the research question of this study, “How can sustainable tourism development in rural Albania be pursued more effectively?” and the purpose of objective 4 is to identify where changes in the current tourism development process could occur, and potential mechanisms for change, to increase sustainability. To provide insight into Objective 4, first identification of leverage points for change are briefly discussed using information presented under Objective 3 and the roles of stakeholders. Following this, through the use of stakeholder identification and salience framework from management theory, changes in stakeholder roles and interactions are proposed as a mechanism for pursuing sustainable tourism development more effectively.

6.2.1 Identification of leverage points for change in Thethi TD

Using the information presented under Objective 3, it is logical to suggest that in order to adjust the current form of tourism development in Thethi to a more sustainable form of development, the requirements of STD that were identified to be lacking in Table 6-1 could act as a starting point for change. This suggests that functioning and efficient institutional support and frameworks for tourism in the village need to be established, communication and coordination between stakeholders needs to be increased, awareness of the local population of impacts of tourism development should be improved, the local perception of development ideally should reflect a sustainable perspective to achieve rural development objectives, and implementation of tourism projects in the village should incorporate planning, management, monitoring and evaluation, as well coordination between stakeholders implementing projects. Table 6-2 presents these points of change, mechanisms, and describes the stakeholder likely responsible or key actors in implementing change.

Table 6-2 Points of change in the Thethi tourism development process, responsible stakeholder.

Points of change	Mechanism for change: Policy directions Source: (Foxlee, 2007)	Stakeholder responsible for change Time required: long or short-term
Functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks	Policy, legislation and enforcement procedure in place to ensure minimal impacts from tourism.	Government Long-term
	Planning, Integrated management, Access guidelines, Impact assessment, Monitoring	Government Long-term
	Incentives to encourage best practise and sensitive marketing.	Government, private sector Long-term
Communication and coordination between stakeholders	Partnerships and cooperation with local communities, sharing tasks and benefits.	Tourism project stakeholders, local community Short-term
	Research and information exchange between stakeholders.	All stakeholders Short-term
Awareness, education: capacity building with all stakeholders	Raising awareness of conservation and sustainable tourism through education and interpretation for industry, government, and tourists.	NGOs, government other organizations with capacity Short-term
	Capacity building in the form of staff training and provision support to promote sustainability.	NGOs, government, other organizations with capacity Short-term
Redefining the perception of development to reflect sustainability.	Ethical tourism, or the role tourism could play in poverty alleviation, gender inequality, etc.	NGOs, government, other organizations with capacity Long-term
	Acceptance that there are limits to acceptable change of vulnerable ecosystems.	NGOs, government, other organizations with capacity Long-term

From Table 6-2, it appears as though the changes that need to be made and implemented to adjust the current form of tourism development in Thethi rely heavily on the government, or organizations with capacity, such as knowledge and finances. Although some changes could be implemented immediately, via actions of NGOs working with the local community, many are long-term changes. Also, knowing that the activities and role of the central and regional governments are currently observed to be minimal in the region, it is unclear how effective changes in institutional structure would be in increasing the sustainability of the tourism development process in Thethi.

Therefore, although points of change identified in Table 6-2 are necessary, in the short-term they may not be practical or useful for the local community; tourism is occurring to promote rural development for the local residents, but to do so needs to be sustainable while protecting their key resource, the environment. It is the local community that should theoretically have the highest interest in adjusting the current form of tourism to something more sustainable because they have the most to gain and lose from the development.

Therefore, in order to achieve sustainable tourism development in Thethi, the local community could be the main actors or drivers in changing the current form of tourism development. To analyze how the local community could obtain this role, stakeholder

identification and salience theory is used and discussed below. Justification of placing the local community in the ownership role of tourism development in Thethi is justified for two reasons: first, the local residents are the traditional land users in the valley, which is collectively owned by the community and the state; and second, sustainable tourism development principles and guidelines require that the local community is involve and integrated into management of tourism development, because without this, development is unlikely to succeed.

6.2.2 Pursuit of STD in Thethi: A change in stakeholder roles and interactions

To evaluate how the local community could become the main actor or driver in changing the current form of tourism development in Thethi, it is necessary to analyze whom the current main actor(s) or stakeholders are in the current tourism development process, and where the local community is placed in respect to this; or, identification of ‘definitive’ stakeholders ‘who really count’ in the Thethi tourism development process. To conduct this analysis, the theory of stakeholder identification and salience as described in Chapter 2.5 was used in a process similar to that used by Currie *et al.* to determine stakeholder salience in a tourism project along with stakeholder identification insights under Objective 2 (Currie *et al.*, 2009; Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

First, clarification on differences in the context of the “management” stakeholder salience theory and how the theory is used in this research context is needed (Table 6-3). The management theory is based on examining single relationships between a “manager” and “stakeholder” who are connected to an “organization”; for example, this theory can be used to describe which stakeholders are important to managers of a mining company. In the context of this research, there is no individual manager or an organization; rather, the manager is replaced by the person, individual, or institution who has the decision-making power in the tourism development process (landowner, local or regional government who control development, managers of individual projects, or those with access to funding) and the organization becomes the tourism development process. In the tourism project feasibility study by Currie *et al.*, the manager who identified stakeholders and perceived salience included the tribal council, stakeholders in the project, and the researchers themselves to allow for different perspectives on salience because the authors were concerned that managers typically overlook social and environmental concerns based on their perspective of salience. However, for the purposes of this research, the “manager” is defined as the regional government or Commune, as they by law control development, landownership, and should technically be responsible for protected area management and the “organization” is the tourism development process (Table 6-3).

Second, the attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency were defined for this research context (Table 6-3). For the attribute of power, there were no examples of coercive power found in this research, utilitarian power was based primarily on access to financial resources, but also social connections in Thethi, materials, land, and local knowledge, and normative power could be based in deeds and contracts or institutions, such as the government or local traditions. The bases for legitimacy and urgency in the context of this research were similar to that defined by Mitchell, Agel, and Wood (1997).

Table 6-3 Key constructs in Mitchell, Agle, and Wood stakeholder identification and salience theory (1997).

Construct	Definition	Bases	Research context
Stakeholder	“Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives”	Not applicable.	Current tourism development process = organization.
Salience	“The degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims”		Manager = regional government
Power	“A relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done”	Coercive power: based on force, threat, restraint Utilitarian power: based on material, financial resources Normative power: based on symbolic resources → Transitory, can be acquired and lost	Coercive power: not present (example: government bring in military as enforcement of legislation) Utilitarian power: access to financial resources, social connections in Thethi, materials, local knowledge, land. Normative: those respected in village, traditions, land deeds, contracts, legislation.
Legitimacy	“A generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, definitions”	Defined at various levels: Individual, Organizational, Societal - usually found in something “at risk”, morally, property rights	Basis for legitimacy of a relationship: contract, stakeholder has a claim in firm, moral claim in firm, something at risk,
Urgency	“The degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention”	Time sensitivity (degree to which managerial delay in attending to claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder), Criticality (importance of claim or relationship to stakeholder)	Stakeholders who are very concerned and want something to be done quickly.

Source: (Mitchell et al., 1997)

Once the stakeholder identification and salience theory was defined for this research context, attributes were assigned to all stakeholders with the exception of the regional government, who was placed in the “manager” role (Table 6-4). The process of assigning attributes was iterative, based on discussions with the researcher’s supervisor. The choice to create generic groups, such as ‘international NGOs’ and ‘local community’, despite their heterogeneous nature was described under objective 2, stakeholder identification. A summary indicating stakeholder typology is presented in Table 6-5, with discussion following.

Table 6-4 Stakeholders involved in current Thethi tourism development and assigned attributes, where the 'regional government' is in the managerial position.

Category	Stakeholder	Power (Coercive, utilitarian, normative)	Urgency (Time sensitivity Criticality)	Legitimacy (Contract, moral claim, risk)	# Attributes
Landowners	Local community	X no management, enforcement of activities or respect of contracts, landownership unclear [√ if have deed and it is a respected contract (normative, utilitarian)]	√ Time sensitive and critical, but because of claim in rural development, TD less so? i.e. local people want to keep their property	√ Moral (traditional, historical use) and contract (if have deed), risk losing livelihood	2
	Non-local	√ no management, enforcement of activities, access to finances (likely more than local people) [√ if have deed and it is a respected contract (normative, utilitarian)]	√ Time sensitive and critical, because area is lucrative for development and currently not expensive (some locals approached)	√ Contract (if have deed and it is respected)	3
Transportation	Furgon drivers	√ (Utilitarian, based on materials (vehicle) and skills (road knowledge)) → unused	√ Critical if livelihood depends on transportation job (otherwise X)	X	1
Investors and builders	Local-entrepreneurs (websites, non-GTZ)	√ (Normative if have social connections, Utilitarian because have access to finances, land, local materials, knowledge) [X if normative connections could work against them]	√ if recognize the potential and value in tourism development for their family/village; want to move before others move in.	√ Moral, want to help themselves develop, Contract if have permission to invest/develop	3 - not many local people have access to finances
	Albanian	√ (Utilitarian because have access to finances)	√ if recognize the potential and value in tourism development; but does not impact livelihood, family so not as urgent as local	X unless √ have contract, permission to invest/develop	2 or 3
	Foreign	√ (Utilitarian because have access to finances)	√ if recognize the potential and value in tourism development; but does not impact livelihood, family so not as urgent as local	X unless √ have contract, permission to invest/develop	2 or 3

Category	Stakeholder	Power (Coercive, utilitarian, normative)	Urgency (Time sensitivity Criticality)	Legitimacy (Contract, moral claim, risk)	# Attributes
Government	National: MAFCP, MTCYS, NAT, MEFWA	√ normative, society representatives → unused	X not active in promoting rural or tourism development	X moral, society representatives, but corrupt	1
	Regional- Commune	“Manager” position or salience of stakeholders in the perspective of the regional government.			
	Local- Headman	X normative, society representatives, utilitarian (IF access to resources), but overall lacks importance in government	√ Time sensitive and critical, but because of claim in rural development, TD less so	X moral, society representatives, but not supported by all people (elections corrupt)	1
International NGOs	B3P UK, UNEP, UNDP, WWF, MADA, GEF, German Embassy, Dutch Embassy, Kmun Shale, SG	√ (Utilitarian because have access to finances, possibly normative if well respected internationally) [X no finances, only 'people' power, still normative]	√ If NGO is acting on behalf of community or environment see issues as very critical	X in the specific area	2
Local NGOs	IEP Albania, SNV Albania, GTZ Albania, B3P Albania, REC Albania	X lack finances, only 'people' power, still normative [√ Utilitarian because have access to finances, possibly normative if well respected] → NGOs new phenomenon in Albania	√ If NGO is acting on behalf of community or environment see issues as very critical	√, have some kind of moral connection or from the area	2
Tour operators	Example: Outdoor Albania, High Albania	√ (Utilitarian because have access to finances)	X (not invested in tourism there, unless see potential for profit)	X (no moral ties, nothing to risk)	1
Tourists	Regional, foreign	√ (Utilitarian because have access to finances)	X (not invested in tourism there)	X (no moral ties, nothing to risk)	1
Education, research	IPPE SVP, Antonia	√ (Utilitarian IF have access to finances, otherwise have skills/capacity)	X (perhaps time sensitive, but not critical)	X (no moral ties, nothing to risk)	1

Table 6-5 Stakeholder typology in the current Thethi tourism development.

Number of attributes	Stakeholder	Typology
3	Non-local landowners Investors: Local, Albania, foreign	Definitive
2	Transportation Investors: Albanian, foreign International NGOs Tour operators	Dangerous
		Dominant
	Local community, landowners Local NGOs	Dependent
1	Transportation National government Tour operators, Tourists Education, research	Dormant (power)
		Discretionary (legitimacy)
	Local government, Headman International NGOs	Demanding (urgency)

6.2.3 Discussion

To evaluate how the local community could become the main actor or driver in changing the current form of tourism development in Thethi, it was necessary to analyze whom the current main actor(s) or stakeholders are in the current tourism development process, and where the local community is placed in respect to this; or, identification of ‘definitive’ stakeholders in the Thethi tourism development process. It is clear from Table 6-5 that investors (local, Albanian, and foreign) are definitive stakeholders, mainly due to access to financial resources; it should be noted that the percentage of local people with access to resources is likely low, but given their moral legitimacy, if they did have access to resources they have unquestionable salience in development. Also, non-local landowners are surprisingly definitive stakeholders because there is no management or enforcement of building activities, so they have the power to develop at will. The lack of enforcement of regulation and legislation also results in the local community as dependent stakeholders, because their power is based in land ownership, which is not defined or enforced. Similarly, local NGOs are also dependent stakeholders if they lack access to finances.

Dangerous stakeholders include transportation providers who are responsible for bringing tourists to the valley; however, given that they likely do not have an urgent claim, they could also be classified as dormant. There are a surprising number of dormant, largely non-local and with access to finances but a lack of urgency; however, if their claims are urgent, they become dangerous stakeholders. Finally, only the local government or headman and international NGOs (if lacking funding) are considered demanding stakeholders, only possessing urgency in their claims.

Therefore, it is clear that primarily two elements differentiate stakeholders: access to finances, which results in power, and legitimacy. The stakeholders who do not have access to finances typically do have legitimacy, such as the local community, local NGOs and local

entrepreneurs; note, that the majority of these stakeholders are or are connected to the local community. The stakeholders who do have access to finances, but do not have legitimacy appear to be mostly non-local actors. However, given that contracts are not respected or enforced in Albania, and contracts form a basis for legitimacy, power overrides legitimate claims making dangerous stakeholders also definitive.

The local community could then become a definitive stakeholder in the current form of tourism development if they acquired access to financial resources; this could be through a micro-credit or small loan system operated by the government or an NGO. Currently in the EU, part of the rural development strategy is the establishment of the LEADER program, which funds small projects organized and implemented by local people on a local level. If finances are not attainable, the local community could form a partnership with other stakeholders who do possess power (utilitarian or normative) to increase their salience; for example, an international NGO that is well established has normative power and they could lobby the local government on behalf of the community to increase the communities' salience or landownership ownership, which would increase the communities' legitimacy. Partnerships or alliances could also be formed with non-local landowners, investors, and tour operators.

However, if the local community became a definitive stakeholder, or a main actor, in the Thethi tourism development process, this does not ensure that the process would change to become more sustainable; given the "low ecological" awareness and lack of knowledge of positive and negative impacts of tourism in the community, it is likely that development would continue on its current path unless capacity building occurred to increase the sense of urgency. Remembering Table 6-2, points and mechanism of change to increase sustainability in tourism development, awareness and education and communication and coordination of stakeholders are also key. Therefore, in addition to leveraging the local community into a definitive stakeholder position, this should ideally be accompanied by capacity building concerning positive and negative impacts of tourism. This could be carried out by other stakeholders, likely one who is invested in the development or who has an urgent claim, such as local or international NGOs. Communication and coordination between stakeholders would already be improved through the formation of partnerships, as noted above, but also the creation of a network between tourism development stakeholders would be valuable. There is indication that this may be occurring in the region through the development of LAG groups (personal communication, 2010).

6.2.4 Summary: Objective 4

It is evident from the discussion above that the Thethi tourism development process could change to become more sustainable if the local community could acquire power in the form of financial access and/or strengthen the legitimacy of their landholder status via partnerships and lobbying by powerful stakeholders to become definitive in the tourism development process. However, it is equally important to recognize the need to increase the capacity of the local community in terms of knowledge concerning positive and negative impacts of tourism so that once they are definitive stakeholders with a sense of urgency, they can promote development on a sustainable path. This, along with long-term implementation changes to the TD process, would create tourism development that could contribute to rural development, but also preserve the key resource for development, the environment.

6.3 Summary

To further explore the research question of this study, objective 3 and 4 were analyzed, which provided insight into the sustainability of the Thethi tourism development process and

identification of points and mechanisms for change in the process. In evaluation for sustainable tourism and community based tourism development principles, Thethi tourism development was found to be lacking some components required for sustainability; functional and efficient institutional frameworks, communication and coordination between stakeholders, awareness and education of stakeholders, and redefining the perception of development were areas which could be improved. To enact these changes and take control of tourism development, it was shown the local community should be the main actor. Using stakeholder identification and salience theory from management studies, it is evident that to achieve this the local community must acquire power to become a definitive stakeholder in the tourism development process, which could be through access to finances or a partnership with a powerful stakeholder. However, to then have *sustainable* tourism development, capacity building with the local community on positive and negative impacts of tourism and sustainable development should also take place, as well as coordination between all stakeholders.

7 Conclusions

7.1 Research aim, problem and question

The aim of this research was to investigate how potential negative impacts of tourism development in Thethi could be avoided at this early stage in development. Although tourism could act as a vehicle for economic and rural development in Thethi, there was concern that the current form of tourism development could damage the key resource for tourism, the pristine environment, and aggravate social inequalities and resource management issues. Therefore, the research question proposed for study was: “How can sustainable tourism development in rural Albania be pursued more effectively”.

Through the research methods of participant observation, interviews, and literature review, and the use of international STD and CBTD frameworks and stakeholder identification and salience management theory, the four objectives posed to provide insight into the research question were investigated.

The first and second objectives were to identify the current and probable future impacts of tourism development in Thethi and to identify the stakeholders involved and their roles in the tourism development process. The impacts identified (Table 5-3) included economic, social and environmental costs and benefits, with most social and environmental costs observed to affect the local community. In contradiction with literature, environmental costs were observed, including increased demand and use of resources, accumulation of solid waste, increase in production of wastewater, and infrastructure construction, with tourism overall adding pressure to insufficient or non-existent resource management systems. Such costs are problematic for the overall goal of tourism development to act as a vehicle for rural development because they damage the key resource for development, the environment. The non-static nature of the community and associated development made prediction of future impacts extremely challenging, but it was clear that predicted increase in tourism activity in Thethi would continue to place pressure on resources available to the local community and aggravate existing resource and social issues unless changes were made. Road development was also predicted to have a large impact on the future of tourism in Thethi. Stakeholders and their roles in the Thethi tourism development process were identified (Table 5-4) and found to be more numerous than that identified through literature, with the role of formal institutions minimal and implementation of multiple projects without coordination predicted to amplify tourism impacts.

The third and fourth objectives were addressed using insights into the first two objectives. The sustainability of the current tourism development process in Thethi was evaluated using two methods. First, Thethi TD was evaluated for four components found in sustainable tourism and rural development literature: functional and efficient institutional support and frameworks, communication and coordination between stakeholders, awareness and education, and the perception of development reflecting sustainability principles. It was found that Thethi TD was lacking evidence for these components, and although comparison of the accommodation project with a STD implementation model did exemplify some characteristics of sustainability, the TD process as a whole was found to be lacking in planning, management, monitoring, evaluation and coordination of projects. Therefore, connecting to the research question proposed, objective four examined points and mechanisms of change in the current TD process to determine how STD could be pursued more effectively in Thethi. It was established that the four components noted under objective 3 were logical points for change, however many of these changes were long-term and required

stakeholders who were not directly affected to conduct implementation. Therefore, it was determined that if the local community in Thethi could become the main actor, or definitive stakeholder, in TD then they could act as the mechanism for change. To achieve definitive stakeholder status in the current process, the local community should acquire power through access to finances or partnership with a more powerful stakeholder; strengthening legitimacy of their landholder status could also be increased via lobbying of the government by NGOs. However, it was also essential to recognize that this change in stakeholder role and interaction would not also result in sustainable development; capacity building and education of the local community, which could be the role of a local or international NGO or governmental institution, is also essential to instil a sense of urgency.

Therefore, this research explored the tension between environmental and cultural preservation with the need for development. If the potential of the local community of Thethi to act as leaders in the tourism development of their village can be realized and capacity building takes place, then perhaps residents will be able to achieve sustainable rural development:

It is nice to be a tourist, but also nice to live here.

7.2 Barriers and success factors required for change

There are significant barriers to achieving sustainable development in Thethi, especially concerning the points of change identified via the four core themes for successful sustainable rural and tourism development. As recognized in Chapter 2, social capital is suggested to a major determinant in development, which is likely to be true in the case of Thethi. With low civic participation and trust in public institutions, a lack of respect and enforcement of contracts and government institutions characterized by low capacity, points of change towards sustainability which depend on the strength or implementation of changes in government institutions will be a major challenge. However, the proposed changes to the role of the local community by-passes the need or reliance on formal institutions, but requires the community and stakeholders to recognize their potential as “owners” of tourism development and to act together. This will also be a significant challenge and is why capacity building by external stakeholders is necessary. The suggested creation of a network to increase coordination and communication between actors will also face similar challenges in establishing common goals of development.

7.3 Applicability to other rural areas in SEE

This research is applicable to evaluating and determining changes in a rural tourism development process to increase sustainability. Although results and conclusions are dependent on the specific case study, the method of stakeholder identification, TD sustainability evaluation, and method for identification of points and mechanisms for change in a TD process could be applicable to other case studies.

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 Implications for theory and practise

A significant outcome of this research is that it exemplifies the applicability of stakeholder identification and salience management theory to tourism research. Further exploration of this theory, including discussion of the “manager” role in the context of a tourism development process is pertinent. Also, investigation into the interactions between

stakeholders through the use of stakeholder multiplicity theory, and the addition of a fourth attribute, proximity, would be interesting topics to pursue in establishing stakeholder theory in tourism research.

Practical outcomes of this research include recommendations of changes to stakeholder strategies and actions in the Thethi tourism development process in order to achieve development with a higher degree of sustainability. Specific recommendations are suitable for the core audience of this research, or local and international NGOs working in Thethi, especially B3P UK with whom the researcher is associated with. Following from the conclusions of this research, NGOs are advised to become advocates for the local community obtaining land ownership and a main role in the development of tourism in Thethi. Advocacy should include lobbying of other stakeholders for the creation of a small-loans program, the implementation of the LEADER program in rural Albania, or funding small-scale local tourism projects themselves, similar to the GTZ accommodation project. Equally important would be the creation and implementation of awareness and capacity-building projects concerning the positive and negative impacts of tourism for local residents, but also beneficial would be awareness and education for all stakeholders involved. Through the formation of a Thethi tourism development network this could be realized.

7.4.2 Future research

There are many areas for future research as a result of this study, ranging from large theoretical questions for investigation to practical and case study-based queries. Overall, this study contributes to the suggestion that more information is needed on the nature and prediction of tourism development impacts. Also, debate between the uses of top-down versus bottom-up implementation methods for development emerges as a significant theme from this work, where tension and connections between the two methods should be explored. More specifically related to the Thethi case study, identifying the idea of environmental sustainability within the local community to precede capacity building activities would be logical, as well as analyzing the potential to use local resident's connection to agriculture and traditional land-use practises in mitigating the observed "low ecological" awareness. The role and interaction of gender and tourism development in the valley was briefly mentioned in this research, but should be further studied, as well as the influence of informal institutions, such as the Kanun, and various social networks in the Shala Valley. Finally, the monitoring and evaluation of tourism development as it proceeds in Thethi in contribution to an ongoing study of rural development in the area would be relevant.

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Appendix

Table A-1 International Charters, Guidelines and Declarations relevant to tourism and protected areas, selected from 2003 onwards, for full table see Foxlee, 2007.

Document (Date)	Guiding Agencies	Target Audience	Main Focus
Tourism and Biodiversity: Mapping Tourism's Global Footprint (2003)	United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Conversation International (CI)	Governments; business; local communities; donor organizations	Sets out guidelines for supporting sustainable tourism development.
Vth IUCN World Parks Congress Recommendations (2003), Recommendation #12	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)	Tourism organizations; protected area managers; conservation organizations and others	Specific recommendations concerning tourism as a vehicle for conservation and support of protected areas.
Durban Accord (2003) and Action Plan (2004)	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)	Governments; protected area managers; tourism operators and others	Statement and call for commitment and action for the benefit of protected areas so that their benefits can be conserved and equitably shared.
Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development (2004)	Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Government; private firms and proponents of tourism projects and activities	Guidelines related to sustainable tourism activities in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems of major importance for biological diversity and protected areas.